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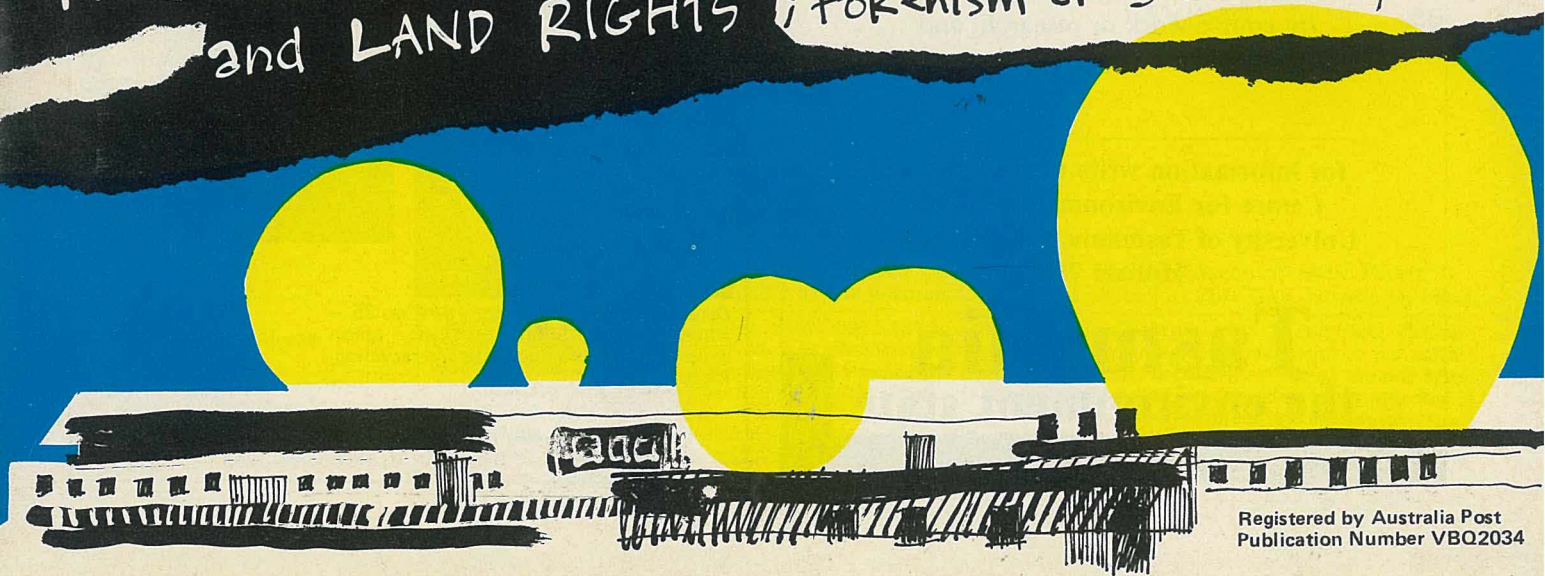
# Chain Reaction

Friends of the Earth Australia

Number 36 February-March 1984 \$2.00



PINE GAP - Debate on the WOMEN FOR SURVIVAL  
and LAND RIGHTS | tokenism or solardarity!



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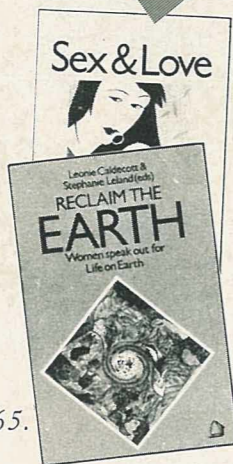
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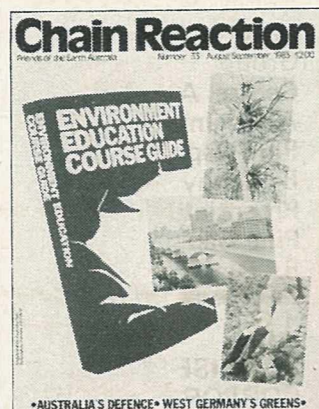
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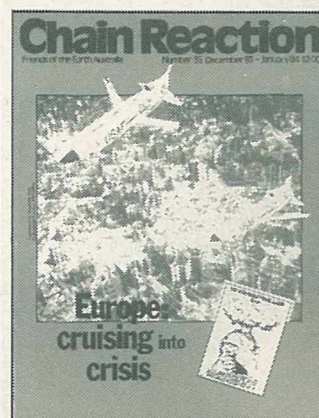
Thirty back copies of *Chain Reaction* — all those published from autumn 1976 (except vol 2 no 3, of which we will supply a reprint of the major stories) — are available as a set for \$42. Add another \$2 to include this edition (no 36). The five editions published in 1983 are available as a set for \$9. Single copies and class sets of each edition are also available. All post free.

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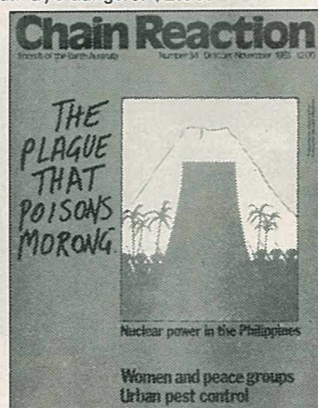


August—September 1983, no 33 — Australia's defence, Roxby Downs, Environment education guide, West German Greens, Wimmera River pollution. \$2.00.

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



December 1983 — January 1984, no 35 — Allergies, Dan Smith interview, union actions against uranium, jobs and recycling, Kakadu. \$2.



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

## Chain Reaction

Established in 1975  
Number 36  
February—March 1984

**Publisher**  
Friends of the Earth Australia

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

**Production**  
Robert Bell, Amanda Collinge, Penny Figgis, Madeline Ford, Kathy Gill, Mary Goodfield, Roger Halley, Ern Mainke, Ray McKendrick, Judy Messer, Margaret Mills, Bob Muntz, Robert Rands, Sylvia Rogers, John Stone, Glyns Stradij, Chris Ward

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

**Distribution**  
Richard Shelton

**Subscriptions**  
Tim Darling

**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**  
Correct Line Graphics, 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

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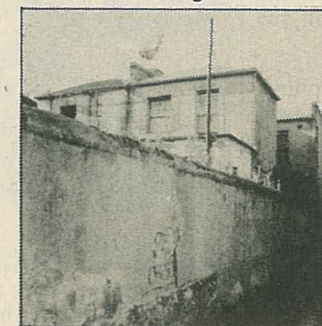
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Cover design: Lin Tobias. Illustration based on photograph by Fiora Sacco of Irene Peters Napangardi and Amanda Buckley at the Women for Survival protest at Pine Gap, November 1983.

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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 April—May 1984 edition will be published in mid-April. Deadline for feature articles is 2 March. For the June—July edition, deadline is 27 April 1984.

# FOE GROUPS

## Meeting

The 1984 Friends of the Earth national meeting was held at Katoomba, in the Blue Mountains near Sydney, on 2-5 February. Representatives from local groups in Adelaide, Brisbane, Collingwood, Macquarie University, Newtown, Perth, Port Pirie, Ryde, Sydney and Whyalla; and from *Chain Reaction's* Melbourne and Sydney collectives were there.

The meeting discussed the issues each FOE group is involved in, such as uranium mining, toxic waste disposal, recycling, and environmentally aware job creation. It recognised the need for groups to put forward realistic job creation schemes to combat the notion propagated by industry and the media that conservation costs jobs.

Another suggestion made at the meeting was that FOE members become more involved in the Australian Labor Party at branch level. This would help maintain opposition to uranium mining in the ALP and put pressure on the leadership to implement ALP policy. There was much discussion of the uranium issue at the national meeting. Pat Jessen (FOE Collingwood) reported that there would be another blockade



NICK THIEBERGER

**FOE representatives take a break from the business of the three-day national meeting.**

at Roxby Downs uranium mine in August 1984 if the ALP national conference in July reaffirms the Hawke position on Roxby Downs. A dossier on Western Mining Corporation and Roxby Management Services is also being prepared for interested groups in Australia and overseas.

FOE Ryde are investigating possible legal action regarding the Ranger uranium mine Supervising Scientist's obligation to supply information to the public. For some time Ryde have been trying to gain information regarding contamination of the Alligator River by the Ranger tailings dam.

The meeting issued a press release calling on all state governments to follow the example of South Australia and introduce beverage container deposit legislation. The increased use of wasteful throw-away packaging caused concern. There was unanimous opposition to an across-the-board litter tax, which is being advocated by the packaging industry as an alternative to container deposit legislation.

Richard Nankin (FOE Collingwood), who has been working on the recycling campaign in Victoria, said:

The litter tax concept is an inflationary measure which would victimise consumers and cost millions of dollars if introduced. Such measures do not address the problem of wasted resources and energy and the serious disposal problems created by throw-away packaging.

The meeting reappointed Nick Thieberger as the FOE national liaison officer for the next six months. The meeting also agreed to reappoint the *Chain Reaction* editorial collective for another two years with a review at next year's national meeting. Next year's meeting is to be held in Western Australia.

### Friends of the Earth groups

- ADELAIDE** 120 Wakefield St, Adelaide, SA 5000  
**BLUE MOUNTAINS** 94 Waratah St, Katoomba, NSW 2780 (047) 822701  
**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** c/- SRC, Macquarie University, North Ryde, NSW 2113  
**NEWTOWN** PO Box 169, Newtown, NSW 2042 (02) 517 2139  
**NORTHERN YORKE PENINSULA**, c/- Valinor, 734 Moonta Mines, Moonta, SA 5558 (088) 25 2813  
**OAKLEIGH** 69 Waratah St, South Oakleigh, 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/- 366 Smith St, Collingwood, Vic 3066 (03) 419 8077

## 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

### Women and Earth

I would like to be able to explain to Ross Scott and Peter Myers (letters, CR 34) why environmental issues are unavoidably social/political issues, why CR's placing 'Earth' issues within the broader context of human life is *not* non-environmental.

The ways people relate to one another, the ways they make decisions, and the structures that they create with which to make and enact these decisions, are very important determinants of the *sorts* of decisions made regarding the future of the planet.

It (your viewpoint) began long before you ever thought about being an environmentalist; it began with the story books, your parental models, your schooling. You see, in our society, men have been taught the all-importance of their 'getting on in the world' (academic prowess, career status, high money-earning power - rich and famous, important and powerful; being looked-up-to by the family, the employees, the community, the world - dominance, intimidation, aggression, competition, and the ability to depersonalise every one and thing, are the characteristics necessary for 'success as a man').

Women have been allowed to keep having babies, and to nourish and care for people and the Earth, both physically and emotionally. Whilst rigidity of role-allocation has (enormous) problems of its own, one thing that *has* meant is that women so much more than men, have been able to remain *friends of the Earth*.

Less preoccupation with personal worldly success has allowed more opportunity to perceive oneself as part of the whole, to see the (real) interest of the other - people, plants, animals, rocks, air, water - as consistent with one's own (real) interest; in addition the experience of being oppressed/dominated/exploited, leading to the struggle for self-determination has given non-white-Anglo-Saxon-heterosexual-male people an understanding of the dynamics of oppression and domination. And what they eventually understand is that those interpersonal

characteristics (of aggression and dominance) reflect and create the broader society in which we live, and without changing those things, we cannot hope to save our Earth from the violence and destruction inherent in our patriarchal capitalistic etc etc system. The different levels from within the individual's own self through the immediate love/live/work relationships, through the structure of institutions of employment/education/recreation, to the structure and events of local, federal and international politics, are all interrelated.

The need to dominate - whether in debate on the streets, or in the wilderness - is essentially the same. For this reason, Ross and Peter, I don't want to 'write off' people whose viewpoints differ from my own, and I take the trouble to read your letters and respect and appreciate your sincerity and effort. I have tried to put my viewpoint to you in a non-alienating way, and I simply ask you to do the same with me and my viewpoint. It would help me to know your reaction to my letter, should you have the energy to let me know.

Jenni Dall  
Dylnyrne, Tas

### Social defence

Mark Hayes' 'Defending the Sunburnt Country' (CR33), should not be dismissed peremptorily as done by Robert Horn (letters, CR34). We in Canberra Peacemakers have been concerned for some time that the peace movement in Australia has no longterm strategy. Those who call for disarmament and the repudiation of ANZUS have no alternative to military defence which is seen by most people as a necessary evil to ensure Australia's security.

Canberra Peacemakers has been exploring social defence as a basis for a strategy for peace. Social defence is non-violent community resistance to aggression as an alternative to military defence. It is based on the principle that no government, whatever its political colour can survive without the cooperation, or at least acquiescence of the majority of the population. Social defence uses all the

techniques of non-violent action including symbolic actions, non-cooperation, non-violent intervention and alternative institutions. Thus it has much in common with campaigns by environmentalists and other social activists. It can act as a deterrent to oppression by appealing to the soldiers and civilians of an aggressor nation and also to the transnational community, with the justice and non-violence of its cause. An aggressor can also be persuaded that an invasion will not be worth the effort nor achieve the desired objective.

As with military defence, social defence is not guaranteed to be successful and may entail considerable casualties. But it has a number of advantages. It is strictly a method of defence and cannot be used to invade another country. In many countries today the military is used by the government against its own people. Social defence requires the support of the grassroots to operate and cannot be directed solely by the government - in fact, it can be used by the people to fight against oppression and in all the struggles for a just and participative society. It thus strikes at the roots of war, and indeed, at the roots of other social problems including environmental ones. Disarmament alone would not touch the structures which perpetuate militarism.

There are a number of historical examples of social defence being at least partly successful without preparation. These demonstrate the great possibilities social defence could have if the same degree of effort were put into its planning as is presently put into military defence.

The ideas of social defence are relatively new and we by no means have all the answers. However it is vital that the peace movement begin to analyse alternatives to military defence and work out a strategy beyond organising the next rally.

Anyone who would like a copy of our broadsheet on social defence should write to Canberra Peacemakers, GPO Box 1875, Canberra, ACT 2601.

Philip Anderson  
Canberra

# LETTERS

### Variety

Thanks for the interesting reading matter; living on the Cape York (that's north Queensland) does not really make for automatic awareness of external affairs. If *Chain Reaction* did not deal with other than 'environment issues' I would be totally uninformed. So keep your magazine open to the variety of issues that exist.

Tell me more,

Toolkit  
Cooktown, Qld

### Eco-feminism

It is incredible that a mention of women (especially feminists), the disabled and gays can raise such (male) indignation. True, as Ross Scott and Peter Myers pointed out in their letters, there are many pressing environmental issues that need our analysis and action. But have the men in the environmental movement ever wondered *why* we are sitting on the brink of chemical and/or nuclear obliteration?

Do they believe it's just a tiny bit of technological overkill (*inappropriate technology* perhaps)? An aberration of capitalism/communism/colonialism? A lapse in male logic? The 'inevitable' conflict between 'good and evil'? 'Normal' aggression unfortunately taken to its ultimate extreme?

We must be willing to consider the root cause behind our peril and take the leaps of consciousness necessary to shatter the old cycles of violence, or planetary survival is unlikely.

As one of those 'discredited, hard-core' lesbian feminists who is also a 'discredited, hard-core' environmentalist, I would like to share a perspective.

There is a common thread of oppression that runs through environmental destruction, sexism, racism, homophobia, militarism,

Continued on page 40

# Dear reader

This is the year of the rat.

There's a lot of vermin out there, selling uranium, deploying missiles, exploiting people, poisoning the environment . . .

With your help, *Chain Reaction* can improve and become more effective in helping stamp out the plague.

Unlike the mass media, we depend on you, the reader, for news, information and encouragement. We do not have the resources available to the commercial media, and the issues we are interested in are often those issues that they ignore or trivialise.

Your contributions are encouraged. We are looking for news items (up to 500 words), feature articles (usually from 800 to 3000 words), reviews of films, books or periodicals (500 to 2000 words), photographs and illustrations, and letters to the 'editor'. It helps the collective to plan editions and saves you from producing unwanted material if you first provide us with an outline for a feature story, or discuss what you want to write with us first.

As well as providing information and news on issues such as the environment, nuclear power, disarmament, resource use, and workers health, we will continue to explore the links (and conflicts) between issues that we cover. In this edition, for example, we look at the Women for Survival action at Pine Gap and examine this interaction of the women's movement, the peace movement and the Aboriginal land rights movement.

Your responses to the stories we publish are especially welcome. Often we choose to print material in the hope of opening up debate in what we believe are important areas, such as the role of women in the peace and environment movements (eg 'Women's Actions for Peace', *Chain Reaction* 34); or social defence ('Defending the Sunburnt Country', *Chain Reaction* 35).

We hope to at some stage be able to pay a reasonable rate for contributions to the magazine — indeed for all work at presently done voluntarily. For the time being, we plan to pay for published contributions from low-income earners and those who depend on writing for their livelihood. We are also able to cover expenses involved in researching an article.

*Chain Reaction* is produced and distributed by collectives based in Melbourne and Sydney, with the help of four paid workers at our Melbourne office. Regular collective meetings decide on content of the magazine and other aspects of the magazine's operation. This editorial collective is open to anyone who works regularly on the magazine. If you wish to become involved in the production of the magazine please contact us in Melbourne or Sydney. Free childcare is available.

This is the first of six editions of *Chain Reaction* to be published in 1984. The magazine will come out every eight weeks during the year. For feature articles, we prefer to receive copy by the deadlines listed below:

*Chain Reaction* 37 (April-May) Deadline: 2 March.

Publication: 16 April

*Chain Reaction* 38 (June-July) Deadline: 27 April.

Publication: 9 June.

*Chain Reaction* 39 (August-September) Deadline: 22 June.

Publication: 4 August.

*Chain Reaction* 40 (October-November) Deadline: 17 August.

Publication: 29 September.

*Chain Reaction* 41 (December-January) Deadline: 12 October

Publication: 24 November.

Hoping to hear from you.

Jonathan Goodfield

# Ecological Horticulture

A Philosophical and Practical Approach to Horticulture in Australia, using the Indigenous Flora.

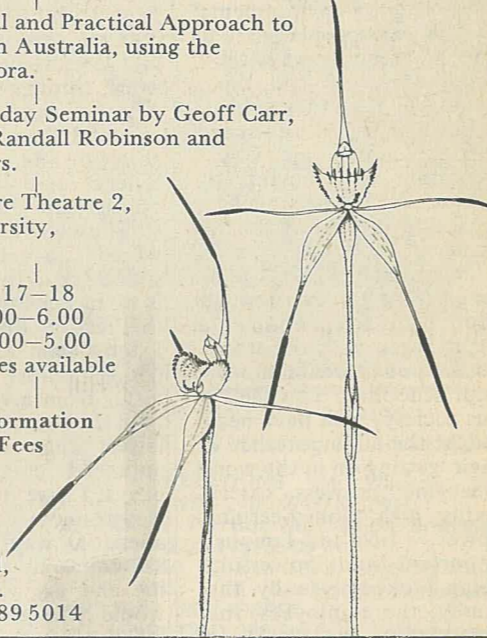
**What:** A Two-day Seminar by Geoff Carr, John Robin, Randall Robinson and Guest Speakers.

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## Chain Reaction

In the June-July edition of *Chain Reaction*, we plan to publish the annual listing of activist organisations:

## Activist Contacts

This is how *News Weekly*, the newsletter of the ultra-right National Civic Council, described last year's Activist Contacts: "... the latest issue of *Chain Reaction's* four page centre-piece has been devoted to listing radical left-wing activist contacts. These contacts are not restricted to conservation issues, but include to organisations under heads of Gay Liberation, Women's Liberation, Peace and Disarmament, Aboriginal Land Rights, etc." (*News Weekly*, 20 July, 1983)

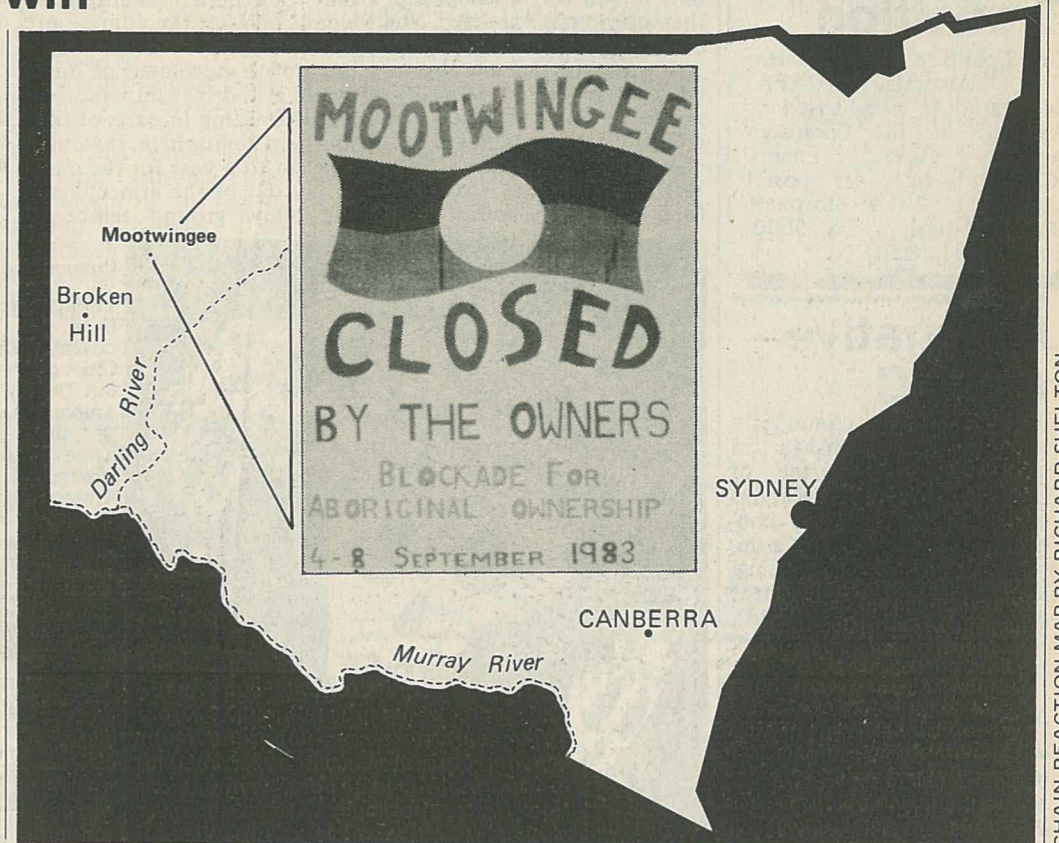
If your group wants to be part of the 1984-85 Activist Contacts, send us information on your group including contact address and telephone and telex numbers. Send these details as soon as possible, by 27 April 1984 at the latest, to: Activist Contacts, Chain Reaction, Room 14, Floor 4, 37 Swanston St, Melbourne, Vic. 3000.

## Mootwingee win

Aboriginals in western New South Wales have been successful in closing Mootwingee National Park to tourists. The park contains a sacred site that has been used for rain-making and other ceremonies for thousands of years.

Mootwingee National Park is a large area recently created from Mootwingee station and surrounding areas north of Broken Hill (see map). The area includes the habitat of the endangered Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby.

A week-long blockade of the site in September 1983 was organised by the Western Region Land Council who demanded closure of the site, and the handing-over of control of the site to local Aboriginals. The park has been effectively closed since then, although it has only been official since 1 February 1984. The National Parks and Wildlife Service is now developing a plan of management for the park which should provide for Aboriginal control, but the details are still unclear.



## Trials and tribulations

The tropical lowland rainforests within the Cape Tribulation National Park in far north-east Queensland are currently under threat by a road construction project being carried out by the local Douglas Shire Council.

The Douglas Shire Council has for many years favoured the construction of a road from the Daintree River through to the Bloomfield River and has sought both state and federal funding to upgrade the existing road and extend it through to the Bloomfield River. The Queensland government provided a grant of \$100 000 for the road project in 1983.

A rough track was officially gazetted as road reserve in 1978 and excluded from the national park when it was declared in 1981. However the proposed road route has never been properly surveyed and consequently its path has been decided on an ad hoc basis, not following the

protected as Marine National Park, and rainforest.

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gazetted road reserve.

The Douglas Shire council and the Queensland government say that the road project will lead to increased tourism, and improved surveillance against drug trafficking, wildlife smuggling and illegal immigration. The road, however, will be accessible only by four-wheel drive vehicles, while the steep and rugged terrain, combined with heavy seasonal rains and highly erodible soils, will mean that the road will only have a very short lifespan without continuous and very expensive maintenance.

Even though there are alternatives to the route, the Douglas Shire Council persists with its plans to build the road. Conservationists are urging the federal government to use its existing powers

under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act* or the *World Heritage Properties Protection Act* to stop the project.

Before Christmas, local conservationists blockaded bulldozers trying to proceed with the road. The Christmas break and monsoon rains stopped work, which may not start again until after the wet season. When roadworks begin conservationists will again attempt to stop further work on the road.

**Contact:** If you want further information or wish to participate in the campaign contact: Queensland Conservation Council, Tel: (07) 221 0188; Rainforest Conservation Council, Tel: (07) 369 6352; The Wilderness Society, Tel: (02) 267 2979, (002) 34 9466, (03) 663 1561; Australian Conservation Foundation, Tel: (03) 819 2888; or Cairns and Far North Environment Centre, Tel: (070) 51 1204.

# EARTH NEWS

## Transition

The Coalition for a Nuclear Free Australia (CNFA) Secretariat is now based in Adelaide at the Campaign Against Nuclear Energy (CANE) office. Its postal address is 291A Morphett Street, Adelaide, SA 5000. Tel: (08) 51 3821.

## Alternative ASTEC

A wide range of community groups has established an independent committee of inquiry into nuclear weapons proliferation and other consequences of Australia's involvement in uranium mining. Members of the committee are Keith Suter (chairperson), Joan McClintock, Judy Messer and Charles Kerr.

The terms of reference of the Suter inquiry are:

- The potential for Australian uranium to enter the nuclear weapons cycle
- The effectiveness of international and bilateral safeguards agreements in controlling the flow of uranium in the nuclear cycle
- The opportunities available to Australia to influence proliferation of nuclear weapons if it does not mine and export uranium
- The dangers posed to workers in the uranium mining industry
- The environmental impacts of the proposed Roxby Downs mine

The inquiry will receive submissions until 1 March 1984, and it is anticipated that one or more members of the inquiry will be available to receive oral submissions during March. The inquiry will report in May 1984.

The Suter inquiry is a response to the federal government's attempts to

## The night after

A new study into the consequences of a nuclear war has found that after a nuclear war, the Earth's surface will be subjected to below freezing temperatures, plants will be unable to photosynthesise, and the amount of radioactive fallout will be much greater than previously expected. The study, completed in November 1983, was carried out by an ad hoc group of over 100 physicists and biologists. The group's advisory board included Carl Sagan, Joseph Rotblat, Evgeni Chazov (deputy health minister of

the USSR) and Nobel Prize winners Hans Bethe and Francis Crick.

Dust in the atmosphere from nuclear explosions would absorb the sunlight, warming the atmosphere but lowering ground temperatures. Most of the northern hemisphere would take on the climate of a deep Siberian winter while the global movement of dust would also drive temperatures below freezing in parts of the southern hemisphere. It would take up to a year for the dust to fall out of the atmosphere and allow ground tempera-

tures to return to normal.

The amount of radioactive fallout would be much greater than earlier studies had predicted. The dust in the atmosphere would intercept and return to Earth radioactive particles which would otherwise escape to the upper atmosphere. The group of scientists also found that an explosion of only 100 megatons would result in months of cold and dark almost as severe as a full-scale 5000-megaton nuclear war.

Source: *New Scientist*, 3 November 1983.



## Computer Analysis by Allen Short

Twenty Five Million Dead.  
Coventry, Dresden, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Cities of dread memory.  
But Twenty Five Million!  
Among the ruins of their industry  
The survivors hear the war cry from Fulton.  
Atom bombs, H bombs, MIRV, Poseidon,  
Always behind,  
Always striving to catch up.  
The hawks of the Pentagon talk quietly of  
One Hundred Million dead.  
But their technology is flawed.  
Dust.  
Over the whole hemisphere.  
A fraction of the bombs would do it.  
It matters not on whom the bombs fall.  
Summer would become winter,  
And winter!  
Who or what would survive?  
Ozone.  
Clear skies murderous over the whole sphere.  
Australia, you are not exempt.  
Two minutes to sunburn.  
Who or what would survive?  
Abandon the threats, the fraudulent proposals.  
An honest approach is our only hope.

whitewash the uranium industry through the Australian Science and Technology Council (ASTEC) inquiry. The terms of reference of the ASTEC inquiry are confined to examining Australia's contribution to waste disposal, safeguard proposals, and how Australia's safeguard proposals can affect non-proliferation.

Many peace and environment groups chose to boycott the ASTEC inquiry feeling that its terms of reference were far too narrow. The groups also feel that the inquiry would only serve to reinforce the pro-uranium policies of the Hawke Labor government.

Contact: Submissions and any correspondence should be forwarded to: The Secretary, Uranium Inquiry, PO Box A243, Sydney South, NSW 2000.

## Bega ballot rebuff

The Bega Valley Shire Council is wilfully ignoring the result of Australia's first ever poll of electors to decide whether to declare a council region a nuclear free zone. A majority of voters in the politically conservative Bega Valley (in south-west New South Wales from Eden to Bermagui) supported the declaration of a nuclear free zone in a referendum held in conjunction with the annual local elections of 24 September 1983. The poll was held as a result of pressure from the Bega People For Peace and Nuclear Disarmament

Despite the fact that nearly 60% of voters were in

favour of a nuclear free zone and despite repeated assurances from many shire councillors, the council refuses to declare the shire nuclear free.

The electorate - including even those people who had voted against the nuclear free proposal at the election - were outraged that the vote has been virtually ignored. In November, more than 400 people marched on Bega Council Chamber, protesting the council's over-ruling of basic democratic rights.

A motion at the December council meeting to declare the shire nuclear free was lost by 6 votes to 5 and the issue will not be raised again until March 1984. A spokesperson for PPND, Phillip Hurst, said that the declaration of a nuclear free zone is a certainty.

## Coal sack

What can the Miners Federation do about the sacking in mid-January 1984 of 363 coal miners by the Bellambi Coal Company? The company operates a colliery at South Bulli, just north of Wollongong.

Barry Swan, the general secretary of the Miners Federation, calls for the New South Wales government to inject money into the company by buying some of the coal currently stockpiled. The Bellambi Coal Company, which is 45% owned by Shell, has blamed the retrenchments on loss of sales to Japanese customers. Barry Swan accepts this explanation, saying that without the retrenchment, the mine would have closed put-

ting 880 miners out of work.

But a cash injection into the coal company would also support Shell in its overall global campaign for control of the coal industry. Shell plays off its cheaper coal-producing facilities in other countries, gaining contracts for sales at the expense of smaller concerns such as that at Bellambi.

So what can the union do? In the short term it is campaigning to protect its workers' jobs while proposing longterm solutions such as an authority to coordinate pricing policies among Australian producers and to unify negotiations with overseas customers.

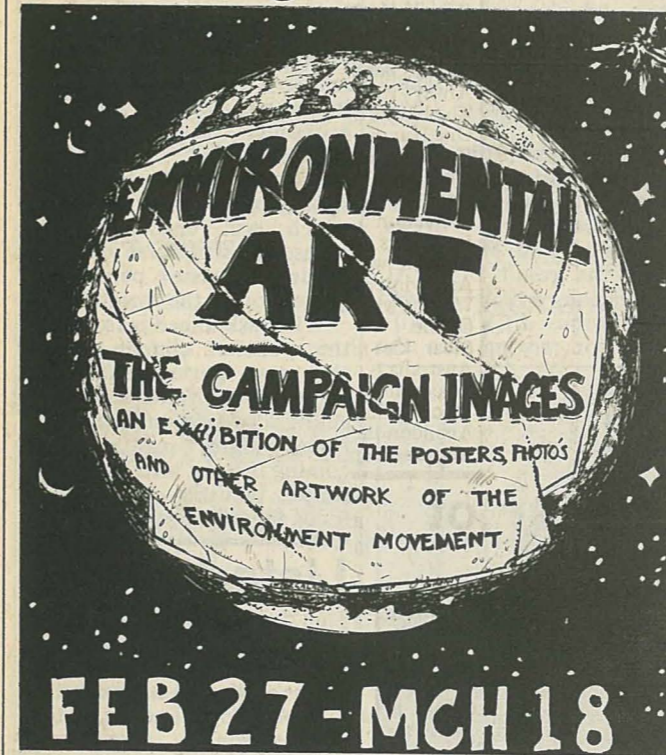
That such an authority

could ever operate is uncertain when transnational corporations like Shell are both Australian producers and overseas producers - the competitor and the compe-

tion. (For more information on Shell's operations see: 'The Real Shell Report' in *Chain Reaction* 30; and 'Shell sheds coal jobs' in *Chain Reaction* 32.)



## Green fringe



Campaign Against Nuclear Energy (CANE) (South Australia) are organising an exhibition called 'Environmental Art: The Campaign Images' to be part of the Adelaide Fringe Festival which is on from 24 February to 18 March.

CANE will be exhibiting artwork and display material used in campaigns for the protection of native forests and wildlife, the preservation

of wilderness, and the stopping of uranium mining and nuclear proliferation. *Chain Reaction* intends to enter a display around the themes of jobs and environment, women and the environment and the role played by *Chain Reaction*.

The exhibition will be shown at the premises of CANE at 291A Morphett Street, Adelaide.

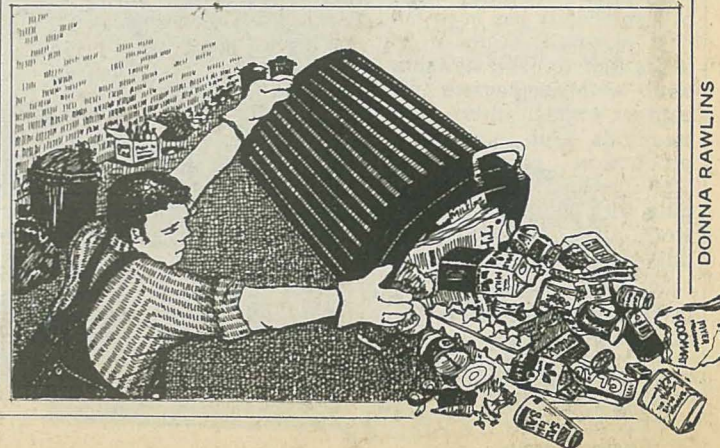
## Rubbish tips

The Recycle-it Kit was released early in 1984 by the Environment Studies Association of Victoria. The kit is designed to encourage the recycling of household garbage by the residents of two inner suburban Melbourne municipalities - Collingwood and Fitzroy. It contains background information on the benefits of recycling the major items in household waste, and contrasts this with the costs of not recycling.

The Recycle-it Kit is the

culmination of six months' work by a three-person team, who have been employed under a state government job creation project. Research has involved discussions with municipal employees and recycling activists in Melbourne and Sydney; and the 'digestion' of voluminous quantities of literature from Australia, the UK and the USA.

Contact: The Recycle-it Kit can be purchased for \$3.00, plus \$1.00 postage, from the Environment Studies Association of Victoria, 285 Little Lonsdale St, Melbourne, Vic 3000.



## Cheap paper's sweet

Cuba has developed a method of making high-quality cheap newsprint — the paper on which newspapers are printed — from sugar cane waste. This is a breakthrough not only for Cuba but also for the 45 or so underdeveloped countries which depend on sugar exports, as the fluctuating price of sugar on world markets has proved an unstable base for any economy.

Usually, expensive newsprint made from increasingly scarce wood pulp is imported and now costs about \$550 per tonne. Meanwhile 'bagasse', the cane waste which forms the basis of the new Cuban newsprint, is inefficiently burned as fuel in most sugar refineries. Forty years of research have led to the production of over 2 million tonnes of paper a year from bagasse in Asia, Africa and Latin America — a small fraction of the annual world paper consumption of 174 million tonnes.

Development of the Cuban paper product, called 'Cuba-9', was carried out by the Cuban Research Institute for Sugar Cane Byproducts with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme. A pilot plant which can produce 35 tonnes of paper daily has been built near Havana. The Cuba-9 plant is the first to make newsprint with a high bagasse pulp content to high international standards at reasonable production cost. Previous attempts had mixed bagasse pulp with high proportions of wood fibre, making the product much more expensive.

Similar research has been carried out in other developing countries.

Source: *Earthscan Bulletin*, December 1983.

## East Gippsland logging

In its ever destructive quest for short-term profit, the timber industry, with the support of the Forest Commission of Victoria (FCV), continues to overcut the forests of East Gippsland.

For many years the main focus for conservationists has been the Errinundra Plateau. The plateau, which marks the southern extremity of the Monaro Tablelands, contains Victoria's largest remaining rainforest. This forest is the only area in the world where Sassafras is the dominant rainforest species and where the mountain plum-pine (usually an alpine shrub) grows into 15-metre trees, up to 500 years old.

The forests of Errinundra are a major logging area. Already 40% has been cut with logging now moving towards the untouched catchment of the East Errinundra River.

Overcutting forests for sawlogs not only threatens the unique environment of places like Errinundra but puts at risk the jobs and the local economies which depend on the timber industry.

The Australian Conservation Foundation, Native Forest Action Council

(NFAC) and the Conservation Council of Victoria have called upon the Victorian government to recognise their responsibility towards the environment and to hold immediate talks between all parties to find a solution that would exclude all important areas from logging while a strategy is developed to ensure an environmentally and economically sound future for East Gippsland.

The success in November, 1983 of the campaign to have logging stopped, albeit temporarily, at Rodger River (also in East Gippsland) has shown that environmental groups can have important input into decisions which effect the environment. The forests of Rodger River are important as examples of the forests which covered Victoria's mountain regions before the devastation caused by European fires and logging (see *Earth News*, *Chain Reaction* 35).

The decision for a two-year moratorium came in November from the Minister for Conservation, Forests, and Lands, Rod MacKenzie. It was the result of NFAC investigation which showed that previous FCV's justifications for moving into the

area were incomplete and misleading. The commission had drawn a picture of a short-term timber supply crisis for the Nowa Nowa mills. Using FCV figures, NFAC showed that the Nowa Nowa district, outside NFAC's national park proposals, contained at least five years' supply of hardwood. Mills have not been cutting their full allocations, and much timber is still available in previously cut forest. Logging the Rodger was the easy way out. The supply crisis existed only on paper.

The minister must be supported in this action which can be seen as the first step towards parks to protect East Gippsland's tall forests. Already the industry is working to erode the moratorium, saying jobs will be lost. NFAC is confronting this industry attack by organising its campaign around a sensible economic future for East Gippsland. In consultation with local people long-term strategies are being prepared which will encourage the necessary structural changes needed to ensure permanent protection of the forests.

The task ahead is to create the political climate where the state government's 'on paper' commitment to parks and conservation can be forced into reality. The coming inquiry into Victorian timber industry should be a focus for such pressure.

## Listed

The federal Department of Home Affairs and Environment and the Office for the Status of Women are preparing a list of women active in the conservation movement. Under the government's policy of 'affirmative action', the departments would like to be able to propose more women to environmental committees, authorities, advisory boards etc.

Contact: Women who are interested in being added to the list should send their names, qualifications and experience to: Barbara Smith, Department of Home Affairs and Environment, CML Building, University Avenue, Canberra City, ACT 2600.

NFAC



Evidence of clearfelling on the Errinundra Plateau.

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PINE GAP - Debate on the WOMEN FOR SURVIVAL and LAND RIGHTS i tokenism or solardarity!



BARBARA MILES

The recent Women for Survival action against the USA military installation at Pine Gap has engendered heated discussion in the peace movement and women's liberation movement concerning organisation, tactics and actions. In particular debate has focused on the relation between Aboriginal struggles and nuclear disarmament. The following articles raise some of these issues and we hope will serve to encourage continuing discussion in further editions of *Chain Reaction*.  
'Response to Women for Survival Campaign' is reprinted from the *Brisbane Women's Land Rights Solidarity Group Newsletter*; and 'Central Australian Aboriginal women and Pine Gap' has been published in an edited form in *Tribune* and will also appear in *Girls Own*. Although *Chain Reaction* maintains a policy of not reprinting articles we have made an exception in this case because we feel that these issues are of vital importance for us as peace activists and environmentalists.



FIORA SACCO

# Responses to WOMEN FOR SURVIVAL campaign.

The Brisbane Women's Land Rights Solidarity Group discuss what it means to support land rights in relation to the Close the Gap campaign.

For the Brisbane Women's Land Rights Solidarity Group, the Close the Gap campaign raised many questions we have discussed many times, such as 'what does it mean to support land rights?'. For the group, land rights is not an issue to be tacked onto the end of campaigns: to say we support land rights must mean that the way that whites organise all campaigns changes. Colonisation is not an historical event, it continues to the present. And political campaigns by women should not continue to be aimed at assimilation and integration; but rather should recognise colonisation.

Our group is critical of the ways in which the Close the Gap campaign has drawn links between nuclear disarmament and land rights, and the implications of these links for the organisation of the action.

Links between nuclear disarmament and land rights were articulated in Women for Survival literature and press releases. It was pointed out that

- Pine Gap is located on Aboriginal land;
- land rights are of no worth without nuclear disarmament; and
- survival from nuclear war is linked with land rights as a survival issue for blacks.

The implications of these links in the organisation by Women for Survival demonstrate their commitment to land rights. For example

- permission from the traditional owners was sought to establish a camp;
- organising groups were called Women for Survival in Solidarity with Black Women, (see 'Women of all cultures acting against global violence', *Girls Own*, no 13);
- money was raised for Welatye-Therre;
- workshops were conducted on racism and land rights;
- in most leaflets from Women for

*Brisbane Women's Land Rights Solidarity Group is a group of non-Aboriginal and non-Islander women who have been meeting since before the Commonwealth Games. They are at present discussing colonisation and decolonisation in an Australian context and are also attempting to build up a collection of relevant articles.*

Survival, mention was made of land rights; and

• groups allegedly sought to involve black women in the protest.

Pine Gap is located on Aboriginal land, support actions are situated on Aboriginal land, where we live is on Aboriginal land, meeting places for Women for Survival are on Aboriginal land... was permission sought from the traditional owners of all this land? Land rights struggles are not a series of isolated demands for pieces of land, as the focus of Women for Survival on Welatye-Therre and Pine Gap land suggests. We are certainly not suggesting that it was ridiculous to ask permission from local Aboriginal people to camp on their land. However, all the land in Australia has been colonised and a commitment to land rights should not be time and place specific. Welatye-Therre was a very convenient struggle for the Close the Gap campaign to attach itself to: good location, timely, and a women's sacred site. It is true that there were specific requests from Arrernte people for money for the Welatye-Therre struggle; it is also true (and our group has certainly found this) that it is easier to support via fund-raising and it is easier to support something away from home. We can kid ourselves we are doing something, without risking our white privileges. Where is the white support for land rights that was shown during the Commonwealth Games, now?

Publicity about the action also stressed the idea of brave women going out to the harsh barren desert. Such denies that Aboriginal people have a loving and supporting relationship with their land.

In terms of the aims of the action, it was stated that the Close the Gap protest was aimed at drawing attention to particular issues: mainly nuclear disarmament, but also land rights. It was also aimed at 'raising awareness', presumably via media coverage of the event at Pine Gap and of support actions in other towns and cities. However, in most newspaper articles and TV coverage (certainly what we saw in Brisbane) there was no mention made of Aboriginal people, land rights or 'survival' in the wider meaning proposed by the campaign.

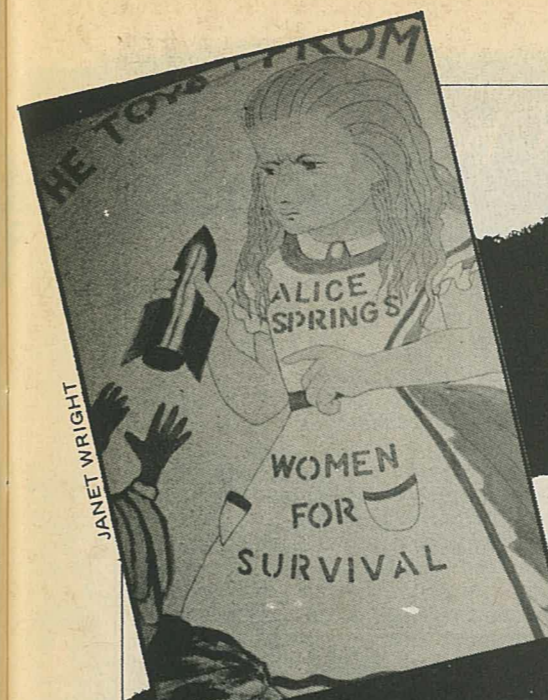
In the Women for Survival literature produced, there was plenty of detailed information on Pine Gap as a CIA installation and nuclear arms proliferation - but really very little on land rights, in terms of colonisation in the Northern Territory, land rights legis-

lation, or on tribal groups in the territory.

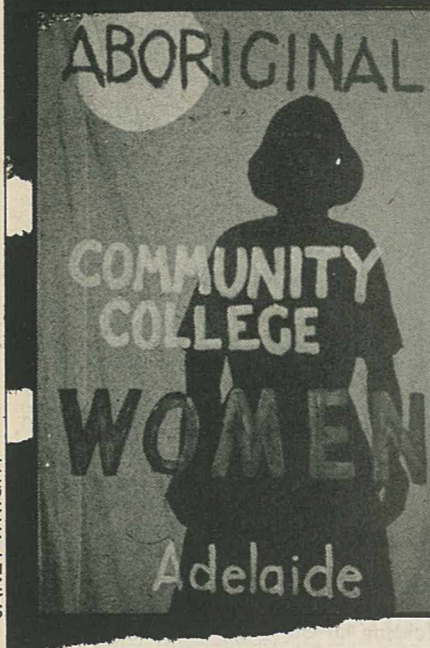
Aboriginal women have not in the past attended events organised by white feminists in Australia because the events have not been within their frames of reference, not relevant and inaccessible in terms of structure and organisation. In the main, these events have been by whites, for whites. There is a difference between encouraging black women to attend 'our' events by extending invitations, and challenging our organisation of events so that they are not ethnocentric and colonialist. The former is integration/assimilation - they participate on our terms ('act white'). A report in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 8 October 1983, regarding the Pine Gap action, read, 'Efforts will be made to understand and include Aboriginal women in the demonstration.' We would suggest that whites have been trying to 'understand and include' blacks in all their nation since whites first invaded Australia. Blacks have resisted white efforts at 'inclusion' because they will not submit to colonisation. Campaigns by white women may be as well intentioned as the missionaries perceived their work; they will be just as destructive as long as whites organise with the cultural arrogance they have exhibited to date.

Do we support the struggles of the people of the land around Pine Gap or do we recognise that colonisation involves the whole of Australia? If we do recognise the latter, doesn't that mean that by not being involved with our local black communities, supporting their struggles, we are still fulfilling the coloniser role? We are deciding where to focus politically (Pine Gap), we are deciding how (combined women's peace camp), we are deciding when (11 November). On this basis, our support for land rights and the struggle at Welatye-Therre seems to be a public relations exercise.

We organise that the processes of decision-making, consultation and representation in the black community are quite different to those of the colonisers. Governments have shown a particular inability to accommodate themselves to these differences. Instead they impose their white processes on blacks. (See Bell and Ditton, *Law: The Old and the New*, for a discussion on how the views of black women were never obtained in Central Australia.) There is nothing to suggest that the Women for Survival organisation and consultation meeting held in July in



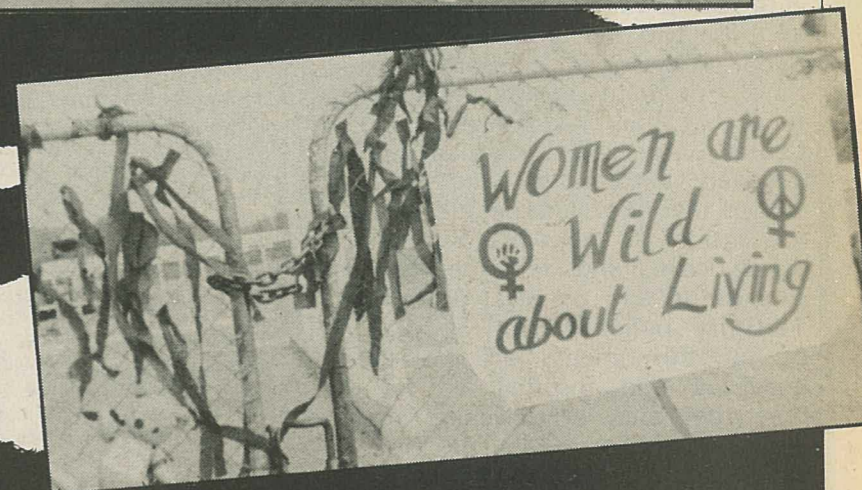
JANET WRIGHT



JANET WRIGHT



JANET WRIGHT



JANET WRIGHT



FLORA SACCO

Graffiti, banners and placards at the Pine Gap action.

Alice Springs was more accommodating; much less that efforts were made to conduct the meeting within black frames of reference. Also at the time of the Alice Springs meeting, the impetus for the action to go ahead was so strong we wonder if there was anything that would have caused it to be called off or postponed.

Mainstream media reported that it was decided that the campaign would be called Women for Survival to link anti-nuclear power struggles with land rights which is a survival struggle for Aboriginal people. Ms Lee O'Gorman

explained the rationale of combining land rights and anti-nuclear protests by saying that, 'without nuclear disarmament, land rights won't mean anything'. (*Brisbane Courier Mail*, 7 November 1983)

We cannot subsume all struggles, all campaigns under the rubric of the bomb going off tomorrow. To suggest that nuclear disarmament is a *primary necessity*, that no struggle for justice means anything without it, exhibits a real ignorance of the harsh reality of many people's lives and directly contradicts the notion of survival adopted by

the campaign. Blacks define their own political priorities. They have never suggested, as Women for Survival are doing for them, that nuclear disarmament is a necessary complement to land rights. This is not to deny the importance of issues like 'USA bases out' and nuclear disarmament. However, the terms of the campaign must be clear, and ignorant and tokenistic 'links' such as this one must be avoided. Whites who support land rights must constantly assess, analyse and redefine our actions and the basis from which we act, including how we define our political priorities.



# Central Australian Aboriginal women and PINE GAP.

The women's action against Pine Gap is over, and most of the women involved have returned to their homes or moved elsewhere, taking with them a variety of impressions of those two weeks in November 1983. It was an extraordinary time. For many it was the first time that they had travelled to Central Australia, camped in relatively extreme climatic conditions, met Aboriginal people, seen the inside of the Alice Springs watch-house, and felt the less-than-gentle arm of the Northern Territory police force. In spite of all this, many left feeling energised and inspired by the creativity and effectiveness of women's action. The Pine Gap action was just a beginning.

During those two weeks there were many intense debates about issues that will inevitably affect the development of the women's movement in Australia. In this article, **Jenny Green** provides some explanation and analysis of the issues raised by the Pine Gap action that relate to its location near Alice Springs, and some of the reactions of Aboriginal women who live in the area to the events which occurred.

## Discussions with Aboriginal women

When the national meeting of Women's Action Against Global Violence was held in Alice Springs in July 1983, some Aboriginal women from the local area were involved in discussions about the proposed action in November. They said that they too were worried about Pine Gap and they supported the idea of a women's camp. They also said that there were other issues such as land rights that were of immediate concern to them, and called on white women to support them in their struggles.

In the months preceding the November

camp, local issues of importance to the Aboriginal community meant that Pine Gap was not the foremost issue of discussion within the Aboriginal community. There was little time for discussions with Aboriginal women about the details of the camp.

At a meeting of the combined Aboriginal organisations in Alice Springs, just before the camp, local Aboriginal women came out strongly in support of the Pine Gap action, and organised for their own participation. Without behind-the-scenes support from prominent people in the local Aboriginal community, the women's camp would not have been so successful, and there would have been little Aboriginal involvement.

## 11 November

On 11 November the long cavalcade of women moved towards the gates of Pine Gap, led by Aboriginal women, both local and interstate. Here are some of their impressions\*:

I think it was a real peaceful march, I was real happy when there was no trouble. It was a real good march and everybody, the women, really liked it. Nice peaceful march for all of us, all the womens here. Anybody who missed out on that march, I think they really should have gone along and joined in with the march. There was no anger and no pushing people around.

Some of the Aboriginal women of Alice Springs joined in the march and for the good of the people here, for our children and for their children. That marching protest, we did it for ourselves, and so we can show our march-protest for all of the women here in Alice Springs and the other people.

*Anwerne lheke arrweketye mape aretyeke, marchirreke anwerne, itne marchirrenheke. Yenge ware alhepalheke aretyeke. Mwarre nthurre itne marchirrenheke gatekatwetye. Police mape tneyame. Itne dancirreke, sing songirreke, mperlkere mape.*

(We went to see all the women. We marched, they marched on. I was going along to have a look. They marched on really well as far as the gate. The police were standing there. They danced and sang, the white women).

The presence of some Aboriginal men who came in support of the rally provoked much debate. Though a great disappointment to many women who had expected the march to be 'women only' the participation of these men did raise the very important question of the relationship between the predominantly white women's movement and peace movement, and Aboriginal

\*The Aboriginal women quoted in this article do not wish their names to be disclosed.

communities.

There is an extraordinary parallel between the debates in the Aboriginal community about the role of white people in Aboriginal struggles, and that in the women's movement about the role of men in such actions as the Pine Gap protest. During the Pine Gap camp all the factors in the sex and race hierarchy were immediately apparent. The white women were confronted with the question of whether their views about the involvement of men in such actions were applicable to the Aboriginal community. This really highlights the need to respect the rights of Aboriginal people to self-determination in political, social and cultural matters. An ethnocentric view of feminism cannot be projected onto Aboriginal women.

Ultimately it will be Aboriginal women themselves who decide about the virtues or disadvantages of an alliance with the white women's movement. One Aboriginal woman commented about joint actions between white and Aboriginal women as follows:

It depends on the issue, but I think it's a good thing in as far as the white women who are organising these sort of things approach Aboriginal women about it, because that's the only way that white women are going to find out if they're doing the right thing, and also it gives the Aboriginal women an opportunity to become aware of these issues, and to discuss and decide themselves if they want to be involved. So you're not going to have an argument come up where people say this was a community thing, but Aboriginal people were not invited to take part.

Though there had been support in theory from the organisers of the camp, Women for Survival, for land rights, the actuality of being in Central Australia where the presence of Aboriginal people is so obvious, probably made some of these issues more tangible. The racism workshops in the creek during the few days of orientation preceding the action became irrelevant when the women were faced with the many real-life cross-cultural situations in the following two weeks. This was the first time that such a large scale women's action involving both Aboriginal and white women had taken place, and I think the difficulty of doing this — because of the language differences and different cultural styles of effecting political change — was underestimated by many.

At the gates of Pine Gap permission was given by local traditional owners



The march along the road to Pine Gap on the first day of the action.

to camp on one side of the road. It was requested that country on the other side of the road not be used because of the proximity of Aboriginal sacred sites. Being bounded on one side by the laws relating to the USA Space Research Facility, and on the other side by the requests of the Aboriginal community, was a really potent example of the multiple systems of authority operating in the Central Australian region.

The women chose to break the whitefella laws designed to maintain the secrecy and impenetrability of Pine Gap, and at all times attempted to respect the directives of the Aboriginal community. They also accepted as much guidance as possible from Aboriginal women as to the appropriate-

ness of certain actions over the two weeks. For example, a meeting of Aboriginal women was asked what they thought about white women wearing land rights T-shirts. They strongly recommended that land rights colours and banners should be carried only by Aboriginal women in public demonstrations. I think the care taken in these negotiations will have a positive effect; Aboriginal people have seen that Women for Survival are serious about trying to respect directives from Aboriginal people.

## Jumping the fence

Early in the action 111 Karen Silkwoods went over the fence and had a tea party on the lawns inside the Pine Gap peri-

meter. They then proceeded up the road inside the base, where they were arrested. Few Aboriginal women were present that day, and none wanted to join in the fence-scaling exercise. Confrontation with police and the law is an unfortunate part of everyday life for Aboriginal people in Alice Springs, and to wilfully invite more of it may have seemed like a ludicrous idea to some Aboriginal women. The reactions from the Aboriginal community to this more 'direct action' have been varied — some support and some fear, sympathy, bewilderment . . .

I think it is very frightening for Aboriginal women to go through the fence. I wouldn't go through the fence 'cos I'd be scared. I think those women were very brave to go

through the fence and get arrested – they probably just wanted to show the newspapers what they do. But I'd be only too scared to go through that fence 'cos I know I'll be the first one to get arrested, I know that for sure – for an Aboriginal person, you'd be the first one to get arrested.

*The itelareke anwernehe lyete atyerreytine. The wrong way akwete itelareke. Aterirremele yenge tywekwentye akwete aneke. Alpmileke arrantherre itye anwwerne aterirreme. Mwerre kwete anwerne aneke.*

(I thought they would shoot us today. I thought wrong. Being frightened I was quiet. Someone said to us 'You mob, we're not frightened.' We were still all right.)

*Mpelkere itne mwarre nthurre, anwerne ingkerrinyeke. Meetup irreme mwarre nthurre aneke. Itne nthakenhe way itne thinkirreke parikenge jumpirreytike? Itneke wronganeke. Anwerne kangke ken aremele, anwerne itye atwelheke itnenhe aremele.*

(The white people, they were really good, for all of us. It was good to meet up with them. But why did they think they had to go over the fence? It made trouble for them. We were happy to see it, we clapped our hands seeing them.)

Another local Aboriginal woman commented as follows:

With what happened with the direct confrontation taken with the authority, that certainly did intimidate a lot of Aboriginal women, mainly I think because a lot of Aboriginal women haven't been exposed to these sort of actions before. But I've certainly looked at it in a positive sense that we have been exposed to something like that, because there are the possibilities, the way Aboriginal politics is moving, maybe in about 20 years or so things like that are going to happen. It is good that we've been exposed to that sort of action. But at the same time I'm not saying that Aboriginal women here in Alice Springs have supported that type of action taken by those women at the Camp.

#### Jail

The spectacle of a large group of white women in custody in Alice Springs, and being abused by the Northern Territory police, must have struck some familiar chords in the Aboriginal community. Some people were incredulous that the watch-house could be full of white women when the usual pattern in town is for Aboriginal people to feel the weight of the law. Others were sympathetic, and wondered if the white women had misunderstood what they were letting themselves in for. The Pitjantjatjara women expressed their support by holding a prayer meeting in the foyer of the courthouse, then sitting through the long list of Karens appearing before the magistrate.

#### Participation of Aboriginal women

Throughout the camp there was varying support from Aboriginal women, both local and from the Pitjantjatjara communities. Many Aboriginal women attended the march on 11 November, some participated in the music and dancing, and some just came and had a look at the camp, sat down, had a cup of tea and a chat. There was also behind-the-scenes, tacit support from Aboriginal women in town.

The reactions from the Aboriginal communities to the Pine Gap action were not uniformly positive. A few Aboriginal women were vehement in their accusations that Aboriginal women involved in the protest had been manipulated and did not know what was going on. This demonstrates the important point that there is much complexity within Aboriginal communities, and many varied political, cultural and social viewpoints. In the Northern Territory elections an Aboriginal candidate stood for the Country Liberal Party in an election which was primarily called because the government was affronted by the granting of land rights to the Uluru (Ayers Rock) people. Accepting this diversity helps in understanding the complex dynamics of Central Australian communities.

#### Need for more information

The women's protest has certainly put Pine Gap on the map, both locally and internationally. Many people throughout Central Australia are talking about Pine Gap and establishing their own views. The women's action has involved Aboriginal people in a way that the local peace group has never managed to do. However there is a call for more information about Pine Gap and its functions, particularly from the Aboriginal communities.

To my way, I like to know about, but I wouldn't get to learn straightaway. It's good for me to learn as an Aboriginal person to know that the Pine Gap is there, and what it's there for. Some people think it's a good thing that Pine Gap is there to protect the centre of here, and the other people think it's not a good thing. I like to learn and see what it does for Australia. Australia's a lovely place and we don't want to destroy it. We belong to this place. We won't learn straightaway, we probably might take a long while to get to know it and learn about it.

The Alice Springs community, the peace group, and the Aboriginal communities are now assessing the effects of the Pine Gap camp now that some of the excitement has died down. I asked one woman if she thought there was a danger of backlash directed towards the Aboriginal community following the protest:

Yes, I think there's going to be a backlash for sure, but I think that any strong stand taken by a large group of people that gets the media coverage the way it has, that people are going to feel very angry about it and other people are going to feel very hurt. But I think if people have decided to take stands on whatever issue, I don't believe people just take them, the vast majority of people think first before taking whatever stand they're going to take, and in thinking about that they also think about the consequences. I think if you personally feel very strong about an issue, then you're going to be very strong in whatever stand you take and also be prepared for whatever backlash is going to come out of it in the end.

The November camp has shown that Aboriginal people do see Pine Gap as an

issue that affects them too, even though their views as to appropriate political action for peace may vary. They also see the Pine Gap issue within the context of their prior ownership of the land.

*Aboriginalakenhe apmere kwete anetyeke, itneke bomb lane itne movemiletyeke, takem back apmere itnekenhe kngale alpe-tyeke. Apmere lane anityine Aboriginal. Aboriginal nhenhele itne kitye irreke, horkeman irreke, old man irreke. Itne kitye mape akerte irreke. Itnetetye mayithe irremele nhenhele anekele, aneme lane itne lyete. Yankee mape bomb mpwareke. Itne move on irremele, akngale alpekyeke apmere itneken- hewerne. Room, plenty room anetyine Aboriginalake. Aboriginal mapeke any way unthelanele, kere kangaroo apeke, rabbit apeke. Apmere itneke ityame lane; Aboriginal mapekenhe apmerame nhenhe, apmere Alice Springs mapeke.*

(This country must still belong to Aboriginal people. This bomb here, they must move, go back and take it to their country. This country will be Aboriginal again. Here Aboriginal people were children, here they became old men and old women. They had their children here. The Americans became bosses since they have been here, and they are still here today. Yankee mob made bombs. They must move on, take it back to their country. Then there will be plenty of room for Aboriginal people, for them to go any way they want, hunting for kangaroos or for rabbits. This is not their country here, it belongs to Aboriginal people, Alice Springs mob.)

#### Northern Territory politics

The Pine Gap camp coincided with major political issues in the Northern Territory. On 11 November, the same day as the women's march to the gates, land rights title for the traditional owners of Uluru (Ayers Rock) was announced.

The overwhelming victory of the Country Liberal Party in the hastily-called Northern Territory elections on 3 December clearly demonstrates the polarisation and conservatism of the Territory. (Nineteen seats went to the Country Liberal Party, and 6 seats to the Labor Party). The Chief Minister, Paul Everingham, in his post-election glory, immediately confirmed the introduction of the new Northern Territory Criminal Code, which is by all accounts a draconian piece of legislation which will greatly disadvantage Aboriginal people.

Those who support land rights, say no to uranium mining and question the idea that north Australia should be developed at all costs are a minority with little voice. The need for the left to reassess its position, and work out where its support lies, is obvious.

Those women living in Central Australia are left trying to assess the repercussions of a very eventful early summer. Hopefully actions like the Pine Gap women's camp have helped to politicise women who came from interstate about issues in the Northern Territory, as well as injecting some of the locals with the energy to continue fighting with the added hope of strong links interstate and internationally.

## Pitjantjatjara women and PINE GAP.

Diana James reports on the participation of Pitjantjatjara women in the Pine Gap action.

A hundred or so Pitjantjatjara women travelled long distances to be part of the women's peace demonstration at Pine Gap. They came from the Pitjantjatjara homelands which cover a large portion of the top north western part of South Australia. This land is held under inalienable freehold title by the Pitjantjatjara and Yankuntatjara people.

The women came in small groups in private cars and trucks. No buses had been organised for them and no outsider was actively pushing their involvement, as has been alleged.

I have lived and worked with the Pitjantjatjara women over the last nine years and have become reasonably fluent with their language. They requested me to interpret at some of the meetings between them and other Pine Gap demonstrators. At these meetings the Pitjantjatjara women expressed their reasons for joining the peace demonstration as follows:

We want the Americans to take their war and instruments of war back to their own country; their fight is nothing to do with us. We want this land and to look after it well. We want to smell the clean fresh air blowing over our land, not like at Maralinga where we smelt the black dust from their bombs. Many of our relatives died after the Maralinga bombs were dropped and the black dust blew over our country. We want these hard thinking men of power and war to go away. We're not like them – rich and powerful – but we want to be heard.

We want our children to grow up safely and look after our land. Old people gave us this land to care for; it's not for war. People want to live here quietly. They should fight their wars in their own countries. We understand the war is between the Americans and the Russians, they drop one bomb and then the others drop a bomb on them. They can do that in their own country.

The Americans didn't ask us if they could come here. They didn't tell us what they would build here. Pine Gap is part of their war machine; they only think of fighting and death. They don't listen to the women of their own tribe asking them to stop fighting.

Aboriginal traditional law controlled men's fighting, the law was very strict. It's our way when our men start fighting for the women to say stop because we are thinking of ourselves and our children. The men at Pine Gap who

*Diana James has lived and worked with Pitjantjatjara women over the last nine years.*



'De-fencing' exercises at Pine Gap preceding the real thing.

think only of war, should listen to the women of the world, Aboriginal women and white women who want to bring up their children in peace.

The Pitjantjatjara women were distressed by the actions of some demonstrators that led to women being arrested and roughly treated by police. Because of these repeated confrontations with police the Pitjantjatjara women decided not to camp at Pine Gap with other demonstrators.

Their concern over the actions of the demonstrators led them to call for a meeting of all groups of women involved – Pitjantjatjara, Arrernte, Alice Springs women and campers at Pine Gap. This meeting was held in Roe Creek at the end of the first week of the demonstration. Initially an atmosphere of tension and misunderstanding was generated between all groups present because of unclear translation.

The issues were not clear cut. All women involved in the peace demonstration, whatever their race or creed,

had different notions of what actions were appropriate and had been involved to differing degrees in actions that had taken place at Pine Gap. Towards the end of this meeting I was asked to translate the considered view of one of the Pitjantjatjara women present. She said:

We understand that the Pine Gap installations are white man's instruments of war and are protected by your [European] laws. You have decided to act as you did, breaking down the gates and going into Pine Gap, because this is your way to act against your law. But our way is to sit and talk, to have meetings with people and try to persuade them of our point of view. The way we talked for our land rights to the South Australian government. We would have liked to sit down outside the gates of Pine Gap and have meetings with the Americans and the Australian government. We wanted to tell them to take Pine Gap back to America.

We agree with all you women on the need for peace, but we cannot take part in actions that lead to arrests and confrontation with the police.

We are glad we came to join together with you in saying we want peace in this land.

# Sunrise on the corporate farm

Biotechnology, the means to manipulate living material, is one of the 'sunrise' industries — capital-intensive, knowledge-intensive industries serving newly created markets. The development of these industries is being promoted as the solution to Australia's economic problems. In this article, Geoff Lawrence looks at how biotechnology and its products are increasingly coming under the control of private corporations, and the implications this has for Australian agriculture.

Recently the *National Farmer*, the paper priding itself on its objective reporting of issues concerning Australian agriculture, generously praised the latest developments in biotechnology. Farmers were 'set to win on the magic gene race' the headline began, and the article went on to describe the potential benefits to our agricultural industries. The list included a commercially produced vaccine for foot-and-mouth disease, new growth stimulants to lift meat and milk production, organisms capable of degrading residual herbicides, new techniques in artificial insemination and embryo transfer, the production of new plant species capable of growth on saline or alkaline soils, and, as the piece de resistance, the development of nitrogen fixing capacity in non-leguminous plants such as wheat, maize and oats.

With these sorts of promises it is clear to see why there has been widespread support and enthusiasm for the new techniques. Farmers, we are told, will be able to increase output, improve productivity, open up once marginal lands to cultivation, improve the genetic pool of their plants and livestock and save on pesticide, weedicide and fertiliser costs.

But will they? Very little attention has been paid to the likely impact of

*Geoffrey Lawrence is a lecturer in sociology at Riverina College of Advanced Education.*

biotechnology and genetic engineering on the structure of Australian agriculture. In this paper I will make one straightforward point — that the biological promise of the new techniques and products is precisely that, a biological promise. Once we consider the economic, social and political implications of biotechnology we may be forced to accept a less palatable conclusion — that Australian agriculture will become increasingly dominated by large-scale farming and that many of the new biotechnology products will increase the dependency of farmers on agribusiness.

## Biotechnology Today

In past decades, biological research in Australia has been a boon to farmers. Genetically superior seeds and animal breeds have been developed to suit regional conditions; the Myxomatosis virus wiped out rabbit plagues and put untold millions of dollars back into the farmers' pockets; agronomic research led to the development of improved pastures; the *cactoblastis* moth devoured the prickly pear which, at the time, was devouring Australia. And so on. All evidence suggests that the public research dollar has gone a long way in biological experimentation in Australia<sup>1</sup>. Much of the research undertaken by scientists from the CSIRO, state Departments of Agriculture, research institutes, and from universities and colleges has solved problems faced by all farmers irrespective of the size of their holdings. That is biological research has, to a large extent, provided widespread benefits and has been neutral in relation to scale of agricultural operations. Such research has helped to sustain the 'family farm'. The applied character of much of the agricultural research in Australia has meant that biological innovations, developed by the state through publicly-funded research, have become immediately available to all farmers.

With genetic engineering the nature of things is changed — in more ways than one. What genetic engineering allows for is the deliberate molecular recombination of DNA, the genetic code. The insertion of foreign nucleic acid into the chromosomes of selected

organisms results in a genetic recombination and the production of organisms not previously found in nature. This is 'new' life. Genetic manipulation can proceed until desirable features are manifested by the new organisms. So far, so good. It is at this stage that the biologists can promise the farmers so much.

The next, down market, stage from genetic engineering is the application of the new inventions. This is the field of biotechnology, defined by the Australian Science and Technology Council (ASTEC) as 'the application of scientific and engineering principles to the processing of materials by biological agents to provide goods and services.'<sup>2</sup> This is where the trouble begins. For whom should new products be developed? What types of products should be marketed? Who will do the marketing? Answers to these questions have not been forthcoming, but all the evidence points to the increased privatisation of biological innovations by large multinational corporations. The reason is not hard to guess. A recent study in the USA has forecast that the total retail value of all USA seeds incorporating genetic improvements will increase from USA\$8 million in 1985 to USA\$6800 million by the year 2000.<sup>3</sup> Profits are there to be made and it is the large corporations which have the money to pour into biological experimentation.

In Australia the situation is a little different. Most of our biological research is undertaken in public research institutions. But these are now beginning to feel the pressure from local business and from the federal government to open their doors to private enterprise. Local and overseas companies have been busily negotiating with scientists in the CSIRO and universities to develop biological organisms and products suitable for commercial application. And it is this trend towards 'collaborative' research and the gaining by companies of exclusive rights over the products of such research, which may lead to a fundamental alteration of state-funded rural research in Australia.

The Labor government has decided that it is the 'sunrise' industries (which include biotechnology) where Australia's

economic future lies. Midway through 1983 the Minister for Science and Technology announced the formation of a National Biotechnology Program under which funds, running into millions of dollars, would be provided to firms capable of developing biotechnology in Australia. The Minister, Barry Jones, stressed that the public and private spheres would need to be more closely integrated, that state-funded research would need to be more 'responsive' and that taxation and other incentives (including a re-examination of patent rights) would be provided to stimulate private investment in biotechnology. But will Australia gain from this chromosome-led recovery? More specifically, will all farmers gain from developments in genetic engineering? I have attempted, below, to identify a number of issues which must be considered before we can come to any conclusions.

### Corporations and patents

The changing relationships between the state and private enterprise must be of concern to all people interested in preserving public research facilities and in preventing the introduction of plant patent legislation. The government has acknowledged that the potential social returns to rural research justify continued public investment.<sup>4</sup> But the amount of funding, and the areas into which research monies flow, have been contentious issues since the late 70s. Within the CSIRO and university sectors, for example, there has been a heightened struggle over research priorities as successive federal governments have acted to divert funds from general agricultural experimentations.<sup>5</sup> The rationale has been that rural industries have been in decline relative to other industries (such as mining) and that consequently, state funding of agriculture must be rationalised. The fiscal problems of the state, resulting in the paring of funds for both pure and applied rural research, has placed pressure on public research institutions to scale down their traditional areas of research and to enter collaborative arrangements with private companies. The trend towards jointly-funded research and the marketing of new products by private organisations will be fostered under the aforementioned Biotechnology Program. In both direct and symbolic ways the companies linking in with public research. It is they who can set the research agenda, for it is they who, so it goes, recognise the commercial possibilities of (and can market) new products.

A recent casualty of the redirection of CSIRO funding has been wind-power research. Farmers, as well as the ecologically and energy conscious, should be asking the government why it directed the CSIRO to pull out of a program which was amongst the most advanced in the world. The research had direct

applicability to rural power generation. It could have cut input costs on most of Australia's farms. One must question whether the new glamour area of biotechnology will be capable of doing this.

Indeed, if the companies presently engaged in research in Australia have their way — and patent legislation is passed by the government — the result will be a bonanza for the agribusiness firms. With exclusive rights over the manufacture and sale of particular organisms, the firms producing biological inputs will be able to manipulate price levels, thereby limiting the sale of the new innovations to only the most wealthy farmers. And we are likely to see in Australia, as they have in the USA, a rush by the large pharmaceutical and petrochemical companies to purchase seed companies as part of their attempts to vertically integrate. Plant patent legislation in the USA and UK protects the biological private property of the corporations and thereby ensures monopoly rights over the new and productive species being developed by geneticists. Under conditions fostered by patent rights, the Shell Oil Company has now become the world's largest seed breeder,<sup>6</sup> and similar firms are jockeying for positions. The threat, according to one group of researchers at Cornell University, is that 'public breeding programs (will be) reduced to the provision of inbred lines for the use of private breeders and to an exclusive preoccupation with basic research.'<sup>7</sup>

In Australia, the Myer Committee on technological change acknowledged that 'plant variety protection... would require a re-evaluation of the rationale and role of public plant breeding institutions.'<sup>8</sup> It considered that firms would not invest in biological research unless they could be guaranteed commercial advantage. The more recent report of the Balderstone Committee on agricultural policy goes one step further. It not only recommends that private researchers be afforded increased access to publically sourced funds but emphatically states that plant variety rights should be introduced in Australia. Given the Labor government's interest in the development of biotechnology and the intensive lobbying by industry for patent rights, it might not be long before legislation is passed in Australia.

### Patch-up research

With corporations becoming increasingly interested in biotechnology there is the danger that many of the real problems of agriculture will be exacerbated, rather than eased, by the new research strategies. In developing salt-tolerant varieties of plants to overcome the effects of over-fertilisation the companies and government institutions involved in such research are ignoring the real problems. Instead of salt tolerance, research could be undertaken to develop plants requiring no chemicals. But is this likely? In the USA, Monsanto has

succeeded in producing a variety of lucerne which has resistance to toxic weed killers. But there is a catch. The lucerne cannot be grown without the toxic weed killer it was developed to tolerate! If it is, it reverts to its 'wild' form and production decreases accordingly.<sup>10</sup> Monsanto has, it seems, designed the ultimate agribusiness package. Not only must farmers purchase the latest seeds to keep up production levels but they must also purchase the weedicide, whether they want it or not.

In a similar vein the CSIRO has expressed its intention of conducting herbicide resistance research, that is, of developing seeds which can withstand a good soaking with agricultural chemicals. There is little evidence of the questioning of the use of herbicides, pesticides and insecticides. These are the 'givens' in the research agenda. When there is little interest in reducing the use of chemicals, but rather in producing plants capable of tolerating them, there are no prizes for guessing who is advantaged. This research fits really into the agribusiness model of agricultural development. But it is this very model which has, in practice, been responsible for the poisoning of lands, the leaching of chemicals into waterways, the death of marine life and many of the horrors Rachel Carson was only beginning to guess at in *Silent Spring*. Moreover, there is no attempt to challenge the capitalist system of agricultural production based, as it is, upon monocultural agronomic practices and the pursuit of maximum profit. Instead of attempting to reduce the reliance of farmers upon monocultures, genetic engineers are being asked to reproduce plants that can be grown even closer together and can withstand even more toxic doses of agrichemicals. So, as it stands, much of the new biotechnological research is attempting to patch up the holes in the already threadbare garment of capitalist agriculture. By accepting the present structure of farming and food manufacture, researchers are conducting research which will undermine the family farm and will put increasingly large wads of money into the pockets of agribusiness firms. In regard to plant agriculture, McQueen has warned:

The combination of patent protection for seeds with the creation of preferential markets for such seeds, a high concentration of control within the seed industry, and an emphasis in plant breeding research on the demands of a high input and intensively mechanised agriculture will lead to a situation where mechanism and chemically dependent crops are not presented to the farmer as an alternative, but rather as an imperative.<sup>11</sup>

Biotechnology will retain its biological promise — imagine if farmers could eliminate fertiliser costs by utilising nitrogen-fixing cereals, or could reduce reliance upon pesticides and weedicides by planting more hardy, disease resistant crops. But the reality is that, in the context of corporate

domination of the agricultural input sector, new plants are likely to be developed only where they complement the interests (and for 'interests' read 'profits') of the large multinationals presently engaged in genetic engineering. Corporations, backed up by patent rights over new life forms will be in a no-lose situation. If the new innovations threaten other more profitable products of the same corporation they can simply be withheld from market. If other firms attempt to market the product they can be sued or legally restrained. If the corporation decides to market the product it will do so knowing it has monopoly rights and can make super profits. Such are the conditions of free enterprise within advanced capitalism!

If the state in Australia were to become committed to public control of biotechnology and were even to go one step further and actually market the products of its research (ie selling them to farmers at non inflated prices) there may be the opportunity of providing benefits throughout the rural community. But this is not, as I have pointed out, likely to be the case. With corporate control of the new inputs, only the richer, more capital intensive farmers will be able to afford the new innovations. They have the financial strength (and credit worthiness) to outlay funds, they have the managerial expertise, and they have the links with the food processors and pastoral houses beyond the farm gate.

The seemingly innocent decision by state-funded research bodies to indulge in collaborative research with private companies will rebound on agriculture; it will force it in the direction of greater capital intensity and leave the family farmer in a marginal position economically.

### Fecundin — an example

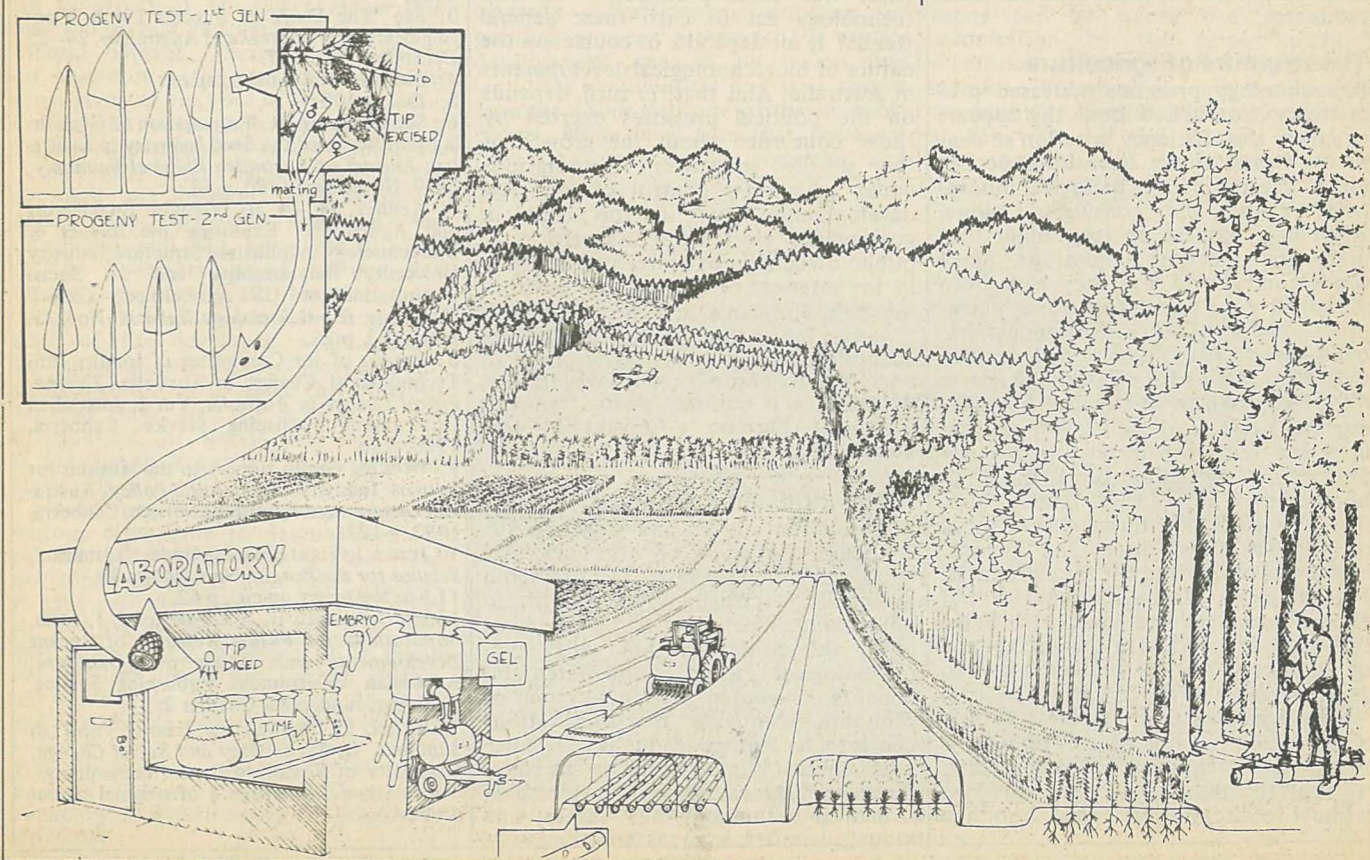
One means of demonstrating the differential impact of biotechnology on agriculture is to consider the newly released fertility vaccine, Fecundin. Developed by the CSIRO's Division of Animal Production and released under licence by Cooper (a division of the multinational Wellcome), Fecundin provides farmers with a means of improving lambing percentages in their flocks. The new vaccine\* stimulates the production of antibodies in the ewe, partially neutralising a hormone which controls egg release. The ovaries of the sheep, upon treatment, produce a higher than normal proportion of two ovulations per oestrous cycle resulting in the birth of twin lambs in a much higher proportion of breeding ewes. As a consequence the potential number of lambs turned off at the end of the season is increased dramatically.

Can all the lamb producers cheer?

\* In technical terms Fecundin is a steroid protein conjugate (an immunogen) which, when injected into breeding ewes produces an antibody response and increased ovulation rate.

As the publicity blurb from Cooper acknowledges, Fecundin is not suitable for all farmers. One reason concerns management. Unless very high standards of management can be employed, the treatment may be wasted. Some ewes must be given up to three shots of the vaccine at specific times before mating, imposing a rigid time schedule on the farmer. If the treatment is not continued each year fertility in the flock falls back to its original level. Importantly, as extra lambs arrive the flock must be handled as a twin-bearing flock. Extra food, shelter, water and supervision must be provided to ensure lamb survival. Multiple births are, as well, a source of management concern. Accurate records of births and deaths must be kept so that unsuitable ewes can be culled in future seasons.

A second reason not all farmers will rejoice is the cost of the treatment. At \$1.30 per dose, Fecundin represents a large investment for the lamb producer — especially given the number of injections each ewe must receive. Fecundin is also a sensitive product. It must be stored at between 2° and 8°C, but not frozen, and must be protected from light. It must be injected separately — it cannot, for example, be injected with worm treatments or with other vaccines. The product will, therefore, be of greatest advantage to the producer with an already large operation — one who is able to absorb the high cost of treatment and who can integrate the new management strategies into an already



advanced lambing program.

The third reason for concern is the nature of the market for lambs. Cooper maintains that its product will be capable of boosting the profit levels of farmers who carefully apply the new technique. The assumption is that more lambs will mean greater returns. The problem for lamb producers is that they face a saturated market, one which is, according to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 'inherently unstable and uncertain'. During 1983 the price of lamb in Australia dropped from \$1.50/kg in May to a low 95c/kg in August — at a time when farmers expected seasonal peak prices. The explanation for the price fall was that the home market was flooded by an unexpectedly high number of last season's lambs. But the real problem is that the lamb market has weakened over time. Australia already has one of the highest levels of meat consumption of any country in the world, and it is unlikely that we will experience a sudden upward swing in demand. Nor is there any certainty that export markets will improve. Indeed, is they do, it is thought that New Zealand producers will be in the best position to fill the new orders.

The promise of greater returns will lead many farmers to utilise Fecundin. Some, the better prepared, may manage to increase their share of the market. But it is doubtful, in the context of our unplanned agricultural economy, whether all producers will gain from the new technology. In fact, as I will argue below, biotechnology is likely to cause headaches for more than our lamb producers.

### The structure of agriculture

Biotechnology promises increased productivity. Considered alone this appears to satisfy the efficiency criterion so dear to the hearts of our agricultural economists. The problem is biological innovations cannot be considered alone. Australian farmers operate under economically uncertain conditions. Since the Second World War they have been placed in what is referred to as a cost-price squeeze. The cost of inputs has increased at a very much faster rate than the prices received for outputs. Farmers have responded to the squeeze by utilising the latest innovations, hoping that increased output will more than cover the costs of the innovations. But their hopes have not, in all cases, been realised. Australian farmers have faced traditionally low price and income elasticities of demand for their products. Indeed, many of the markets for our export products are close to being fully supplied. When a greater volume of produce enters the market it acts to depress returns to the farmers.

Our agricultural producers are in a cyclical bind. Farmers are forced to adopt new technology in an attempt to boost output. Individually this is a rational strategy. But when produce

floods an already oversupplied market it can force a price drop leading to the economic ruin of the more marginal farmers. The result is that agriculture becomes more capital intensive, farm size increases, and fewer farmers are left to share the agricultural pie. The average size of Australian agricultural properties have grown by 27% in the period 1966-7 to 1980-1. There has been an associated decrease in the number of farm enterprises of some 12% during those years (from 200 000 enterprises in 1966-7 to 176 000 in 1980-1). Labour employed in the rural sector has declined by 13% during the same period.<sup>12</sup>

These changes have profoundly altered the level of economic activity in many country towns. One leading American rural sociologist has made some interesting observations about the outcomes of post World War II agricultural technology:

[As the] cost minimising, productivity increasing technologies became more generalised they have several important effects. First, utilisation of new technology tended to become compulsory for all farmers...Second, increased aggregate production lowered product prices...Third, the minimum farm size at which technological economies of scale could be realised tended to increase, placing small and then medium-sized farmers at an increasing disadvantage relative to their larger counterparts. Finally, increased labour productivity reduced employment opportunities in agriculture and shifted farm returns away from returns to labour and towards returns to capital.<sup>13</sup>

These same structural conditions have led to the problems which have beset our rural producers. Will biotechnology act to curb these general trends? It all depends, of course, on the nature of biotechnological developments in Australia. And that, in turn, depends on the political pressures exerted by those concerned about the growth of the sunrise industries. Corporations could grab total control of the new developments. But so too could a government elected on a platform of public ownership of biotechnology. It is in the interests of farmers, the environmentally conscious, and those who wish to arrest corporate domination of our economy, to lobby the government in an effort to ensure patent legislation is defeated and ensure public research does not become a servant of corporate interests.

### Innovation and inequality

It would be unjust and improper to condemn the work of our molecular biologists and geneticists. Their research is capable of creating great benefits to humankind. What we must be conscious of is the context within which biotechnological research is conducted and benefits distributed. Within a system of economic inequality new innovations can lead to further inequalities if corporate control is encouraged by the state. Biotechnology cannot be considered as a neutral technology but, rather, one

which can be monopolised by interests bent on extracting maximum profits from the sale of new biological innovations. The state has the capacity to reduce the reliance of our farming community on agribusiness inputs. The most effective way to achieve this would be to continue public research into matters agricultural and to distribute the fruits of research through state-run organisations such as the Departments of Agriculture. This is, after all, the way in which previous biological breakthroughs have found their way to the farmers' paddocks.

The reason that corporations have shown so much interest in biotechnology is that, in circumstances where patent rights and other protection operates, new innovations can prove to be extremely profitable. Should the corporations — via biotechnology — be allowed to further penetrate the rural sector we are likely to see the development of a more capital intensive agriculture, the movement of a greater number of farmers from the land, and the increasing domination of agriculture by agribusiness input industries.

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# Beyond the limits

**Chain Reaction** continues to foster debate on how environmentalism fits into radical political and economic thought. In this article, **Keith Redgen** responds to an essay, 'Limits to Growth', by Ted Trainer, published in *Chain Reaction* 34 (October–November 1983). Further contributions are welcome from readers on the issues raised in this article.

Ted Trainer argues that the environment movement must 'become involved in much wider social and political controversies, especially those involving a call for basic social change'. He sees this as being necessary apparently for two main reasons. On the one hand the economy of the developed world depends primarily on growth, and even our current level of development uses up resources at an unsustainable rate and causes vast and irreparable environmental damage. Therefore to achieve an environmentally sound society we must strike at the root of that economic system and replace the constant growth and development with 'de-development'.

On the other hand there is the problem of unequal distribution of goods and resources between the developed and the Third World. 'We' in the developed world become rich at the expense of the people of the Third World. The material living standard of the developed world cannot be universalised since there are not enough resources to make this possible. So the only way to achieve a just distribution of goods and resources is for 'us' to lower our material living standards.

Most of Trainer's essay deploys various arguments to demonstrate the second of these points, that the developed world is developed because it 'rips off' the Third World and forces it to follow an economically self-destructive path. It seems to be taken for granted that we cannot sustain or universalise 'our' current level of material development, let alone tolerate

*Keith Redgen is a member of the Chain Reaction collective. This article developed as a result of discussions among the collective in Melbourne.*

any more growth. However, it should be noted that there is a rather complex debate concerning the possible environmental viability of high material living standards, especially with the application of alternative energy sources and rational and effective resource management.

### Not just rich and poor

Leaving that debate aside, Trainer seems to see the world as a very simple place divided into two camps, the developed and the Third World. The problems of the world are located around this division, the developed world attaining and maintaining its affluence by exploitation and manipulation of the Third World which sinks further and further into poverty. Surely this is an extremely simplistic analysis of a very complex global economy. It ignores the very real differences between countries that could be regarded as developed and between those which could be classed as Third World. In terms of any particular category — affluence, economic or political power, prospects for future development and so on — no two countries are identical and it is absurd to lump them into one of two possible camps. While it is true that there are rich countries and poor countries, and

that rich countries use an inequitable share of the world's resources, there are not just rich and poor.

Trainer would have us believe that the only manipulation that occurs is manipulation of the Third World by developed countries. But there is also manipulation between developed countries, as for example USA manipulation of the Australian or West European economies; and also between Third World countries. Some Third World countries, particularly oil-exporting ones, are much more powerful and influential than those with very few natural resources. To complicate matters even more, much of the manipulation is not done by countries, or even multinationals based in particular countries, but by transnational corporations whose base is in no particular country, developed or not.

To understand the contemporary situation we have to look to history, specifically the history of colonisation and neo-colonisation. Many of the problems Third World countries face today can be traced back to their colonisation by the empire-building European nations in the eighteenth century. Colonisation saw traditional communities divided by borders drawn at the whim of the colonial powers, infrastructure and transport systems



The Ford factory in Bataan Export Processing Zone in the Philippines. Third World countries encourage transnational corporations.

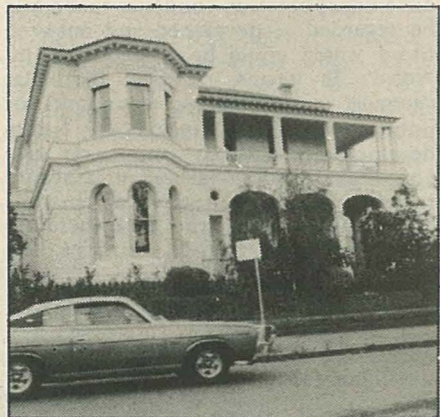
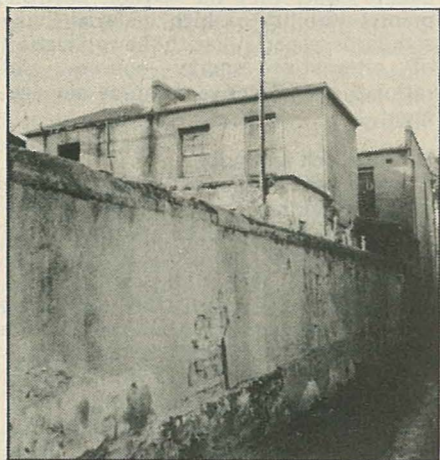
designed to provide easy access to ports, the introduction of cash-cropping, and an urban middle class. These factors resulted in the alienation of whole populations from their land and traditional cultures. This process was continued after the Second World War when the USA used the growing independence movements in most of Africa, Asia and Latin America to increase their influence on the world's political and economic system. More recently some formerly Third World countries have managed significant economic development (Japan, Brazil) and are now in a position to engage in their own local imperialism; the oil exporters are largely responsible for the massive and destructive debt of many of the most impoverished nations; while some developed countries (Britain) appear on the verge of losing their 'developed' status.

### Historical explanations

To start with a simplified view of the world will inevitably lead to simplistic explanations. Trainer's explanation is that the 'separate problems' of the world (everything from Third World impoverishment, the need for nuclear arms and social breakdown) 'are best understood as different manifestations of the one basic mistake, which is our determination to have material living standards that are unnecessarily high'. Given what has been said above it should be clear that 'our' high living standards do not cause Third World poverty. Rather the unjust and complex division of the world must be explained historically.

It is not 'us' overconsuming that cause this situation to come about. However, it could be argued that we sustain it by overconsumption and our determination to maintain our high material living standard. But then surely the overconsumption and determination themselves require explanation. Let us look more closely at this. First, our high material living standard has historical causes of its own. Just as capitalism required colonialism and imperialism to sustain its growth, it also required a market for the goods that it produced in the colonies. That market was in the 'developed' countries, the home bases of empires. Nobody decided to adopt a more affluent lifestyle. Rather a new structure of need was created in developed countries and has been constantly recreated since by increasingly sophisticated advertising and other techniques. While it is clear that this affluence was and is preferable to the impoverishment of the colonies it is not affluence which caused or causes that impoverishment. Rather they are both caused by the same thing — capitalism on a global scale.

Trainer appears to concede this when he says 'it is essential to recognise that the fundamental source of



**Wealth, poverty and needs.** From top: wealth in Malaysia; poverty in Australia; a Melbourne mansion; would you buy a...

these difficulties is our economic system'. He locates two 'basic faults', that 'our economic system cannot tolerate anything but growth', and that 'it is an economy in which what is produced, who gets it and what industries are developed are determined by what makes most profit'. This may be largely true, but Trainer goes on to claim that 'it is always much more profitable to produce what the relatively rich want than what the poor need'. But it is not at the level of consumption and demand that explanations should be sought. What 'the relatively rich want' is determined by what is produced rather than the other way around. And surely growth, at least in principle, could be achieved without huge disparities in wealth and poverty. In fact the world's poor represent a huge untapped potential market.

### Consumption patterns

The basic fault of the argument seems to be the assumption that the production and distribution of resources throughout the world is governed by free market forces, supply and demand, and all that is needed is some regulation and self-control on the part of Western consumers to make sure there is enough to go around. If we don't buy it then they will sell it to the Third World, cheap. In fact the market forces, supply and demand, have been created, and consumption patterns, and consequently growth are built into this system. What is growing is not essentially consumption in the developed world but capitalist enterprises, chiefly transnational corporations.

Consumption patterns are thus largely explained with reference to larger elements of the economic system of which they form a part. This brings us to the second point. For who is the 'we' that overconsumes and has determination to maintain high material living standards. Trainer seems to forget, or only remembers in passing, that within both developed and Third World countries there are large disparities of wealth and consumption. This is seen as little more than a side-effect of affluence and the pursuit of growth. Consequently it is also something, along with other 'forms of social breakdown' that could be cured by a reduction in living standards. However, it is not wealth which creates poverty, but both are created by an economic system which is class-based and distributes rewards according to its own needs.

Further, the economy does not simply give growth and increasing affluence to the developed world and poverty to the Third World. In fact it creates rich and poor in all countries and in recent times the tendency has been for increasing polarisation within rather than between countries. We are all aware of the crisis of capitalism, both from the publicity it has received



**Development in the Philippines — the infrastructures of capitalism.**

and its effect on our own lives. One of the most noticeable of these effects is decreasing affluence, massive unemployment, increasing prices not matched by wages, cutbacks in state-provided services, and so on. Meanwhile, wealthy elites all over the world have been doing rather well. (Has Trainer simply missed all this?) The crisis of capitalism is not caused by consumption. Where consumption patterns in developed countries were once manipulated to satisfy capitalism's need for expanded markets, lower consumption levels are now enforced.

### Alternative lifestyles

What then of Trainer's proffered solution to all of the world's ills, to voluntarily decrease consumption in the developed world by the adoption of alternative lifestyles? The first thing to note is that even if it was conceivable it would not necessarily be desirable. It is true that our economy depends on growth and fairly high consumption levels. The economy of Third World countries also depends on production for the developed world. Whether or not this is desirable it is true that a sudden large reduction in consumption would result in economic chaos and would be extremely destructive. Millions would be thrown out of work not just in industries producing for the consumer market but in all sectors of the economy, and the Third World would also suffer economic devastation. Any strategy to reduce consumption must be not only democratic but carefully planned.

This is probably less important than the impossibility of Trainer's vision. As has already been emphasised, there is no 'we' in the developed world who live in a similar state of affluence, education, political awareness and so on. Rather, there are extremes of wealth and poverty, with most of us being somewhere in between. Clearly a similar degree of material sacrifice cannot be demanded

of the poor as of the rich. But Trainer seems to be demanding a reversal of traditional progressive Western political and social objectives which have been to raise the living standards of the less well off, to achieve equality with the affluent.

What is being suggested is that those who are now affluent should voluntarily reduce their consumption to a level closer to those who are now poor. This would require two things. On the one hand the poor should abandon their goal of affluence and the dream of a middle class existence either through individual hard work or collective political action (trade unions etc). Given the nature of developed societies where the poor live surrounded by affluence and wealth as a social goal has been internalised in all of us by the institutions of hegemony (schools, media, advertising, etc) this seems to be an outrageous and hopelessly utopian goal. Even if it were reasonable to expect the poor to no longer strive for wealth, those material aspirations are not going to be voluntarily abandoned.

On the other hand, those who are already affluent are just as unlikely to accept the call to voluntarily reduce their material well-being. The rich traditionally go to great lengths to defend their wealth and have never seemed less likely to accept the philosophy of 'living simply so that others may simply live'. The point is that it is not individuals through their separate actions and choices that create a society and its economic system. Individuals are the product of the social and economic world in which they live and their choices are largely mapped out for them by this world. While it may be possible for some specific individuals in special situations, such as university teaching, to escape from the needs structure created by this economic and social system, and 'drop out' or adopt alternative lifestyles, this

decision is simply not even available to the majority. (And it should be remembered that even universities and the university environment have been created, as has their function as centres of criticism isolated from any real contact with, or effect on, social structures).

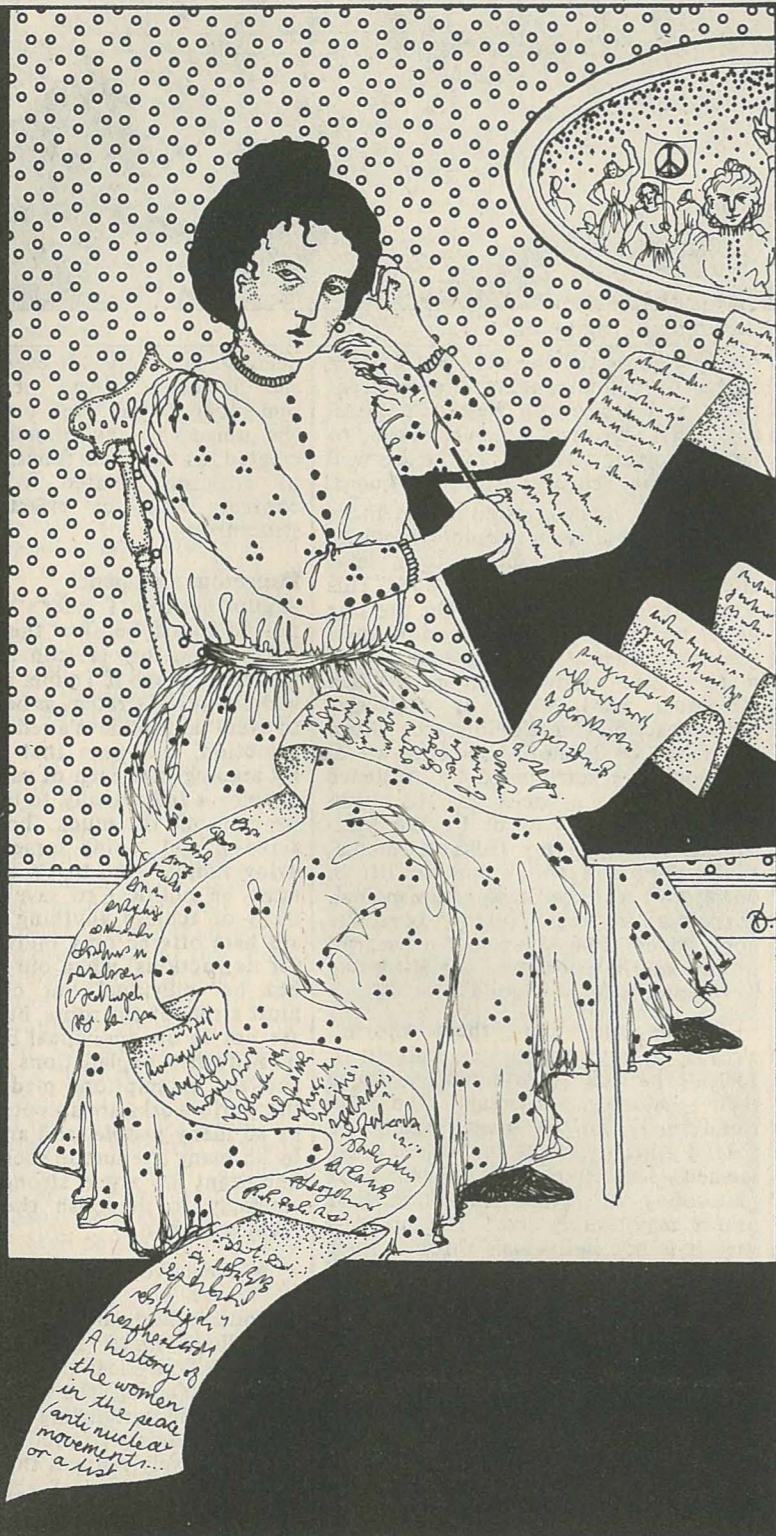
### Dangerous arguments

Arguments like Trainer's are dangerous not so much because they are wrong, but because they are convincing. Indeed it is hard to tell if Trainer may see some wider political strategy as being necessary to eventually achieve a reduction in consumption. But then that is the point. By arguing that each of us (middle class people) is individually to blame because we consume too much, then the road to activism and 'doing something' lies in living simply. And that's all. Indeed we must be political to save the environment or achieve anything else. But we are here offered only individual actions (or non-actions) when our politics must not be individual but collective. We must strike at the roots, but those roots are not in our individual lifestyles. The individualist explanations and strategy and the assumptions made about how the world works are accepted as 'natural' by so many people, and are propagated by so many avenues in society, that it is important to argue strongly and convincingly to demolish these myths — again and again.

Whatever voluntary simplicity may do to relieve the guilty consciences of individuals and allow them to express themselves more fully without the burden of physical possessions, it will do little to change the world. The effort involved in untangling oneself from consumer society in even a very limited way effectively reduces the potential to work in any political activity that is operating with a more realistic perspective.

# The growth of eco-feminism

DEBORAH KELLY



The women's protest at Pine Gap in November 1983 was but one of numerous actions taken by women in recent years in opposition to environmental destruction and the arms race. Ariel Kay Salleh looks at the growth in the past twenty years of an 'eco-feminist' consciousness and the many groups, protests and published writings which stem from it.

At its most obvious level, women's ecological caring and anger concerns human survival itself: reproductive risks, and dangers to public and occupational health arising from careless use of technology and its byproducts. Thus, in the USA as early as 1962 an astonishing series of legal challenges to large corporations from individual housewives, mothers and grandmothers was underway: *Mary Hays v Consolidated Edison*, *Rose Gaffney v Pacific Gas*, *Jeannie Honicker v Nuclear Regulatory Commission*, *Kay Drey v Dresden Nuclear Power Plant*, *Dolly Weinhold v Nuclear Regulatory Commission at Seabrook*<sup>1</sup>. In 1974 occurred the unquiet death of Karen Silkwood, employee and union activist at Kerr-McGee's Oklahoma plutonium-processing plant — another woman who would not remain silent.

Very soon, the question of self-determination came into focus as the continuum of the domination and exploitation of natural resources, of women, and of coloured peoples was recognised. Magazine pieces on male supremacy and hierarchical structures in the environmental movement appeared, and arguments for collectivity, interdependence and decentralised campaign networks were developed. Sometimes separatism was advocated as the solution to this male tendency to control. In Paris, Françoise D'Eaubonne's *La femme avant le patriarcat*, and in New York, the theologian Rosemary Reuther's *New Woman New Earth* were published in 1975. Both celebrated the social value of nurturance and

Ariel Kay Salleh lectures in sociology at the University of Wollongong, NSW, and is author of a number of articles on contemporary movements and social change. See also 'Feminism as ecology' (forthcoming) and 'Deeper than Deep-Ecology' in D Bennet (ed), *Environment Ethics and Ecology*, ANU Press, 1984 (forthcoming).

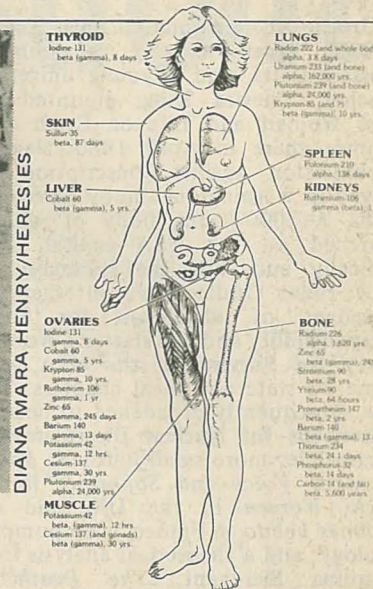
explored the primordial affinity of women to household (in Greek, *oikos*, the etymological origin of the word *ecology*), habitat and Earth's natural cycles. A conjectural history of the self-deforming, appropriative and destructive culture of patriarchy was drawn. A further French contribution along these lines was Anne-Marie de Vilaine's philosophical article 'La femme et/est l'ecologie'<sup>2</sup>.

By 1976, in Australia Friends of the Earth in Brisbane were holding conference discussions on women and ecology; Helen Caldicott, physician and mother was campaigning vigorously against the mining of uranium; and women were taking a strong co-ordinating role in the new **Movement Against Uranium Mining**. The Australian *Womans Day* even carried a piece on women and the anti-nuclear issue in 1977, and similar material was coming out in *Ladies Home Journal*, *MS* and *Village Voice* in the USA. That year two groups — **Another Mother for Peace** and **Women's Action for Peace** — were formed in the USA and a consciousness-raising group **Women of All Red Nations (WARN)** emerged from tribal Indian women in South Dakota especially worried about aborted and deformed babies, leukaemia and involuntary sterilisation among their people<sup>3</sup>.

A bumper all-women's number of *Chain Reaction* was produced in 1978, with critical articles on 'so-called progress': artificial needs and consumerism, animal exploitation for cosmetic manufacture, Aboriginal health, recycling and, of course, uranium<sup>4</sup>. Several separatist anti-nuclear groups had become established by now — **Women Against Nuclear Energy (WANE)** in Sydney, Melbourne, Hobart and Brisbane, **Feminist Anti Nuclear Group (FANG)** in Perth; addresses were also circulating for feminist ecology collectives in Paris, Hamburg and Copenhagen; ads for feminist farming communes were popping up everywhere. A serious, scholarly yet magical and poetic text, Susan Griffin's *Woman and Nature: the Roaring Inside Her* appeared in 1978 and from Boston Mary Daly's *Gyn/ecology* followed a year later<sup>5</sup>. Both authors described the self-alienation of the patriarchal ego; the emotional obsession with mastery, militarism and death, and its intellectual counterpart in analysis and calculation. They urged the need for



Above: Women's Pentagon Action in 1980. Right: Illustration showing where various radioactive isotopes effect a woman's body.



a new language, reintegrating reason and passion, Wholeness. Again in 1978, near Niagara Falls, USA, local mothers leading the **Love Canal Home Owners Association** were fighting authorities over shocking public health and genetic scandals caused by the industrial chemical waste dumps in their town. Then a very mainstream political body, the **US League of Women Voters**, began lobbying for a moratorium on nuclear plant construction licences; the **YWCA** initiated an anti-nuclear education campaign; while the **National Organisation of Women (NOW)** instituted a National Day of Mourning for Karen Silkwood. A further group, **Dykes Opposed to Nuclear Technology (DONT)**, organised a New York conference on the energy crisis as male-generated pseudo-problem, and a vigilant anti-expert **Women and Technology Conference** was held in Montana the same year<sup>6</sup>. A trickle of papers on the eco-fem connection was now arriving in USA feminist journals like *Off Our Backs* and *Commonwoman*. In the UK *Womenergy* appeared, and non-violence activists were reading numerous articles from and about women in *Peace News*. From Manchester came an anarchy-feminist approach to the ecology question, with poet and painter Monica Sjoo reinforcing the personal as political theme and linking the eco-feminist problematic to mythic archetypes of femininity which had long been devalued under patriarchy<sup>7</sup>.

Everywhere in the developed world,

women's political lobbies and protests over effects on workers and children of pesticides and herbicides, of urea formaldehyde in furniture covers and insulation, of 'carcinogenic nitrate preservatives in foods, of lead glazes on china, and so on, were gaining momentum. But another facet of the feminist struggle against pollution was the need felt by women conditioned and deformed by patriarchal attitudes for self-purification and personal reconstruction. A unique feature of this environmental activity is the consistent linking of the personal and political, characteristic of all feminist politics. A woman's overt political activity invariably goes hand-in-hand with her work on her own personal growth, usually undertaken in consciousness-raising sessions with a group of closely supportive women. Such a revolutionary strategy entails a profound commitment.

At the same time, this account of women's special involvement should not be taken to imply that women have not been active in the environment and peace movements generally. In fact, women tend to constitute about half the membership of such bodies, taking a very keen organisational, if not public leadership, role in them. What impresses though, is that obviously women have not felt this to be enough. Many participate in both mainstream and specifically feminist environmental groups. Hence, associations calling themselves **Women for Peace** were set up in

HANDBOOK FOR WOMEN ON THE NUCLEAR MENTALITY

Austria, Switzerland, West Germany, Italy, France, Norway and by 1980, the UK. A collective called **Women Opposed to Nuclear Technology (WONT)** organised a Women and Anti-Nuclear Conference in Nottingham that year, and two middle-of-the-road English organisations, the **National Assembly of Women** and the **Cooperative Womens Guild**, were rapidly becoming caught up in the peace issue as well<sup>8</sup>.

In the USA, **Women in Solar Energy (WISE)** began meeting in Amherst, Massachusetts, and a young university teacher, Ynestra King, mounted the first Women and Life on Earth Conference there in April 1980. Next, a Mobilisation Against Conscriptation was staged in Washington, and by November 1981 a 2000-strong body of women marched on the USA capital, symbolically encircling the Pentagon. By now, Helen Caldicott was international president of **Physicians for Social Responsibility** and had started a **Womens Party for Survival** in the USA, with some 50 state and local chapters. This was subsequently broadened to become **Americans for Nuclear Disarmament**<sup>9</sup>. Meanwhile, more small journals: *Valley Womens Voice* and *Sojourner* in the USA, *Women* in the UK, and *des femmes hebdo* in France, were pumping ecology; and a theoretical analysis from Caroline Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution*, had made its way onto the scene<sup>10</sup>.

By 1981 the following networks were operating in the USA: **Lesbians United in Non-Nuclear Action (LUNA)** v Seabrook Reactor; **Church Women United**; **Feminists to Save the Earth**; **Feminist Resources on Energy and Ecology**; **Dykes Opposed to Nuclear Technology (DONT)** v Three Mile Island and Columbia's TRIGA Reactor; **Women for Environmental Health** demonstrating in Wall Street; **Mothers and Future Mothers Against Radiation** v Pacific Gas and Electricity; **Women Against Nuclear Development (WAND)**; **Spinners Opposed to Nuclear Genocide (SONG)**, and **Dykes Against Nukes Concerned with Energy (DANCE)** v United Technology<sup>11</sup>. More women's environmental conferences were held, at Somona and San Diego State universities. In Japan, a kamakazi encampment of grandmothers known as the **Shibokusa** women were running continual guerilla disruptions on a military arsenal near Mt Fuji, while a further 2500 women marched on Tokyo in the cause of world peace<sup>12</sup>. **Women for Peace** in the Netherlands started a series of chain letters which began weaving the globe in 1981, and 3000 German women demonstrated at the Ramstein NATO base. In the UK, **WONT** had grown into a string of non-violent direct action cells around the country - Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Bristol, Brighton, Nottingham, Cam-

bridge and Edinburgh. A more conservative response, **Oxford Mothers for Nuclear Disarmament**, were holding their first protest too. In Australia, Margaret Morgan drew together a rural anti-nuclear organisation at Albury, New South Wales, and *The Sun Herald* was reporting on ALP and Australian Democrat women's decisive intra-party policy stand against lifting uranium-mining bans.

Elizabeth Dodson Gray's incisive little book *Why the Green Nigger?* came out in the USA about this time, while *Heresies* and *Environment* (both USA) and the CND broadsheet *Sanity* (UK) all ran special numbers on feminism and ecology<sup>13</sup>. Women on editorial boards, in research establishments, hospitals and universities had begun to inject the issue into their work and to use the resources of the workplace in their campaigns. Finally 1981 climaxed on Hiroshima Day with a women-led March for Peace: 50 000 people walking from Copenhagen to Paris.

A further peace walk followed in 1982, from Stockholm to Vienna via the USSR. On 8 March, International Womens Day (IWD), 15 000 women came out singing and dancing for peace in the streets of Brussels. In the USA, Catholic sisters were arrested while praying for peace on the White House lawns, and 3000 women reinforced the first Pentagon Action with yet another, to the chant of 'Take the toys away from the boys'. An Arab women's peace march at Kuneitra, Syria, attracted 5000 supporters, and in Japan 3500 women rallied together against nuclear destruction. The old-established **Womens International League for Peace and Freedom** and the **Union of Australian Women** injected heavy emphasis on disarmament into the 1982 Australian IWD celebrations. Other Australian feminists protested outside the Smithfield base in South Australia. In Britain, two more groups - **Babies Against the Bomb** and **Families Against the Bomb** - emerged, and by December 1982 there was a vast spontaneous grassroots swell calling itself **Women for Life on Earth**. Co-ordinated by Ann Pettitt and Stephanie Leland, 30 000 of these women converged on the Greenham Common missile site, creating a human chain around its 9-mile perimeter fence and decorating it with tokens of life - baby photographs, flowers and childrens toys. Moving accounts of their dissent can be read in *Undercurrents* and in Lyn Jones' collection *Keeping the Peace*<sup>14</sup>.

Nineteen eighty-three saw the continuing blockade of Greenham Common and repeated attempts by the state to enforce closure of the women's camp; police violence; multiple arrests. Other women's blockades have occurred in the UK at Capenhurst uranium enrichment plant, at the Marconi torpedo factory in Neston, and at bases in Northern

Ireland and in Sicily. Now an East German **Women for Peace** movement is forming. May 24th has been named **Women's International Day for Disarmament** and 1983 brought synchronised actions from re/sisters all over the world. Australian women celebrated with a women's peace cavalcade to Canberra, and weekend workshops on non-violence were held there. In Sydney a new collective, **Women's Action Against Global Violence**, staged a demonstration camp outside Lucas Heights Atomic Energy Establishment and the year culminated with a nationally organised on-site protest over the American presence at Pine Gap. The **Women Against Rape in War** and **Women Against Violence Against Women**, represent yet another facet of this insurgent worldwide confrontation with masculine destructiveness. On the ecological side, two women stood as candidates in the 1983 British elections on a combined **Women for Life on Earth/Ecology Party** ticket; while fem-environmentalist Petra Kelly led the **Greens** to electoral success in the German parliament.

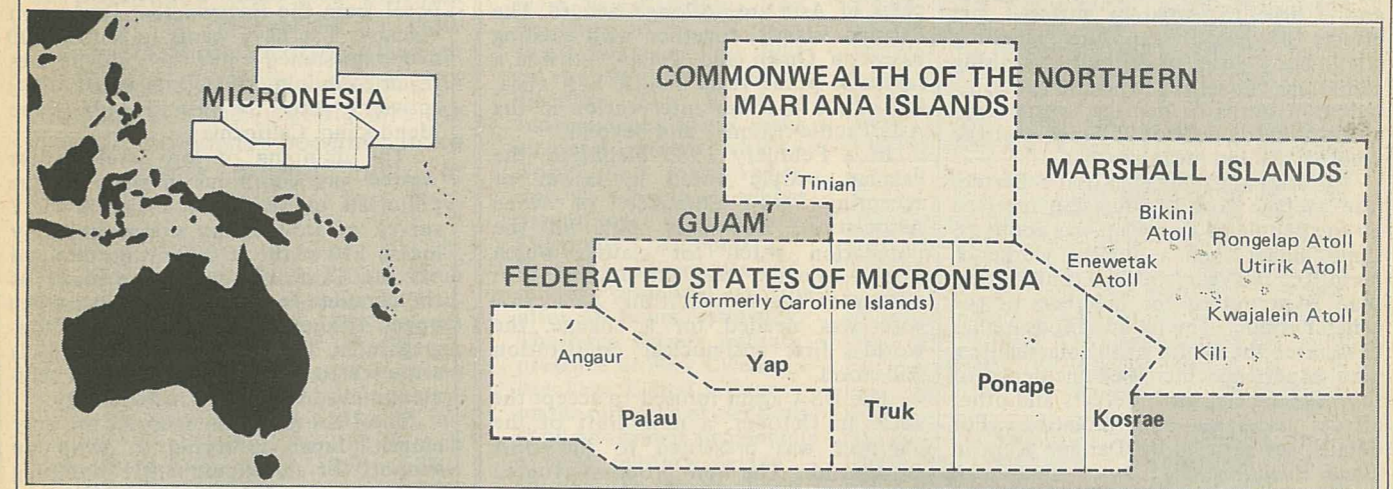
Dora Russell, old-time radical and educationalist, has now produced her diagnosis of the contemporary crisis. An expose of the patriarchal ego, *Religion of the Machine*, is due for publication sometime this year; another milestone. But the struggle for life has only just begun. To quote one eco-feminist:

I am annoyed that I feel forced to deal with the mess the boys have made of the earth. It is a hard enough struggle to survive and to build and maintain a life-affirming culture . . . (Joyce Cheney, 'The Boys Got Us Into This Mess')<sup>15</sup>.

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# Micronesia in the nuclear maelstrom



In March 1984 Roman Bedor and Abgn Jeadrick, two activists from Palau and the Marshall Islands, will be touring Australia. They'll be speaking about their campaigns for compensation for victims of radiation from USA nuclear weapons testing, and their opposition to new nuclear developments:

- the testing of the MX, Trident

Micronesia's three island chains - the Carolines, Marshalls and Marianas - make up the world's only 'strategic' trust territory, placed under USA administration by the United Nations in 1947. After 14 years of negotiations, the five political units which make up the trust territory (see map) are finalising a Compact of Free Association with the USA. The compact gives some measure of self-government and economic aid to the people of Micronesia, but perpetuates USA military control over the region. Faced with the legacy of previous

*Nic Maclellan is a member of the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Committee in Melbourne.*

and anti-ballistic missiles at Kwajalein atoll;

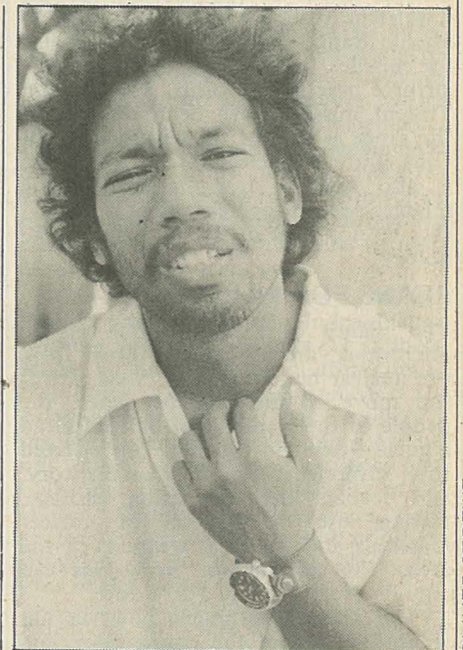
- plans for the ocean dumping of low-level radioactive wastes north of the Marianas Islands; and
- USA pressure to expand its military facilities in Micronesia.

**Nic Maclellan** outlines the long history of USA nuclear-related activity in the region.

nuclear activities in the islands, Micronesians are now confronted with USA plans to use their home as part of a massive military build-up in the Pacific. On 7 September 1983 the people of the Marshall Islands voted by a 58% margin to accept the Compact of Free Association. There was bitter debate over provisions for compensation for radiation victims leading up to the vote, with the people of Bikini and Enewetak turning down the pact and Rongelap and Utirik approving it.

#### ATOMIC TESTS

Between 1946 and 1958, the USA military conducted 66 nuclear weapons tests at Bikini and Enewetak atolls. Six



Aisen Tima, one year old at the time of the infamous Bravo atomic test in 1954. At the age of thirteen he had a thyroid tumour removed. Today, after doctors have diagnosed a new growth, he worries about his next operation.

OLIVER STREWE



islands were totally vapourised during the testing program. The people of Bikini and Enewetak were relocated for the good of mankind, and to end all world wars'. The Bikinians were moved five times before being settled on Kili Island, an island which was isolated for half the year and had no lagoon for fishing. Allowed to return to Bikini in 1968, they were forced to leave again a decade later, when a 75% increase in radioactive elements was discovered in the population.

With the Bravo test at Bikini on 1 March 1954, the USA tested its largest-ever hydrogen bomb. Due to an 'unforeseen accident' — a change of wind direction — radioactive fallout was carried over a number of islands to the east of Bikini. The people of Rongelap and Utiirik immediately suffered the effects of fallout exposure, receiving whole-body doses of 80 rads of ionising radiation. (Localised exposure can cause radiation burns or damage to the lungs and thyroid; a dose of 250 rads over the whole body can mean death.)

According to Sister Rosalie Bertell, 'the average dose of radiation received by the people of Rongelap was about 16 times higher than a nuclear worker is permitted per year, and 160 times higher than is permitted for members of the general public'. The fallout exposure has devastated the health of the Marshallese, who experience increased incidence of thyroid cancers, birth defects and other effects associated with radiation. (For details, see articles by Darlene Keju in *Chain Reaction* 23.)

The Compact, still to be approved by the USA Congress, perpetuates the nuclear threat to the Marshall Islands. Kwajalein Atoll, the site of the Kwajalein Missile Range, is the splashdown point for missiles test-fired from Vandenberg airforce base in California. The MX and Trident missiles have been tested into the range as part of the development of USA strategic nuclear forces. The range is also used to test the anti-ballistic missiles needed for Reagan's Star Wars — the development of space warfare technology.

#### PLANS FOR PALAU

The islands of Palau, to the east in Micronesia, are also under threat from the nuclear build-up. In 1979, as part of the move towards independence, the people of the Republic of Belau drafted a nuclear-free constitution. This asserted total sovereignty over Palauan territory, and forbids the detonation, storage, testing, use or disposal of nuclear materials and chemical weapons in the area. The anti-nuclear provisions can only be overridden by a 75% vote.

The USA government however has refused to accept the constitution and has forced a series of votes to remove the nuclear-free provisions. As one Palauan organiser notes: 'It is from the Americans that we learned democratic processes, and now that we are practising

democracy, the Americans ignore it!'

The USA administration has great plans for Palau:

- The construction of a 12 000 hectare jungle warfare-training base on the main island of Babeldaob.
- An 800-hectare storage area for nuclear and conventional weapons.
- The extension of the airstrip on Angaur island to take B-52 bombers and anti-submarine aircraft.
- Despite official denials, the construction of a naval base which could provide a base for the Trident nuclear submarine.

The USA government is currently rebuilding its capacity to intervene in the Third World, and is extending its nuclear program. At the same time, key bases in the Philippines and other parts of Asia are no longer secure. The Palauan islands, together with existing bases on Guam and Tinian, provide a fall-back point from South East Asia, but also a base for intervention in the Asia/Pacific region — and beyond.

In a February 1983 plebiscite, the Palauan people voted in favour of accepting the Compact of Free Association. But only 50% of the population voted for clauses which would override the anti-nuclear provisions of the constitution. As a 75% vote was needed for a change, the world's first anti-nuclear constitution still stood.

The USA again refused to accept the vote. In October, a new draft of the compact was presented to the USA ambassador. The new proposal avoided the conflict by leaving the way open for nuclear and military activities with the approval of the government of Palau. Even this compromise seems unacceptable to the USA government, and the issue is yet to be decided.

#### AUSTRALIA'S ROLE

With Micronesia a key testing ground for the new generation of nuclear weapons, Micronesian campaigns for a nuclear-free Pacific are of great importance. Australian government proposals for a nuclear-free zone in the Pacific ignore the Micronesian islands to the north of the equator, focusing only on the South Pacific islands of Melanesia and Polynesia. The plan for a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific was put forward by Foreign Minister Bill Hayden at the August 1983 South Pacific forum. The proposal avoids any limitation on the transit of nuclear-armed and powered vessels, the mining of uranium, or the presence of nuclear-related installations in the region.

The tour by the two Micronesian activists in March will help to strengthen Australian public support for a more comprehensive nuclear-free Pacific policy, and for indigenous peoples' independence movements in the region.

Contact: Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Committee, PO Box 338, Fitzroy, Vic 3065.

## N dumping

What does one do with hundreds of thousands of drums of low level radioactive waste? The USA and Japanese governments are pushing for the seabed storage of nuclear waste containers in the oceans north of the Marianas islands in Micronesia.

The USA dumped nuclear waste off its Pacific coastline between 1947 and 1970, but abandoned the program as land storage was cheaper. Rising costs and concern over toxic and radioactive waste storage in the USA has led the nuclear industry to look to the Pacific Ocean once again.

The USA navy is also moving to take over some responsibility for waste disposal from the Environment Protection Agency. The navy wants to scuttle 100 decommissioned nuclear submarines (each containing 50 000 curies of radioactivity) into the Pacific off Cape Mendocino, California.

The dumping of low level nuclear wastes has enormous dangers in the pollution of the food chain. A 1977 survey of USA dump sites could only locate 140 of the 50 000 drums dumped off the California coast, and many of the concrete-encased drums had broken open. Although the waste tends to congregate at the dump sites, sea life is attracted to the area, eating ocean sediment and spreading the radioactivity.

The USA government is not the only culprit. Japan is trying to whip up support for an 'experimental' dumping program north of the Northern Marianas. Announced in 1979, but still thwarted by opposition from Pacific Islanders and Japanese fisherpeople, the Government hopes to dump 5–10 000 twelve-litre drums encased in concrete into a 6000-metre deep ocean trench. The second step in a four stage program, this would open the way for the disposal of 250 000 drums of low level radioactive waste currently in storage in Japan.

More dangerously, any dumping of low level waste would be a 'foot in the door' for the ocean dumping of high level reactor waste. The USA government has expressed interest in the Japanese program, and in 1981, a USA research vessel, the *Vema*, surveyed the area north of the Marianas. It was then suggested that the site could hold 'all the nuclear waste that has been or ever will be produced by the world'.

Resistance to these proposals has come not just from Micronesia, but from throughout the Pacific. In February 1983 at the London Dumping Convention, Kiribati and Nauru sponsored an amendment to ban the dumping of nuclear wastes. It passed, in the face of USA and Japanese opposition. The Japanese government responded by announcing the continuation of the program, so Pacific-wide opposition to all stages of the nuclear fuel cycle is still vital.

# A little piece of France

A potentially explosive political situation is developing in New Caledonia. Violence may well erupt in 1984 as tensions between the indigenous Kanak people and the French colonists become more acute. **Jamie Button** looks at French colonialism in New Caledonia.

The Kanak Independence Front, which envisages a multiracial socialist independence for New Caledonia, has the support of 75–85% of all the Kanak people. However, the Kanaks are no longer a majority in their own country, owing to a concerted campaign of immigration undertaken by the French government in the 1970s. New Caledonia's population numbers 140 000, of which 60 000 are Kanak and 80 000 Europeans, Polynesians and Asians. Many of the Europeans have a vested interest in ensuring that New Caledonia remains a French colony. The last few years have also shown that the French are willing to use violence to safeguard their position.

Before Christmas 1983, Melbourne newspapers carried an advertisement extolling the virtues of New Caledonia as 'a little piece of France'. Since 1853, when the French government annexed the group of islands north-east of Australia and founded a penal colony there, the 'Frenchification' of New Caledonia has been undertaken at the expense of the Kanak people. Rebellions in 1878 and 1917 were savagely suppressed and the Kanaks were forced onto reserves comprising 5% of the mainland.

French colonialism has never been particularly healthy for the colonised, but New Caledonia's case is a pronounced one. The law confining Kanaks to reserves was not abolished until 1946 — and only then to remedy a shortage of workers in the nickel industry. Kanaks were not granted the right to vote or rates of pay equal to those of whites until 1953. In 1984, New Caledonia is one of the few remaining

*Jamie Button is a member of the Nuclear Free and Independent Committee, and of People for Nuclear Disarmament in Melbourne.*

A July 1983 newspaper from New Caledonia. The headlines on the left refer to electorates and the right to vote in the July 1984 election. The Kanak Independence Front seeks electoral reform which would allow voting rights only to inhabitants whose parents were born in New Caledonia. At present French civil servants and military personnel can vote after 48 hours' residency. The large French military presence in New Caledonia can have a vital influence on the outcome of elections. (The newspaper also depicts a large military parade through the streets of the capital Noumea.)

colonies in the world but, despite this anachronism, the French government shows no sign of relinquishing its control.

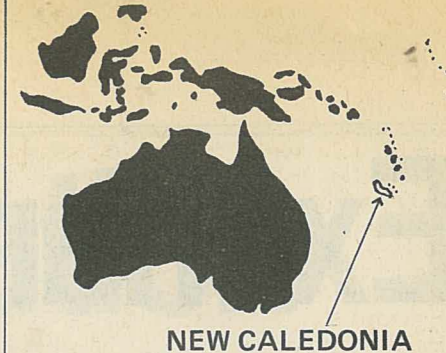
In 1979, the French Socialist Party pledged its support for the struggle of the newly-formed Kanak Independence Front. Once in power, however, the Party has proved a disappointment. Some reforms have been instituted, including an attempt to buy back land for the Kanak people, but the French government has ignored the call of the Independence Front for much-needed electoral reform and a timetable for independence by 1985. Instead, the government has attempted to reconcile all the parties involved, an absurd gambit given the opposing interests of the white settlers and the Kanak people.

In November 1983, Lemoine, French Minister for Overseas Territories, proposed five years of autonomy and a referendum on self-determination in 1989, by which time the Socialists may well be out of power. In short, the French government would like to wash its hands of the problem. However it is also keen to maintain a military profile in the South Pacific. This is closely linked to its nuclear testing program on Mururoa Atoll; the French government finds New Caledonia to be a convenient

base for its soldiers. But the problem will not go away, and the vacillation of the French government is only serving to fuel an already volatile situation. In September 1981 a leading member of the Independence Front, Pierre Declercq, was assassinated by a rightist group, and in 1982 the Territorial Assembly was stormed by rightists and Independence Front leaders were assaulted. Bashings and attacks grow in number every year.

Knowing it cannot rely on the French government, the Independence Front is looking elsewhere for support. Much support has been forthcoming from the Vanuatu government. The Australian government has a policy of promoting Kanak independence but has not taken the initiative to have New Caledonia registered on the list of the United Nations Decolonisation Committee, an act which would bring the situation of the Kanak people to the eyes of the world.

Action: In Melbourne a support group for the Kanak Independence Front has recently been formed, and intends to be active in 1984. Above is only a brief sketch of a complex situation; if you would like more information about New Caledonia or wish to become involved, please contact the group at PO Box 338, Fitzroy, Vic 3065.



# Exchanging uranium for non-proliferation

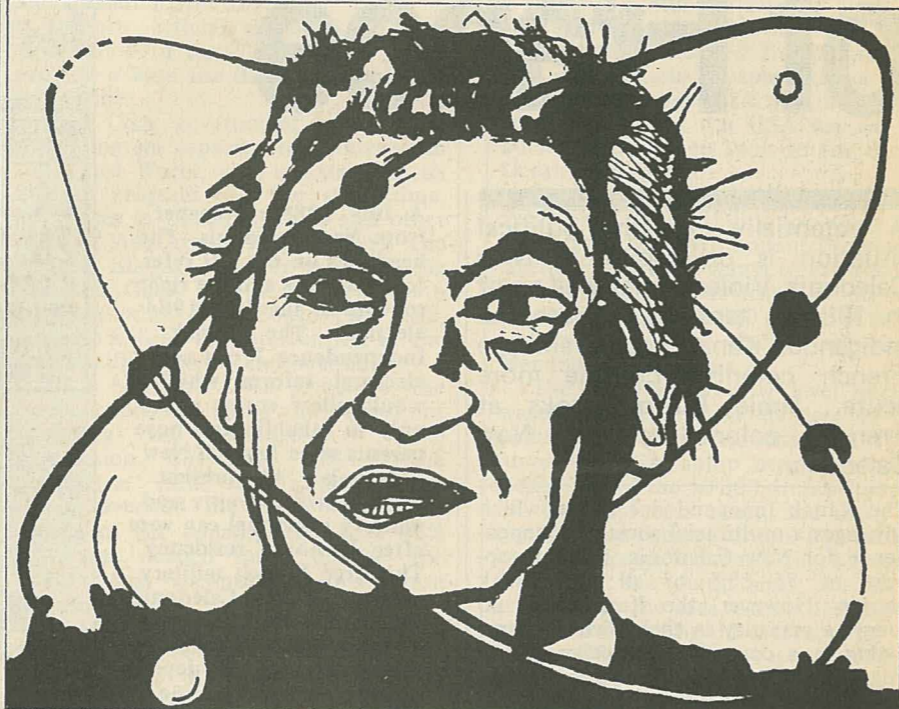
On 7 November 1983, the nine-month-old Hawke government voted at a Labor caucus meeting to allow the development of the Roxby Downs uranium mine in South Australia and continuation of the Ranger uranium mine in the Northern Territory. The decision represented a departure by the ALP government from what most people believed was stated ALP policy, the phasing out of existing mines and not allowing any new mines to proceed. The Hawke government's move is being justified to the Australian electorate as a positive response to nuclear proliferation and peace and disarmament issues, but, Ron Leeks and Mark Hayes argue, it is primarily motivated by political and economic considerations.

The government has spelled out its case in two revealing documents, one from the prime minister's offices, referred to as the *Hawke Caucus Paper*, and one prepared by the three government departments of Foreign Affairs, Resources and Energy, and Trade called the *Background Paper*. A study of these two papers and the nature of the world nuclear system leads to five major observations about the Hawke uranium policy:

- Hawke's uranium export decision is set within a deliberate policy established and promulgated by the international nuclear fraternity.
- Uranium exports are being connected to government disarmament and peace initiatives and are being promoted as such to the Australian electorate.
- Despite government rationalisations to the contrary, Australian uranium exports will contribute to nuclear proliferation and render support for the status quo of the nuclear arms race.
- The net effect of the Hawke uranium policy will be to undermine support for the peace movement within the Australian community.
- An alternative uranium policy is available which provides a reasonable response by Australia to the threat implicit in the nuclear arms race.

## The non-proliferation regime

The main thrust of the government position is that a withdrawal by Australia



PETER LOWE

as a uranium supplier would adversely affect the international non-proliferation regime.

Historically, nuclear weapons preceded nuclear power and in many nations the two have been, and continue to be, intertwined. The military use of nuclear materials also includes the extensive use of nuclear reactors as power plants for submarines, surface vessels and satellites. Any nation which has the technology needed to mount a nuclear power program also has the capability to make nuclear weapons, especially if its nuclear fuel cycle includes enrichment and reprocessing equipment.

It was in the interests of the early nuclear-armed nations to depreciate the links between their military and civilian nuclear fuel cycles while at the same time instituting measures to ensure that non-nuclear-weapon nations did not follow their lead. The USA 'Atoms for Peace', begun in 1954, while being a tool of competition with the USSR for influence and prestige overseas, was also a propaganda exercise which included talking as if civilian nuclear use substituted for military use rather than complementing or supplementing it. 'Atoms for Peace' put the major problem of preventing 'horizontal' proliferation on the international agenda, resulting in an evolving series of measures which form the non-proliferation regime.

The nature of the non-proliferation regime has been outlined by Warren H Donnelly in the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) 1983 *World Armaments and Disarmament Yearbook*. He says:

Today the world depends upon a loose structure of treaty commitments, verified by international inspection, not to acquire nuclear weapons; informal and voluntary understandings of nuclear supplier states to limit certain nuclear exports, to require safeguards for others, and to limit their nuclear cooperation to the least dangerous nuclear technologies bilateral agreements between some nuclear supplier states and their clients; and a general predisposition against nuclear weapons.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), based in Vienna, is the major operating arm of the non-proliferation regime. Its primary mandate however is to promote nuclear power worldwide. The terms of the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty assign to the IAEA the responsibility for safeguarding fissionable material used in civil nuclear power programs.

## Illusion of safeguards

A major argument presented in the Hawke Caucus Paper for continued uranium supply is the resulting influence Australia would have in promoting safeguards. The Hawke Caucus Paper thus says:

MARCH '83



MY COLLEAGUES AND I WILL TAKE THE BEST ACTION POSSIBLE, AS CONCERNS THE URANIUM DEBATE.....



MARCH '84



MY COLLEAGUES AND I WILL TAKE THE BEST ACTION POSSIBLE, AS CONCERNS THE URANIUM DEBATE.

BRENDAN REA

Currently, whatever the limitations are in terms of controls and safeguards, they are much the better for the involvement of Australia, who has supplied and will continue to supply, even more stringent safeguards.

The limitations of safeguards however are well known and were sufficient for the major Australian investigation into the nuclear fuel cycle, the 1976 Ranger Uranium Inquiry (Fox Report), to conclude:

The Commission recognises that the defects, taken together, are so serious that existing safeguards may provide only an illusion of protection.

Safeguards do not control the future policies of states; they only perform a stocktaking role on nuclear materials. The IAEA cannot physically protect anything but only report if it discovers diversion of nuclear materials. It is even prohibited from publishing details of the quantities and state of dangerous nuclear materials such as plutonium held by any country. Meanwhile we face the major issue of the implication for humanity of large amounts of separated or separable plutonium stockpiles. By the year 2000, 50 tonnes of separated plutonium, some derived from Australian uranium, will be on hand. That could produce 5000 warheads.

The limitations of safeguards are more severely underlined by the threats to the non-proliferation regime as a whole. Donnelly, in his study of this issue concludes, 'It appears . . . that the balance of forces opposing the regime is rather greater than the balance sustaining it.' The most significant of such forces is the total lack of serious and meaningful disarmament initiative by the nuclear weapons states. This has put the Non-Proliferation Treaty under risk of not being renegotiated when its term runs out.

The Hawke Caucus Paper says: Given the fragility of world peace and the potential for nuclear warfare our view is that

our priorities should be focused in the use to which uranium is put rather than eliminating over-supplies from the world cycle.

Recent studies released in the United States have indicated that even a so-called 'limited nuclear war' could do irreversible catastrophic damage to the planetary environment. Thus the rhetorical connection of the Hawke uranium policy with nuclear disarmament and peace is an unacceptable folly.

Withdrawing Australia's uranium from the global nuclear fuel cycle would be a clear signal to the world that Australia is serious in its statements to the effect that the global nuclear arms race and the escalating threat of nuclear war represents an intolerable situation.

## The nuclear industry and proliferation

Implicit in the Hawke uranium policy is the active support of the nuclear industry. Ranger has some 80 000 tonnes of uranium to sell and Roxby Downs 1.2 million tonnes. The Hawke Caucus Paper essentially reiterates the previous government's arguments in favour of mining when it says:

In not proceeding with Roxby Downs we would be denying the potential of an enormous economic and employment benefit to South Australia and the country in general.

In a time of over-supply of uranium the Hawke government is actively attempting to stimulate the global nuclear industry to gain as large a share as possible of the resulting demand for uranium from Roxby Downs and Ranger. This position must be contrasted with one of the principal findings and recommendations of the Fox Report:

Policy respecting Australian uranium exports . . . should seek to limit or restrict expansion of that production.

Donnelly, in assessing factors which support the non-proliferation regime, cites:

A slow-down in nuclear power . . . Weaknesses in world nuclear industries . . . Nuclear difficulties of threshold states [and] Diminished use of highly enriched uranium.

In short, to prevent or minimise the risk of proliferation, measures which limit or even reverse development of the global nuclear industry are desirable. The strengthening of the non-proliferation regime is essential and can be most effectively accomplished in the context of a contracting rather than an expanding international nuclear industry. The Hawke policy, by granting permission to Roxby Downs, thus totally contradicts its stated desire to strengthen the non-proliferation regime.

In essence, the Hawke policy argues that uranium exports enhance our position in non-proliferation forums. This is the same logic used by nuclear-weapon nations to justify their escalating arsenals, thus enhancing their positions - negotiating from strength - at arms control talks.

## Contradictions in the Hawke policy

The Hawke policy argues that withdrawal of uranium supply is technically irrelevant to the world supply of uranium and the ability of nations to make nuclear weapons. Withdrawal would only offer uranium trade with lesser safeguards. To support this the Hawke Caucus Paper says, 'one would not expect high standards for supplies from South Africa and Namibia [and Niger]'. The facts however are that these countries already supply more countries than Australia does, including those with a high proliferation risk such as Iraq, Libya, Pakistan and Taiwan. Competition with Australia may in fact force such suppliers to seek or maintain contracts with proliferation-risky nations.

The Hawke Caucus Paper takes the so-called 'leverage' position when it says: We would effectively be forced out of the

international debate if we withdrew from supply. We would not be in a position to use the threat of selective non-supply as a weapon against nations' intentions such as dumping waste in the Pacific or continuing with nuclear tests.

However, the Background Paper itself contradicts this argument. The high interconnectedness of the international uranium supply routes and the very nature of bilateral and multilateral safeguards agreements impede the unilateral actions implied in the leverage argument. The Background Paper says: 'France's continuing cooperation is essential to the uninterrupted flow of AONM [Australian Origin Nuclear Materials] through that network'. The Background Paper also observes that 2600 tonnes of yellowcake ordered from Australia could easily be obtained by France from other sources. It appears that Australia's participation in the nuclear fuel cycle puts substantial pressure on Australia to continue supply and little on other countries from the threat of withdrawing supply.

#### An alternative policy

There are five measures which can be simultaneously undertaken by Australia which form the basis of a viable policy to reduce the risk of nuclear disaster. These are:

- A moratorium on any new uranium-mining developments and the export of uranium. This can be justified to the international community on the basis of all the problems associated with the nuclear industry, and in particular the adverse impact of the arms race on measures to limit nuclear proliferation and the catastrophic consequences which would result from global nuclear war.
- A reaffirmation and extension of measures to effect recommendations of the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry 'to institute full and energetic programmes of research and develop-

ment into (a) liquid fuels to replace petroleum, and (b) energy sources other than fossil fuels and nuclear fission'.

- The establishment of an environmental inquiry on Roxby Downs in accordance with the *Environmental Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act 1974* to be conducted under terms of reference at least as broad as those of the Ranger Inquiry. Particular reference should be made to the impact of the escalating arms race and related issues subsequent to the Ranger Inquiry, and the viability of Roxby Downs without uranium processing.

- The affirmation of a continued emphasis of Australian research into radioactive waste disposal, in particular the disposal of high-level *unreprocessed* waste. It should be noted that a 'solution' to waste disposal is unattainable as any method developed involves risks and costs. However, the large quantities of radioactive materials which have been and will be produced by both the civilian and military nuclear cycles must eventually be disposed of, as best as possible, for the safety of humanity. Australian participation in this research therefore need not be connected in any way with support for the nuclear fuel chain, though the Hawke policy does imply such support. The abandonment of uranium supply would also eliminate inevitable pressure for Australia to become a radioactive waste repository.

- The Australian government can and should continue to support the non-proliferation regime. This is possible for any nation with or without nuclear developments. As it stands, Australia will have a vested interest in the non-proliferation regime because Australian uranium is already in the global nuclear fuel cycle, and also because of continued research into radioactive waste, disposal and the long-term maintenance of uranium mine tailings.

#### The Australian peace movement

The rhetorical connecting of Hawke's policy with moves to bring about non-proliferation and a reversal of the arms race will find root in a largely supportive and uncritical public. If the Australian people believe, or are led to believe, that the government is doing all it can in the cause of peace — although actually supporting the status quo — they will remain inactive regardless of any personal fear or concern they may feel.

The Hawke uranium policy effectively clouds and confuses the issues, making the public debate much more difficult and also retarding it in the development of its focus. Many people will suffer an almost schizophrenic debilitation as they try to reconcile what common sense demands with contrary government actions loquaciously defended by government spokespersons. The political effect on the peace movement of a victory by the Hawke policy and its supporters within the ALP at the forthcoming national conference in July 1984 is beyond the scope of this article.

It is clear, however, that the peace movement will suffer a significant loss of support within the community if the Hawke uranium policy wins the day.

*Ronald K Leeks is a graduate of the University of Montreal, Queens University at Kingston, Ontario, and the University of Queensland. He has worked as an organiser for the Campaign Against Nuclear Power (Qld) and maintains an active interest in the global nuclear fuel and weapons system and the anti-nuclear and peace movement.*

*Mark D Hayes is a graduate of the University of Queensland in journalism and sociology and the University of Bradford (UK) in peace studies. He is currently completing PhD studies in humanities at Griffith University. Mark has worked as a freelance journalist and researcher for print, radio, television and film organisations. He maintains an active interest in the global nuclear system and the anti-nuclear and peace movements.*



NEW YORK TIMES

## REVIEWS



**Ridiculing our Allies.** General Edward Lansdale, USA Assistant Secretary of Defence, Covert Operations, 1957-1963, earns the wrath of a layout artist.

## Film

*Allies*, directed by Martin Wilkinson, produced by Sylvie le Clezio, 16 mm, colour, 100 minutes. Available from Film Exchange, Tel: (02) 33 5360.

Reviewed by **Jenny Hocking**

*Allies* is a most meticulous and intriguing film. It is made up almost entirely of interviews with people who have been directly involved with aspects of the Australian/American alliance since the 1940s. What becomes almost as astounding as the revelations made in these interviews is the remarkable ease with which these men (for security concerns remain always a man's game) discuss their complicity in overthrowing popular governments around the world. Although some of those interviewed, such as Victor Marchetti and Ralph McGehee, have plainly had doubts about the legitimacy of such activities, most remain unquestioning and even disconcertingly exalted by their involvement in them.

In the typically American euphemisms which so often rationalise an otherwise clearly corrupt and dissolute exercise of power, the security personnel speak of 'liaison efforts', of 'covert operations, peace-time operations, special operations — anything but war', and of the need to 'protect democracy against itself'. The film's best euphemism, however, comes from Frank Snepp, a senior CIA officer in Saigon in the early 1970s who, with obvious enjoyment, describes his method of providing the Australian ambassador to USA with false information about the Vietnam war. Snepp would, he explained, 'neglect to tell' the ambassador those crucial facts about the war which would directly contradict the view he wanted to impress upon him. 'I wasn't lying to the Australian ambassador', he glibly asserted — he was just 'neglecting to tell' him everything.

The film progresses chronologically from the forging of a strong Australian/American alliance during the Second World War to the establishment of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), the overthrow of the Sukarno government in Indonesia in 1965, the Vietnam war, the issue of USA bases in Australia, security relations with the Whitlam Labor govern-

ment, and finally the current government's relationship with USA. Through these different sections runs the underlying theme, which was stressed in the film's opening sequences, that intelligence services function according to their own internal logic, and with a loyalty to their own security network members rather than to the elected governments of the countries both from which and within which they operate.

Of particular relevance here is the role of ASIO and the CIA in our own domestic political affairs. Dr John Burton, who was Secretary of the Department of External Affairs when ASIO was established, explains Brigadier Spry's perception of ASIO's function as being 'to protect democracy against itself'. Spry, ASIO's long-serving director-general, saw ASIO as a vital means of ensuring that social-democratic governments did not become 'too extreme'. The recognition that ASIO may at times work against the interests of the government was most tangibly demonstrated during the Whitlam government's turbulent period in office.

On several occasions between 1972 and 1975 the CIA threatened to close Australia off from the vital security information network of which ASIO is part. Frank Snepp referred to Clyde Cameron's vociferous criticisms of Nixon's saturation bombing of Hanoi, stating that the CIA's reaction was that 'Australians may as well be regarded as North Vietnamese collaborators'. This was one incident which prompted the CIA to sever any further dealings with Australian intelligence. The last of these threats came just three days before Whitlam's sacking, in a telex sent from the CIA to ASIO's Melbourne headquarters, after Whitlam had revealed the identity of some CIA personnel stationed in Australia. Christopher Boyce, imprisoned on a charge of treason in the USA, succinctly explains the American security view of the Australian government at that time: 'We didn't have to worry about ASIO, it was the government we were worried about.' In a characteristically mild description, both William Colby and Frank Snepp refer to the upheavals of this period as achieving the necessary 'sobering up' of the government's attitude towards the security relationship. American intelligence sources seem reassured by the current prime minister's, and his government's, commitment to sobriety.

Although *Allies* presents a strong indictment of the asymmetric alliance between Australia and USA, there are areas where it disappoints; most of these areas relate to the film's sole reliance on interviews for its subject matter. A selection of interviews, presented in this way with no visual respite and no accompanying narration, becomes both boring and intellectually imprecise. Aspects of the Australian/American alliance which are not mentioned by those interviewed, yet which are crucial to any discussion of the alliance, are therefore not covered. In particular the ANZUS treaty and the content of the Australian/American information exchange agreement should have been specified. The failure to detail these formal elements in the alliance is also an indication of *Allies'* determination to focus on the intelligence services' role in the alliance, and to neglect the more tangible government agreements which also bind us.

The yardstick against which political documentaries are still measured is *La Spirale*. This film was an account of the coup d'etat in Chile in 1973 and was particularly strong in the areas

## REVIEWS

where *Allies* is weakest. *La Spirale* developed a fine theoretical argument, with an impact which was greatly reinforced by its unerring use of graphics and its precise narration. *Allies'* decision to let its interviews speak for themselves leads to a visually uninspiring film which looks uncomfortably like a filmed version of the *National Times*.

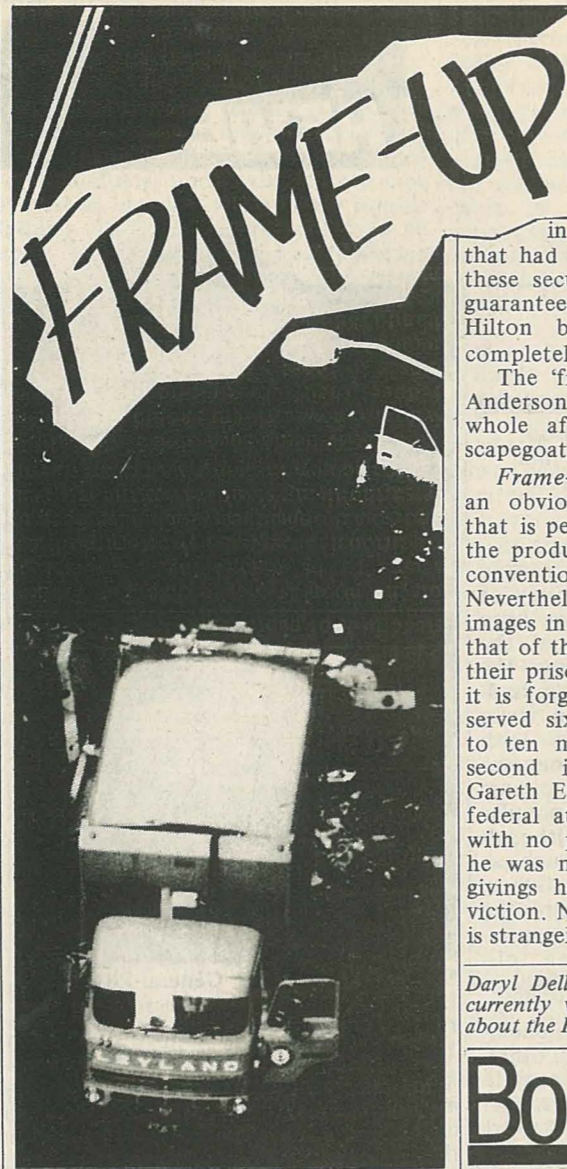
Jenny Hocking is a postgraduate student at Sydney University doing research in security issues.

## Video

**Frame-up: Who Bombed the Hilton, Who Didn't**, produced and directed by Irina Dunn, Nick Power and Graham Double, 3/4 inch U-matic and 1/2 inch VHS videotape, 48 minutes. Available from Sydney Filmmakers Co-operative. Tel: (02) 33 0721.  
Reviewed by Daryl Dellora.

Irina Dunn, Nick Power and Graham Double have come up with a powerful and long overdue documentary which carefully exposes the sinister links between Australia's security services, the bombing outside the Hilton Hotel in 1978 and the subsequent gaoling of three men on a completely unconnected charge. Indeed, many people still believe that Ross Dunn, Tim Anderson and Paul Alister (now serving the sixth year of a 16 year sentence for conspiring to murder minor right-wing figure Robert Cameron) were convicted of the bombing, but as the film points out this is a crime for which nobody has ever been charged let alone convicted.

As anyone who has seen the film *With Prejudice* is aware, the evidence upon which the three were convicted, and for that matter the whole case for the prosecution, was incredibly flimsy. It relied almost entirely upon police verbals and the testimony of police informer, the notorious Richard Seary. *Frame-up* explores much of this same ground and at times even uses excerpts from that film to demonstrate the thoroughly contradictory and unconvincing nature of much of the evidence. However, *Frame-up* goes much further than this, by seeking to answer the central questions. If Dunn, Alister and Anderson were set up as a result of a conspiracy involving the security forces, who stood to gain from their conviction? Who bombed the Hilton and who didn't?



The argument that the film puts forward, along with a large amount of carefully documented evidence, is that Australia's security forces were the only group who stood to benefit from the bombing, and, in fact, gained a great deal in its aftermath. Within days of the bombing the premier of New South Wales, Neville Wran, had cancelled a planned review of the state's Special Branch. Within weeks Malcolm Fraser had passed legislation in the federal parliament widening the powers of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO). And it must be remembered that right up until the bombing in February 1978 the internal security organisations had been under concerted attack.

The sacking of the South Australian police commissioner after revelations that the South Australian Special Branch had been compiling thousands of files on private citizens, trade unionists and Labor parliamentarians; the White Report which followed from the sacking

which recommended tighter controls on Special Branch; and the Hope Report which demonstrated that ASIO had been consistently breaking the law in the execution of its 'security' operations—all these things are brought out very clearly in the film as a tide of events that had to be stopped if the future of these security organisations was to be guaranteed. With the blast of the Hilton bombing all opposition was completely silenced.

The 'frame-up' of Dunn, Alister and Anderson was a neat resolution to the whole affair. They were the perfect scapegoats.

*Frame-up* suffers only as a result of an obvious lack of funds, something that is perhaps aggravated only because the production sticks so closely to the conventional documentary format. Nevertheless it works well and two images in particular stand out. One was that of the three prisoners talking from their prison cells. It is all too often that it is forgotten that they have already served six years and can look forward to ten more if nothing is done. The second image was that of Senator Gareth Evans, then in opposition, now federal attorney-general. At that time, with no power to do anything about it he was most vocal about all the misgivings he held concerning their conviction. Now, with the power to act, he is strangely silent.

Daryl Dellora is a freelance film producer currently working on a short Super 8 film about the Hilton bombing.

## Books

**Jericho** by Pat Arrowsmith, Heretic Books, London, 1983, 322 pages, \$11.95 (soft cover).

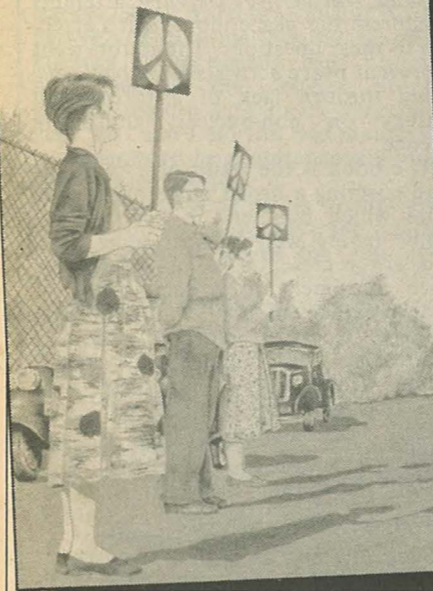
Reviewed by Sheril Berkovitch

*Jericho* is an interesting book, not least for its historical perspective on the British peace movement of the late fifties and early sixties. Pat Arrowsmith, herself a peace movement veteran, wrote *Jericho* in 1964 during one of her ten jail sentences for political offences. She helped to organise the first Aldermaston march and has been active in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) ever since.

A fictionalised account of a 1958 summer peace camp organised by the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War at the Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Research Establishment, the story is interwoven with other similar actions of the early sixties. It is this historical aspect of the peace movement, together with its commentaries on the rising Cold War I and international tensions

## Jericho

Pat Arrowsmith



that I found most fascinating. Political fiction is not easy to write, and Arrowsmith has fused her politics and her creativity effectively.

Whilst Arrowsmith's style of writing, and her perspective, can be viewed as somewhat naive, considering her own tumultuous political career, *Jericho* does discuss many of the conflicts involved when a variety of different people come together to form a mass movement, bringing with them, necessarily, vastly divergent views on the how and why of political protest and organisation. Considering its original publication date (1965), *Jericho* still says much of relevance to today's anti-nuclear movement. (Peace movement hacks will, indeed, find bits of themselves in many of Arrowsmith's exaggerated characters.)

Where *Jericho's* naivety becomes its failing point is around its treatment of violence against women (the pack rape of Joy at the peace camp by hostile locals), and its treatment of gays (the stereotypical older man, Brian, seduces the pretty young teenager, David), both of these being all the more surprising considering Arrowsmith's own professed lesbianism. But as she says in her 1983 introduction: 'Certain aspects of the book are dated. Clearly it was written well before the advent of feminism and at a time when attitudes towards homosexuality were still archaically conventional.'

I suspect that many of the incidents in *Jericho* are digs at the various political factions operating during that period. The infighting between Communist Party and socialist trade unionists at the Nuclear Weapons Establishment; her obvious distaste for the Communist Party line on Soviet disarmament (I remember those arguments only too well

in my own family at that time); and her blatant acceptance of the ethic of non-violent action at all costs, serve to pinpoint the state of Arrowsmith's own political perspective during the early sixties.

But Arrowsmith's explicit political commentary does serve to outline many of the problems faced by campaigners in the early anti-nuclear movement, especially in dealing with hostility from workers at the nuclear plant, the indifference of the police towards protecting the pickets, and the sheer hard slog of persuading 'ordinary' people of the relevance of nuclear disarmament.

*Jericho* is easy to read. It has much in it to think about and is a lively and entertaining addition to anyone's bookshelf.

Sheril Berkovitch is a feminist and freelance writer, based in Melbourne, who likes tacky disco music.

**The Franklin Blockade** by the Blockaders, The Wilderness Society, Hobart, 1983, 124 pages, \$12.50 (soft cover).

Reviewed by Linda Parlane

If you went to the Franklin blockade and still experience the odd pang of nostalgia when places like 'Greenie Acres' or Warners Landing are mentioned, then the Wilderness Society's *Franklin Blockade* is the book for you. A 'scrapbook' chock-a-block with photos and blockaders' most vivid recollections, it certainly gives a strong sense of the kind of experience which the Franklin blockade was for so many. For most it was their first involvement in a direct action, for many their first involvement in anything political. The wide-eyed exhilaration and the excitement of the action for these people is quite evident throughout the book.

Quite revealing for enthusiastic planners of future large-scale direct actions is the sharp contrast between these reminiscences and many of the accounts written by blockade organisers. Many of the organisers spent three months or more in the South West. Some also worked for up to a year in preparation. For one 'long-stayer' the adventures of the Famous Five at the Franklin were a far cry from his experience. 'Crisis management, exhaustion and a sense of responsibility were like three mad dogs tormenting us through our days', he wrote.

The reminiscing approach certainly gives an account of *how it felt*. However, I suspect that unless the reader has had a close association with the Franklin blockade it may be a bit difficult to get a clear picture of *what happened* and *why*. This seems to me to be a somewhat inevitable result of the approach. Contributors were asked to describe their most vivid memories and of course they've done so, adjectives and superlatives abounding.

Conspicuous by their absence are contributions from the (usually) more vocal of the Nightcap Action Group folk who were the backbone of the River Base Camp throughout the blockade. Their view of the operation, I think, would have differed considerably from other writers. Their refusal to contribute means that the book lacks a valuable alternative view for those who might be interested in trying to nut out what made the Franklin blockade what it was and how it might have been different.

A further weakness is that there is no more than a hint of the tensions which existed between the different blockade power bases. These tensions, I believe, were critical in shaping the blockade. The vastly different expectations and styles of working of the different organising groups—non-violent action (NVA) trainers, Information Centre workers and River Camo people—generally made working together a strain at best, impossible at worst. These tensions, coupled with the geographical barriers which also divided the groups, meant that once the blockade was under way, its character was already firmly set.

For me, perhaps the most irritating things about the book are what I believe to be overstatements regarding violent actions by the opponents of wilderness. The blurb on the back cover talks about 'mobs manipulated into anger and hatred'. O boy, did we expect them to cheer as they lost their jobs? To be delighted as they experienced the feeling of powerlessness as they were over-ridden by a bunch of predominantly young greenies, many of whom were obviously quite well off? A little more sensitivity to the reality of West Coast life is called for. And as for the chapter entitled 'A Struggle Against Repression', tell that to the people of Central America and, in the words of Monty Python, they won't believe you!

In these days of blockade mania some people seem to find it difficult to make the connection that the Franklin blockade was possible only after six years of slog by a large number of dedicated people; that it was lucky for the Franklin that the election came along when it did; and that Bob (not Brown) was elected God. There hasn't been a time since the Mount Nardi confrontation, prior to the Franklin blockade, when some group somewhere hasn't been planning or doing a blockade or similar action. Direct action can be a powerful tool. But used too often, inappropriately or without adequate preparation, much of its power is lost. I hope that the Australian environment movement doesn't lose its grip on one of our most powerful weapons simply through overuse.

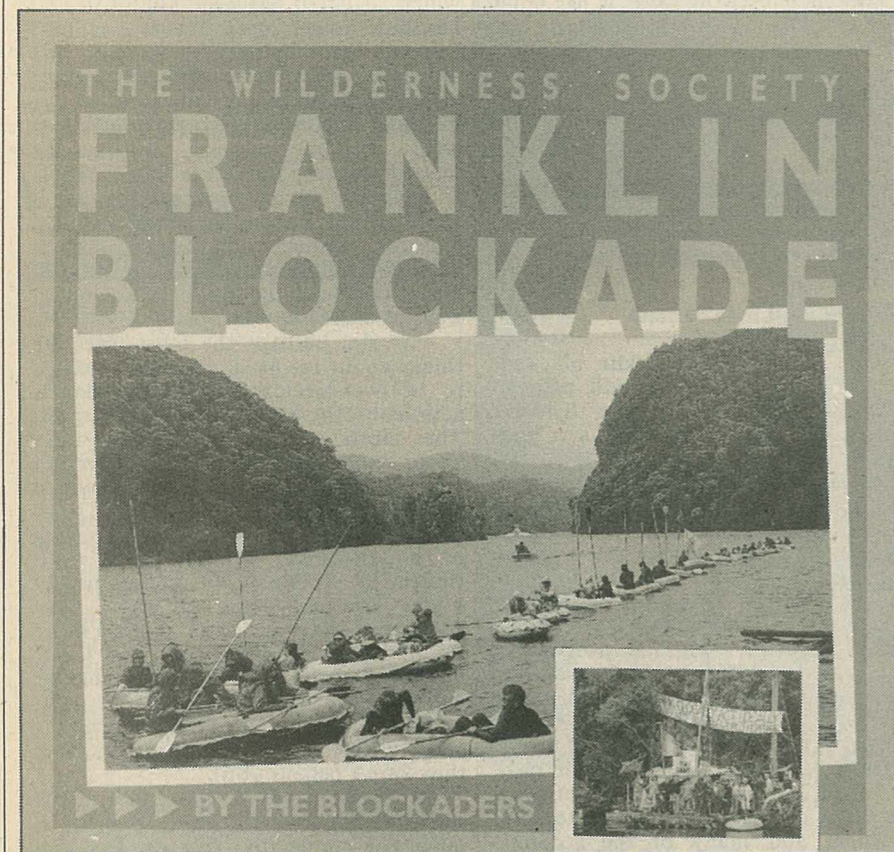
It is a pity that *Franklin Blockade* doesn't go further towards putting the action in its proper perspective. Whilst the book's editors have made every effort to do this in the introduction, a

## REVIEWS

book about a single event in what was Australia's largest and most sophisticated environmental campaign will inevitably be a little out of context. It's easy to overlook the office work, lobbying etc amid the glory of confrontation.

Don't get me wrong though, the book definitely has its redeeming features; together the design, photos and many of the lively descriptions capture a sense of what was without doubt a powerful experience for most who participated. So, despite my criticisms of the book, believe it or not, I still enjoyed reading it. And if you're into recalling last summer's heady adventures on the Lower Gordon, I'm sure you will enjoy it too.

*Linda Parlone was an NVA trainer and organiser for the Franklin blockade. She is currently working on a project entitled 'Evaluating the Franklin blockade: non-violence in action'.*



**Nuclear-free Defence**, edited by Louis Mackay and David Fernbach, Heretic Books, London, 1983, 223 pages, \$11.95 (soft cover).

Reviewed by Phil Shannon

Not many people, let's face it, like nuclear bombs, or have much relish for the prospect of nuclear war. They might be entertained by war films and buy war toys for young Billie but they would rather see the end of all war, nuclear or conventional. For that we should be thankful and hopeful.

One belief, however, that inhibits the translation of this feeling into action is that armed forces, nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and ANZUS are necessary, if regrettable, to protect ourselves and our country (if not for God and King these days, then for

our Davis Cup team). The military, the arms traders, and local and imperial capitalists bank (literally) on people's fear of the Russians and anything to do with them. It is thus easy for the peace movement to dismiss people's fears of foreign invasion, fostered by cold war anti-communism, as groundless and irrational. It does so at a great cost to its further development because this fear impels many people towards a tenacious support for the defence status quo — with nuclear weapons, militarist values and a role as an enforcer of injustice, privilege and profits.

If the anti-nuclear war movement can give a credible answer to the common question of how we defend ourselves if we ditch nuclear weapons, and if the peace and socialist movements more generally can offer alternative defence

strategies to the existing system of military defence, then the prospects for a broader mobilisation of people are improved.

One of the latest peace books from England, *Nuclear-free Defence*, attempts to address the peace movement's attention to these questions. The editors want to prevent peace activists from being disarmed through lack of a theory and strategy on non-nuclear, alternative defence.

The book is the result of a questionnaire covering a broad range of defence issues which was sent to over twenty people (some well known, some not), who are representative of the diverse peace movement in Britain. They include members of the Labour, Liberal, Ecology, Socialist Workers, Scottish National and Welsh Independence parties; people from CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament), END (European Nuclear Disarmament), the Greens, Greenham Common, anarchists, independent socialists, feminists, pacifists, academics; and activists from black, gay and other community movements.

Such diversity is both a strength of the book, in demonstrating the breadth of the peace movement and its openness to ideas, and a weakness, since each contributor was allowed only 3000 words to answer seventeen questions. This results in more assertion than reasoned argument, too much repetition and no interaction between often strongly opposing views. The style lapses into clichés and slogans. These defects are frustrating, but despite the lack of rigour the book will be of some value to peace activists. The following are some of the issues dealt with.

### • Where might a military threat come from?

The idea that Russia, stretched as it is in supporting arms production and containing internal dissidence in its Eastern bloc neighbours, would want to invade Britain is attacked by the more realistic thinkers. The greatest military threat to Britain comes, in fact, from its nuclear weapons and its NATO membership, making it a target for Russian nuclear weapons. USA Cruise missiles in the UK are a bigger threat to national security than the supposed expansionist desires of the USSR. Although it is Russian weapons which are targeted on Britain, it is the USA military/imperialist strategy and the UK's independent nuclear 'deterrent' that make it so. Russophobia is the real threat — 'we have to live with the Russians or die with them' (Frank Allam, Labour member of parliament).

### • Do alternative defence strategies necessarily involve the ideology of militarism?

There is no debate that militarism (in journalist April Carter's words: 'the jingoistic nationalism, extreme glorification of the military or political and

cultural domination by the military') is anti-democratic, anti-social and anti-socialist. Views differ, however, over whether opposition to militarism means opposition to all types of military organisation. David Widgery (Socialist Workers Party), for example, doesn't see things military as necessarily bad: 'the anti-militarism of the abstract utopians doesn't require you to do very much, just "be" and hold the odd jumble sale, it manages to be simultaneously moralistic and ineffectual'.

As well as some rather unconvincing simple opposition to anything military, some contributors see the best hedge against militarist values in having democratically run defence units as an integral part of the community, sharing in socially useful community work. Internationally, Ann Pettit from Women For Life On Earth, would like to see the armed forces acting as a United Nations disaster relief force and development body working on projects such as desert reclamation, irrigation programs, malaria eradication, illiteracy campaigns and so on. This role would also alter the militarist consciousness of the people in the armies.

### • Alternative defence strategies: what practical proposals are offered?

First the worst. David Selbourne (academic and journalist) argues for more conventional armed forces and the extension of national service for a non-nuclear Britain. He argues, soundly, that 'a Gandhian moral politics of passive resistance and "satyagraha" cannot be seriously recommended to a British people which has just celebrated "victory" in the Falklands'. But this is a one-sided, simplistic reading of the conservative side of public feeling. Certainly the British left was reluctant to fully recognise the reactionary, militarist, nationalist and racist sentiments that exist in the old imperial core of many Britons, but recognising this reality should not blind us to the complexity of people and politics. The widespread and deeply rooted desire for peace, justice and cooperation that fuels the large peace and anti-war movement also exists.

Jelly-kneed 'objective' independents like Selbourne do not want to see beyond the momentary ascendance of people's backward attitudes since it would force them to adopt a radical position and perform the hard counter-hegemonic work of mobilising people and building progressive movements.

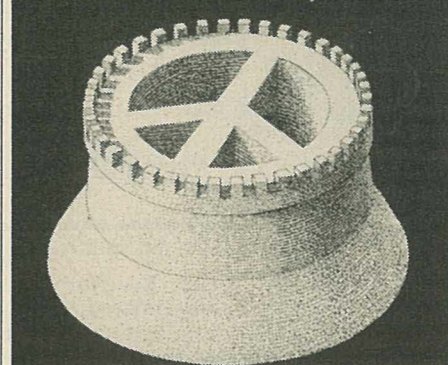
In opposition to Selbourne's status quo proposal are more radical strategies. There is general agreement that political resistance and mass non-cooperation such as strikes, economics sabotage and non-compliance against an invader are essential. Some go further and see some form of armed popular resistance as necessary to back up the non-violent resistance, 'mass resistance at the pit-

Edited by Louis Mackay and David Fernbach

## NUCLEAR-FREE DEFENCE

A symposium with contributions by

Ronald Higgins	Stephen Maxwell	Pat Arrowsmith
Frank Allam MP	John Shiers	Joan Maynard MP
Mary Kaldor	Stuart Christie	Meg Beresford
Bennie Bunsee	Ruth Wallgrove	Robert Fyson
Lisa Foley	Dafydd Elis Thomas MP	Ann Pettit
David Widgery	David Selbourne	Chris Savory
April Carter	Carole Harwood	David Taylor
Peter Tatchell		Jonathan Moore



head, the primary school and police station is only going to succeed if there is also a machine-gun under a good many pillows too' (David Widgery).

Peter Tatchell's (left Labour parliamentary candidate) proposal for territorial defence by a Citizens' Army offers the best basis for widespread, popular support. It is practical, it can counter people's fears of invasion, satisfy their need to feel secure, reduce the need for nuclear arms and alliances, and ease international tension.

Territorial defence would involve the defence of Britain from within its own borders and would be purely defensive, the military hardware would consist of 'coastal mines, surface-to-air missiles, interceptor aircraft and anti-tank guns'. A Citizens Army would involve the mobilisation of the entire population in a system of 'total war' — guerilla war and mass civilian resistance. It would be far more democratic, less militaristic and less reactionary than a professional standing army. These revolutionary and democratic changes to the armed forces would of course require the extension of democracy into other areas of British life, 'the defence of democracy requires a democratic system of defence'.

### • Is there a role for civil defence?

Yes, no, and maybe. Tatchell's defence system requires it but Carole Harwood, from Greenham Common women's peace camp, is not so sure. She found it easy to be tempted by the 'old mentality of fear and mistrust; to begin again to prepare for war'. Civil defence in a nuclear age creates illusions that nuclear war can be survived and leads to an acceptance of war and a complacency towards working to remove the causes of war, 'until the world is safe for all humankind we have no right to dig ourselves

holes in the ground to retreat into, and when it is eventually safe we shall have no need to'.

### • Women and the armed forces

April Carter's comments reflect the contention on this issue. She accepts that the principle of equal rights for women should include the right to join the armed forces if they wish. To argue, as some feminists do, that women have no place in a fighting organisation because they are naturally nurturing and pro-life is as sexist as arguing that men have no place in non-violent protest or caring and sharing groups because they are naturally aggressive. But, Carter believes, 'going into the armed forces is an extreme example of claiming the right to act like men, rather than challenging male aggressiveness'.

As I see it, 'To what ends, equality?' is the real question in the women and armies issue. Equality is a principle not isolated from the real, messily political, world. Equal rights for men and women in democratic armed resistance in El Salvador is a kettle of fish far removed from equal rights to be a member of the subjugating, anti-people standing armies of capitalism.

For a book about alternatives, on all the above issues and more, its greatest weakness is a failure to specify tactics for achieving a non-nuclear defence, and to identify the political levers we can use to transform defence policy and the nature of the military. Such a task is, admittedly, not easy. It is inhibited by recognition that defence reform can only take place alongside a more general reform of society.

Essential to any change in Britain is a Labour government which, despite its attempt to out-Thatcher Thatcher on the Malvinas, is the only avenue for legislative change. For the Labour Party to engender wider support for their recently reaffirmed commitment to unilateral nuclear disarmament, it must be able to offer a credible alternative.

For the extra-parliamentary disarmers, reform of the armed forces from within, by peace moles, is hardly on. As Lisa Foley, a socialist-feminist, puts it, 'it has proved hard enough trying to democratise the Labour Party, let alone the Army, Navy and Air Force!'.

More debate, education and propaganda are needed. Nuclear disarmament and cuts in defence expenditure are, in the long view, not enough. Better books on alternative defence strategies than this one will undoubtedly be produced but, in its defence, it is a pioneering work that shows the absence of, and need for more, rigorous thought in the area. The royalties, too, go to peace movement organisations.

*Phil Shannon works with the Social Welfare Policy Secretariat in Canberra and has been active in the anti-uranium movement for the past eight years.*

# LETTERS

Continued from page 3

nationalism and classism. It is the thread of male exploitation and domination.

When man (especially Indo-European man) set himself outside of and against nature centuries ago, he killed the 'feminine' part of his spirit. His desire to be master of all life set up a perpetual cycle of conflict. Not only must he dominate/subdue all of nature, but any people that he perceives to be 'other' — usually people of other races, cultures, religions or classes — but *always* women, for women are perceived by men as being closer to nature and therefore threatening as well as inferior.

With no recognition of his place in nature or his relationship to other living creatures and humans, man is adrift in a cold universe. The patriarchal institutions he has created, from religion to nationalism, reflect that alienation for they are based on fear, power, distrust and dominance.

He has created a split in human consciousness — a division between male and female, mind and heart, society and self, ideology and lifestyle, nature and human, the spiritual and temporal. Our society is dangerously out of balance and thus veers toward self-destruction. It can be rebalanced only by the development of a total consciousness, an ecological-feminist consciousness.

Feminists demand more than reform or what has been called revolution. Issues like childcare, equal pay for equal work and the elimination of sexist legislation are obviously necessary, but such reforms alone cannot change the hearts and minds that maintain this death-worshipping system.

Feminists do not want a piece of the male pie. We want a *new* pie. We want an end to the myth of male superiority. We want an end to male dominance in all its forms. We want an end to the phallogocentric worldview

— the rape mentality — that permeates all of society but is most obvious in the arms race, the pillage of the environment and the pornographic treatment of women. Men must raise their consciousness above their crotches — women don't want their balls, we want our lives and freedom.

If life is to continue on this planet, we must all take responsibility for our actions and intentions. Men must lay down the power they have stolen by exploiting the Earth, women and other men and be willing to challenge *all* of their assumptions and beliefs — from ethics to language to social structures. Women must dare to dream new dreams and speak them fearlessly.

We must begin a complete critique of our society as we withdraw our physical, psychic and psychological energy from the institutions that oppress us. We will not find pat answers to the vast problems that confront us, but we can develop attitudes that encourage change without fear. Attitudes that transcend violence. Attitudes that facilitate individual autonomy while still contributing to the welfare of the community.

There is much healing to do... the torn and plundered earth, our brutalised spirits. But the healing *has* begun. The new world *is* forming in the debris of the old.

May I recommend the following books to those interested in learning more: Marilyn Ferguson, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*; Marge Piercy, *Woman on the Edge of Time*; Susan Griffith, *Woman and Nature*; Mary Daly, *Gyn/Ecology* and *Beyond God the Father*; Pam McAllister (ed), *Reweaving the Web of Life*.

Becca Miller  
Adelaide

## First class

First, congratulations on Number 34, *Chain Reaction*. Every article first class.

The article 'Limits to Growth' by Ted Trainer is so important that thought should be given to how it can be made available to a much wider readership than those who read your journal. May I suggest that Ted Trainer should amplify it a bit with some statistical figures and

issue it as a cheap pamphlet. It should be possible to get it out for, say, 25c and get it out through unions etc. Overseas aid organisations should be interested. It makes the point I have always thought most important that we should be talking of over-developed nations, not under-developed nations.

On reading my letter in *Chain Reaction* 35 I realised that while the negative view that nuclear power should not proceed was fair enough, the positive side of fluidised bed power stations as pollution preventers was not given sufficient emphasis.

CA Short.  
Ryde, NSW

## Allergic reaction

*Chain Reaction* is to be congratulated on giving considerable space in its December-January issue to the serious allergy illness suffered by Maureen Magee and her children following an attack of flu (or something like flu) in 1977. Many people in Australia and other countries have in recent years suffered in a similar way, and their plight has often been made more difficult because of the unsympathetic attitude of some doctors — and often of friends.

What needs to be better known is that in addition to the groups of people who are studying and fighting allergies, there are other groups of people who have made some headway into studying the flu-like illness which often precedes the allergy symptoms. This virus which, as Maureen Magee states, affects the immune system, is not recognised, or barely recognised, by many medical men [sic], or else it is thought of as merely a slightly different form of flu. But its symptoms are different from, and in many ways more serious than, those of flu in its various forms. Many Australians heard of it for the first time when it was described in an article in the *National Times* of 23 May 1982, based on the experiences of Maureen and Jacinta Magee, but seeing these more in relation to the virus that preceded the allergies, rather than stressing the allergies themselves.

The article pointed out that since the 1930s there

have been throughout the world about 30 outbreaks of a 'mysterious epidemic' which causes 'severe pains and aches, mental changes and fatigue and muscle weakness and other symptoms'. The Royal Society of Medicine in Britain in 1978 concluded that these epidemics constitute a genuine disease, which has been given the long-winded name of myalgic encephalomyelitis, which naturally has been shortened to ME.

The important thing is that, to help sufferers in this part of the world and to get widespread medical recognition of ME (and to encourage study of the disease and possible methods of treatment), a body called the Australian and New Zealand Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Society (ANZMES) has been formed. Through meetings and a quarterly newsletter it keeps members in touch with the latest research and medical opinion on ME, together with experiences of sufferers who have tried various methods of treatment.

These include the concentration on avoidance of substances causing allergies, including limitation of diet and fasting, but do not exclude other treatments which concentrate on the ME.

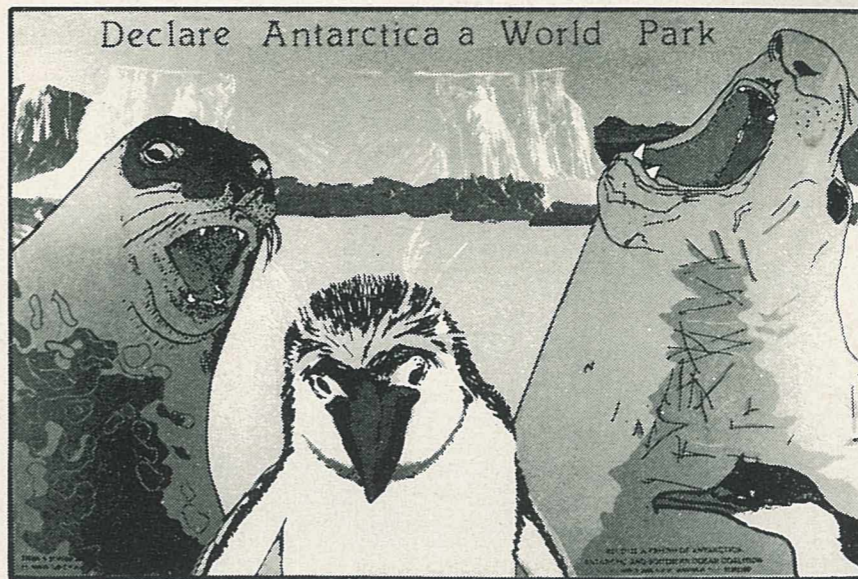
The symptoms, and the responses to different methods of treatment, vary from one individual to another. But it has certainly helped many sufferers to join the ANZMES and to understand better their condition and what is being done about it, and to be in contact with fellow-sufferers.

The address of the NSW Branch is PO Box 1021, Crows Nest, NSW 2065, and the Victorian Branch is PO Box 7, Moonee Ponds, Vic 3039.  
Len Fox  
Sydney

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.

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