

Chain Reaction

Friends of the Earth Australia

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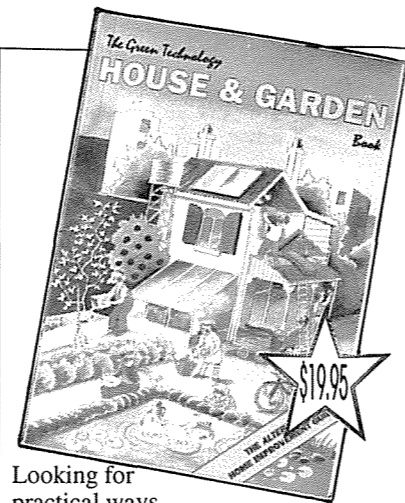
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Chain Reaction

Number 70 January 1994



- 12 Doing politics differently - the WA Greens**
Dhanu River looks at the origins of the WA Greens and discusses some of their future options.
- 16 Nice name - pity about the policies**
There are some groups in the US and Australia which sound like they are environment-friendly, but they may actually be a 'front' for industry or even support the opposite of what their name seems to reflect. *Bob Burton* does a little exposure for us.
- 20 The muzzling of the Dingo Forest Mob**
James Prest follows up on 'Right to protest under threat' (*Chain Reaction* 69) with more information on some legal actions being taken against environmentalists and environmental groups, and what to do if we get 'SLAPPED'.
- 23 Friends of the Earth special feature**
These pages include an overview of Friends of the Earth, both internationally and in Australia, and present outlines on the activities of the Australian groups. There's also a section on how to form a Friends of the Earth group or how to make your current group into a FOE group.
- 35 International Friends of the Earth Meeting**
Clive Rosewarne reports positively on the proceedings of the 1993 FOE International annual general meeting.

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| letters | 2 |
| hello again flower | 5 |
| earth news | 7 |
| resources | 36 |
| reviews | 39 |

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News Communiqué

The WISE News Communiqué is an invaluable source of news on energy developments, particularly relating to nuclear activities, and can be used for newsletters and research as well as being of interest to the general reader.

The Communiqué is published in English 20 times per year by WISE-Amsterdam using articles from relays in 11 countries and a world-wide network of contacts. Selected articles are translated into Spanish, Japanese and Finnish.

WISE was established in 1978 by safe energy activists as an international switchboard focussing on nuclear issues.

For subscription information:

World Information Service on Energy
PO Box 87, Glen Aplin, Queensland, 4381

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Backstage

This is a special issue of *Chain Reaction* just like all issues are special. They all reflect a huge amount of thought and work, both in the words printed and in the events they describe.

This issue focuses on Friends of the Earth, particularly the activities of the groups in Australia. It is intended to provide a description of Friends of the Earth so that people in Australia and overseas can get an idea of the organisation, and perhaps even understand why it does what it does. It is also aimed at encouraging people to join or form Friends of the Earth groups. This issue also serves as a form of an Annual Report for Friends of the Earth, although it is not so strict as to limit descriptions to one year, and finances are not described because they are so small that if we looked closely we might decide that we are not viable and give up! (Not really, we'd just start planning another fundraiser.)

A large part of the FOE material in this issue has been gathered, edited and designed by Dimity Hawkins, one of FOE Australia's National Liaison Officers. She did well with a task which was difficult not least because most Friends of the Earth groups do not have paid workers, and they are not always the best at meeting deadlines. Thank you, Dimity.

We also include other interesting items such as the article by Bob Burton on 'front groups', further material from James Prest on legal action against environmentalists, and an article from the office of one of the WA Green senators, discussing some of the reasons why they are what they are.

There is an edition of the magazine currently being prepared which will cover some issues from the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, with particular emphasis on Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders.

There is also still time to send us items for the humorous issue. We do not expect all humour to be side-splitting, gentle irony will be considered, as will scratchings of cartoons. Send us your material - we're looking forward to it.

Larry O'Loughlin and Clare Henderson, Editors

Letters

DEST returns

Following Cam Walker's (*Chain Reaction* 69) run-down of Peak Conservation Organisation Meetings and the mention of my secondment to the Department of the Environment (DEST), I would like to take this opportunity to elaborate a little on that position. The secondment to DEST is a unique position and one that I have not encountered elsewhere in the Federal Government. It has provided the opportunity for the conservation movement to benefit from first hand knowledge of the Department of the Environment, its officers and policy making structure. It has also provided us with the opportunity to make some long lasting changes to attitudes and culture within the Department.

The position was initially designated as a six month secondment in the Commonwealth Environment Protection Authority (CEPA) but was consequently extended for another six months covering the whole of the Department. In the final six months I am working on a program to introduce departmental staff to the culture and issues of the environment movement. This

includes the incorporation of a staff training module on the environment movement and how we, the movement, can work with the Government. I am also setting up a series of seminars within the Department where environment group representatives are invited to speak to staff and I am developing a set of possible secondments between the Department and the movement.

While the seminars have been occurring on an *ad hoc* basis it is vital that this becomes more regular so that we get as much exposure within the Department as industry groups are receiving.

I currently report to the Department's Secretary and a steering committee consisting of directors of The Wilderness Society, Greenpeace, the Australian Conservation Foundation, World Wide Fund for Nature and a representative of the Conservation Councils. I am also open to assist other groups when seeking information on the bureaucracy.

The position has largely had a networking and liaison function and I will continue to work towards leaving a permanent impression on the Department via formal

mechanisms for continuing liaison. The expectation is that the informal links will continue as in the past.

Having begun my 'green career' in an activist capacity I believe in the need to keep the connection with the grass roots running through all levels of decision making. This is particularly relevant in Canberra where it is easy for government representatives to forget what they are really trying to achieve. For this reason the continual flow of information and personal contact via on-site visits, secondments and seminars is vital to environmental protection in the country.

If people want further information about my position or are wanting to speak to the department on FOE's behalf they can contact Cam Walker at FOE Fitzroy or speak to me directly on (06) 274 1647.

Kate Angus
Special Adviser (Conservation Groups), Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories
Canberra ACT

Campaign Against Violence Project

This is a letter to religious, social justice, peace and environmental organisations and publications of all kinds around Australia. Greetings to you all.

We too are an organisation trying to help bring about a more just and moral world. Our inspiration is the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, whose twin guiding lights were truth and non-violence. We are small and relatively new, but are striving

to take some meaningful steps that will help us in our mission.

One of these steps is a project to begin a campaign in Australia to challenge and confront the attitudes and behaviour that is leading to ever more violence in our society. The Campaign Against Violence would be a major education and reform campaign undertaken jointly by ourselves and its Members, who would be individuals, families, organisations, or any grouping.

A minimum of 1,200 members are needed to make the envisaged campaign viable. If you are possibly interested in becoming a member and would like to receive more information, please write to: Campaign Against Violence Project, PO Box 52, Numurkah, Victoria, 3636, enclosing a stamped self-addressed envelope.

With fraternal best wishes to all,

Stephen Murphy
Co-ordinator
Campaign Against Violence Project, International Gandhi Movement

Waste hots up

I'd like to inform readers about a very serious and urgent matter.

The Queensland State Labor Government has begun to build the first radioactive waste storage facility in Australia. It is located near Esk, just 100km from Brisbane and very close to some of South East Queensland's major freshwater supply dams and fresh produce farms.

So far there has been

hardly any proper community consultation between the government and the people of Brisbane and other towns nor has a proper EIS been done of the site itself.

For further information contact the local residents action group: Communities Against Radioactive Dumps (CARD), 42 Latters Lane, Esk, Qld. Tel: (074) 241 253 or write to Mr Ken Hayward MLA, Department of Health, PO Box 80, Brisbane, Qld, 4001.

Currently 1,000 people a week move into south east Queensland from interstate, a lot of them settle near the main transport routes this waste would be taking. We all agree that radioactive waste has to go somewhere, however there might be safer options.

Gaby Luft
Maleny Qld

Green, Jewish and loving it

I would like to share what it's like to be a Jewish environmentalist. In the past eleven years of involvement in the WA conservation movement I have met many hundreds of people from all walks of life. With only a handful of these have I shared that I am Jewish despite the fact that this has profoundly influenced my involvement in social activism.

First, some family background. My great-grandparents were all orthodox Yiddish speaking Jews from Lithuania who migrated to South Africa in the first decades of this century. I grew up the second of four children in an

owning-class family on a large farm in what was war-torn Rhodesia. Of my parents, my mother made the most effort to pass on Jewish rituals and ideas. I had a formal barmitzva and did attend Shul (Synagogue) on important festivals. In my late teens I strongly rejected my family, Jewish and class backgrounds, a process which corresponded to arriving at 18 to begin university in Australia.

Since coming to Denmark on WA's south coast nearly six years ago, I have worked on my personal growth, as well as continuing to be active in the environment movement. I have helped form men's support groups, and participated in activities which link personal development with wide world changing. My reclaiming of my Jewish heritage has coincided with re-establishing closer links with my parents who visit each year from Zimbabwe, where they continue to farm. While I do not share their owning class values, I am learning to accept them deeply. They have become supportive of my environmental path.

This past year I have accelerated my reclaiming being proud to be Jewish, with support of non-Jewish allies and friends. Since April, I have held Shabbat (Sabbath) shared meals on Friday evenings, with simple prayers being said, and after dinner, a personal sharing, for example, of the cultural heritages of the people present. I learnt how the internalised oppression operating in many Jewish people or people with Jewish ancestors, is

Letters

well hidden and needs to be brought out in the open. For, underneath my and many other Jewish people's outward competence and calmness is a world of fear and terror; a fear that danger and persecution is just around the corner.

I find it easy to cry and laugh when I am closely listened to and supported as I share such Jewish issues as the Holocaust, how isolating it was to grow up amongst black working-class people or as a Jewish boy at a private Anglican boarding school, and the dislike I had for other Jews. Likewise I can feel deeply as I forgive myself for cutting myself off from my parents and family, or when I read aloud about the support many non-Jewish people have provided to Jewish people, often at great risk to themselves, this century.

I would like to share some of the insights I have had into what makes me tick as a community Jewish activist.

- I have dedicated my life to protection and encouragement of biodiversity. In reclaiming and supporting the continuance of my own Jewish culture, and by interrupting anti-semitism I am directly supporting this biodiversity. A related insight is that un-

less I am proud of my own cultural heritage then my efforts to support fourth world peoples retain their culture will be less effective, and I will not so readily be accepted as an ally by individuals from those cultures.

- Beneath the skin of my competence, skills and organisational roles in the social change movement, is a considerable terror that I am not safe where I am, that society will soon turn against me. I now see that I am genuinely at home where I am, that I have not realistically judged the threats around me. Furthermore, I no longer have to make myself indispensable to community organisations in order to be accepted. I am learning to greet each and every person I meet as if they are eager to be my closed ally and friend.

- When I rejected my Jewishness, I also rejected my culture's focus on children and family. The more I reclaim being proud to be Jewish, the more I able to relate well to children and teenagers. This has brought much happiness into my life as I recently was invited to be at the birth of my friends' baby, and encouraged to be close to a number of other children of my friends, many of whom are environmentalists also. I feel a much greater freedom and flexibility in thinking about families, babies, child raising and so on.

- I have found my home here in Australia. What a wonderful relief. I don't have keep wandering. At the same time I can now acknowledge that there is a place for a Jewish

homeland in Israel (as well as Palestinian homeland), and that I have strong senses of identity to other places and communities. I am a Jew who is no longer a homeless Jew!

- I now understand much more clearly the links between my owning class background (as a wealthy land and factory owning Jewish family) and Jewish oppression. Jewish people are permitted into countries by the ruling class provided that they provide certain services (often unpopular ones such as financial, tax collection etc.). They are then often scapegoated when times get bad. Jewish people can find much greater security by building links with other progressive movements rather than throwing their lot in precarious liaison with ruling elites.

For myself, I realise that I understand why my family actively cooperated in Ian Smith's oppressive Rhodesia. How dangerous and futile this was! My family did it because they so desperately wanted to create a safer world in which to live. I understand why, and I am in a better position to ensure Jewish people build links with movements for a peaceful world, because it is with these movements that our true security and survival lies. So I have increasingly made a commitment to identify myself as a Jew when I publicly support working class, anti-racist, gay, environmental and related movements. In this way common bonds of support are being forged.

- I have realised that two huge but secret parts of my

life are expressions of my suppressed Jewishness. The first is my clarinet music (I seem to be able to play a lot of wild improved Yiddish music almost intuitively) and my long walks (which I used to do all alone as a boy in order to escape the tensions of a racially divided and class torn upbringing). I am now coming out with my music into all sorts of gatherings, and I am increasingly going on long walks into nature with other people.

- The more I reclaim my Jewishness the more I can reclaim my closeness with other men. I now understand why Jewish fathers are often very distant from their sons, even as they love them dearly. I understand rites of passage better, how oppressed all men have been, and the critical need for men to provide good models to their children for how to be intimate parents.

- I have not found it easy to rest well. By reclaiming my Jewishness I am now accepting the Shabbat back into my life, one special day a week which I can spend with friends, go for walks in nature, play music, be with children, and not have to worry or think about current projects in which I am involved.

I see that the more I reclaim my Jewishness the more powerfully I will embrace what is best in all the cultures (both human and non-human) in the world. I see that the more I reclaim my Jewishness (and this does not mean slavishly readopting rigid rituals and false beliefs) the more effectively I can be an ally to other oppressed peoples and ecosystems.

I see that I am surrounded by non Jewish allies who provide magnificent support and who encourage me reclaim my Jewishness. This gives me a wonderful place of strength in my heart. I no longer have to search for an identity. I am the wedge-tailed eagle high about Mount Lindesay looking down on beautiful Denmark feeling - I belong here, this is my place.

I am regaining my sense of grief for the earth. I am sure I will be able to cry for all the forest I have seen destroyed and abused, just as I am learning to cry for myself and all my Jewish people, who have been so badly hurt. But I go slowly, one step at a time. Soon I

will be able to cry for the whole earth, but not quite yet ...

Basil Schur
Denmark WA

Which road?

I travelled through Karlamilyi (Rudall River National Park) in October 1993 and want to raise an issue about revegetation. I was travelling with a group of local Aboriginal people (now becoming known collectively as 'Martu') and we were going to parts of the area that they had not been to for a few years. The country I am talking about is to the north and west of CRA Exploration's Camp Tracy at the Kintyre

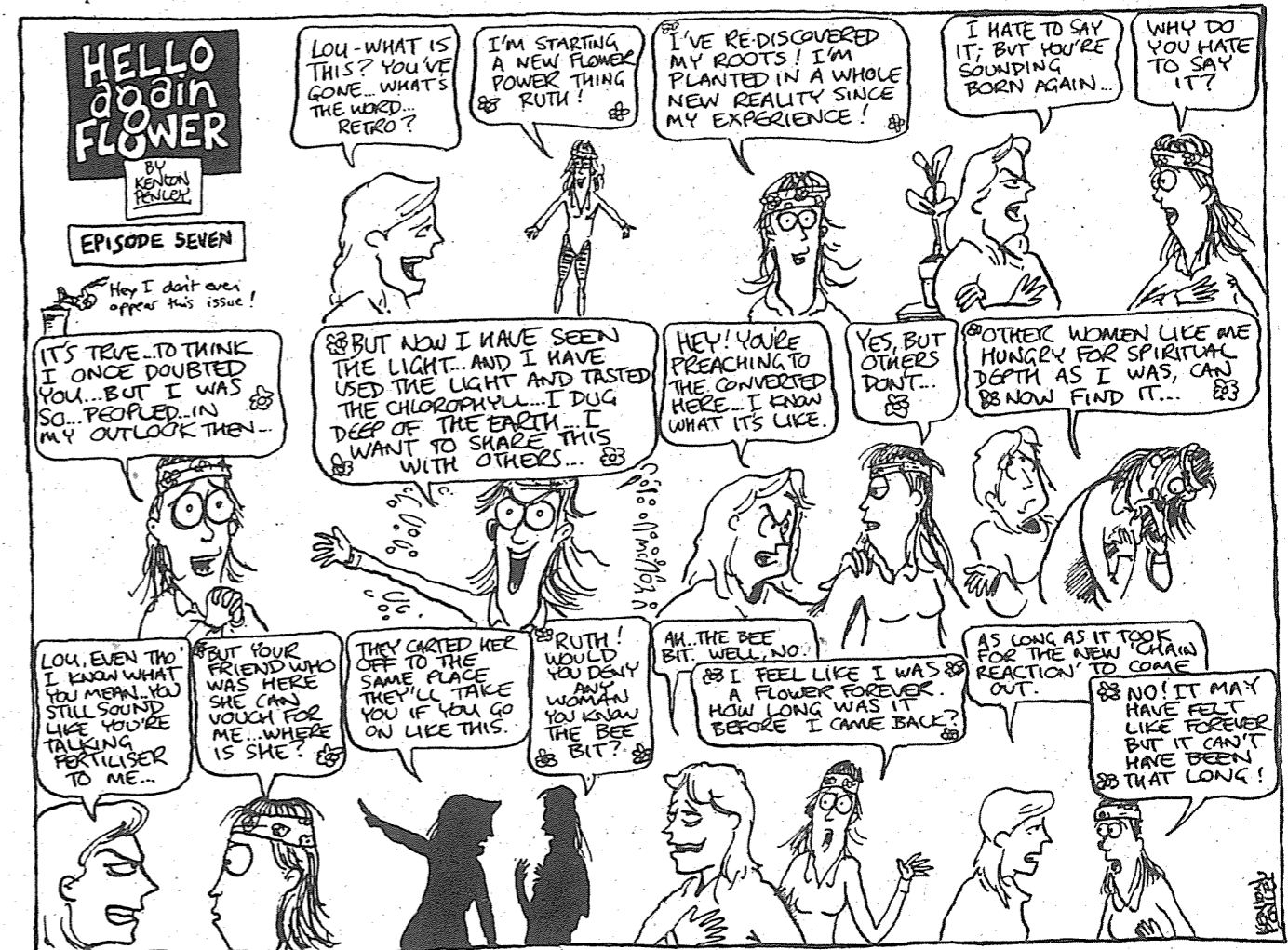
uranium deposit. We had driven through the gates to the camp (who's locking up the country?) and spoken to the two staff currently in residence (considerably less than the camp's eighty-odd capacity).

The Martu knew that we could follow the road we were on and that it would take us back down to the main western access road to the National Park. However, we got to what was obviously an old drill pad and the road and surrounding bush was devastated by gouges and piles of earth. The road disappeared under mounds of earth and we drove through the bush to attempt to regain the road. After about a kilometre we were

successful, but after another hour or so of driving, the road once again disappeared, this time into a maze of seismic lines. These are tracks cut by mineral exploration crews. We gave up and had to turn back, retracing our steps. We were fortunate that we had enough fuel and that the maze of seismic lines did not disorientate us completely.

One of the only benefits that mineral exploration provides is access to country for the Martu. Does revegetation include ripping up roads that the exploration company has put in?

Nick Thieberger
Ainslie ACT



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Earth News



Tigers coming apart

Time is running out for tigers as illegal trade continues for use of their body parts in pharmaceuticals and foods, particularly in Taiwan.

Chinese traditional medicine such the *Materia Medica* alleges that tiger bones can be used to remedy rheumatic pain, typhoid fever, malaria, rabies, scabies, convulsions, boils and to expel spirits. The ground bones are mixed in wines and tonics

or used in pills and balms.

A 1980 report in *Taiwan Trade Trends* magazine cited one Taiwanese brewery as annually importing 2,000 kg of tiger bone – representing about 200 tigers – to make 100,000 bottles of tiger bone wine. One restaurant outside Taipei imports up to two dozen tiger penises a year from Hong Kong and serves tiger penis soup, considered a powerful aphrodisiac, for US\$320 a bowl.

Since 1900, the world's tiger populations have gone from more than 100,000 to

5,000 with only five of the eight tiger species remaining, the other three disappearing since 1950.

There are only an estimated 200 Siberian tigers living outside captivity, halved in the last year and only 100 tigers in the wild in China, once home to 40,000 tigers of four species. Historically, the decline of tigers was caused by habitat loss, big game hunting and government extermination programs. Today the biggest threat is the demand for bones and body parts. A poacher may receive US\$15,000 for a single tiger; the tiger parts can be sold for as much as US\$60,000.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was adopted in 1973 by 108 countries. It has focused on poaching and activities in the range states, but has not made related efforts in consuming countries such as Taiwan and China.

Earth Island Institute in the US describes CITES as a failure because it is predicated on the management rather than the abolition of the traffic in endangered

species – except in the cases of direct threat to the survival of species.

CITES, however has recommended that all countries consider banning wildlife trade with Taiwan and China because those two countries have not reduced their illegal trade in tiger parts and rhino horn. Rhinos are also under threat of extinction because of the use of their horns as an aphrodisiac.

In November 1993 US President Clinton rejected the demand for bones and trade sanctions on these two countries.

Taiwan passed its Wildlife Conservation Law in 1989 and on paper the law is much stricter than the CITES regulations. An investigation by Earth Island Institute and other organisations found, however, that Taiwan has a central role in the trafficking of virtually every species indigenous to the region – as well as other wildlife as far away as Africa and the US.

Sources: *Earth Island Journal*, Spring 1993; *Earth Island Journal*, Summer 1993; *Animal Activist Alert*, Volume XI, Issue 4, December 1993.

Earth News

Mobil - the unacceptable risk

The Coalition against the Refinery Expansion, Altona Environment Action Group, Greenpeace, Hazardous Materials Action Group and the Western Independent Network organised a public meeting on 16 November 1993 to discuss the dangers of oil and butadiene handling at Point Gellibrand and Breakwater Piers Williamstown, and the proposed expansion of the Mobil refinery in Altona.

The main focus of the meeting was the use by Mobil and Shell of a cheaper, imported, dirtier oil. The imported crude oil has a higher sulphur content and is leading to acid rain and other problems in the Westernport Bay area of Victoria, in particular.

Environment groups recently released a risk study of Point Gellibrand and Breakwater piers which had been kept secret from the public. It concluded that the risk posed to residents by the facility 'was unacceptable', and showed that in a worst case scenario up to one kilometre around the facility could be devastated. Other dangers highlighted included the transport of Butadiene through the

main shopping and residential areas of Williamstown which could cause an explosion of 200 metres to either side of a road tanker.

The Mobil expansion will also further increase health and environment problems in Altona, Williamstown, Port Phillip Bay and Westernport Bay and a higher concentration of sulphur dioxide (acid rain) will be emitted into Melbourne's atmosphere.

Contacts: Shirley Winton (03) 97 2347 Colleen Hartland (03) 689 9754 or Paul Adams (03) 687 7027.

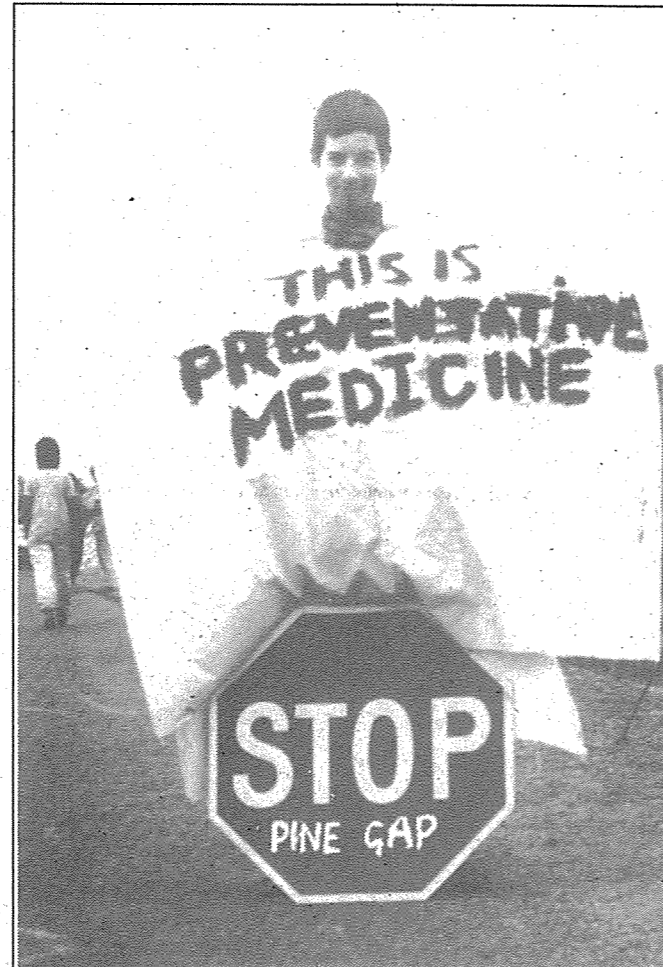
World Bank - 50 years are enough

July 1994 marks the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Bretton Woods Institutions: the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). During July 1994 groups from around the world will be expressing their concern over the destructive economic, social and environmental impact of these institutions.

These actions will lead up to the to the annual meeting of the World Bank and IMF that will take place in Madrid in early October.

Friends of the Earth groups endorsed the '50 Years are Enough' campaign slogan at their 1993 international annual meeting.

Contact:
Bank Information Center
2025 I Street, NW, Suite 522,
Washington DC 20006,
United States
Ph: 202-466-8191
Fax: 202-466-8189
E-mail: bicusa@igc.apc.org



Pine Gap protest 1995

The Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition has agreed that there will be a major national protest at the Pine Gap base in 1995. Pine Gap, south west of Alice Springs in central Australia, is probably the most important 'joint facility' in Australia as it is used for 'sucking up' radio transmissions across a wide spectrum from Australia, south-east Asia, China and parts of the old USSR. It also incidentally listens in on many Australian telephone calls.

From 1995, the Australian Government can give notice to the United States that it no longer wishes to pay to host the United States Base.

The protest will be held over the Easter weekend, and it is planned to have a one-day conference, one day of workshops, one of cultural activities and one day of mass actions.

This will be the third national protest at Pine Gap. The first was the 1983 Women's Peace Camp. The second happened in 1987.

For more information contact: PeACe, GPO Box 1025, Adelaide 5001. Ph: (08) 410 1197 Fax: (08) 410 0588

Source: Nurrungar News, November 1993.

Buckley and Nurrungar

In September 1993 US groups organised demonstrations at the Buckley Air National Guard Field in Aurora, Colorado, US. This facility has been described as a companion to the Nurrungar US base in South Australia.

The Buckley station has a public mission to download from Defence Support Program satellites, but it has grown to nine radomes, and has a large National Security Agency contingent. It is believed responsible for downloading SIGINT (Signals Intelligence) satellites such as Vortex, Magnum, and Jumpseat. It is being expanded between 1993 and 1996 with the addition of a new radome and several new parallel processing computers.

While expansion seems unjustifiable in the aftermath of the Cold War, President Clinton has shown himself to be very much in favor of new National Security Agency (NSA) and National Reconnaissance Office missions. Colorado members of Congress are very much in favor of keeping quiet about Buckley, because expansion will mean adding 750 intelligence analysts to the present employee base of 3,000.

Buckley's expansion may be tied to the predicted closing of Nurrungar in 1997 or so. Or, it may be tied to the imminent launch of a new intelligence satellite capable of 'hyper-spectral imaging', or simultaneous imaging in several frequencies at once.

Source: Loring Wirbel, Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission.

SIPRI details shift by arms makers

In its annual book on the state of the world's weapons technology, security, and arms trade, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) detailed a shift by defence companies to greater reliance on arms exports to boost their earnings. The *SIPRI Yearbook 1993: World Armaments and Disarmament*, notes that companies have turned to exports in the face of falling domestic sales after the Cold War.

The chapter on arms production and trade outlines the general contraction of the arms industry as evidenced by the increase in mergers, joint ventures and corporate reductions. Exports have become a key element in defence companies' attempts to maintain profit levels.

SIPRI examined recent fighter aircraft sales, traditionally a large portion of arms exports. The study said there is a 'commercial imperative to export' because of the domestic military cutbacks, and points to 1993 sales of war planes by American, French and British firms.

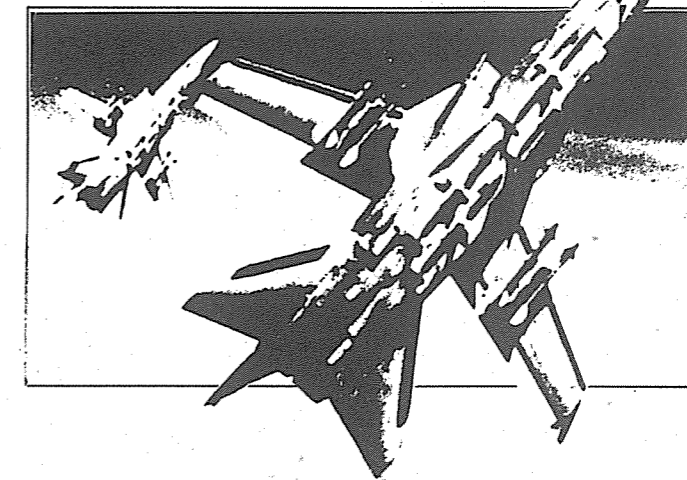
For example, SIPRI noted that US sales of 72 F-

15s to Saudi Arabia and 150 F-16s to Taiwan last year gave much publicity to the arms trade but, 'the manner of the announcement [of the sales] concentrated attention on the employment and balance-of-payments aspects of exports'.

Domestic economic concerns have driven France to sell additional arms as well. Reduced procurement of the Mirage-2000 by the French air force required the plane's maker, Dassault Aviation, 'to rely on exports'. The Yearbook noted, it was 'in these circumstances that the French Government decided to permit the export of 60 Mirage-2000-5 fighters to Taiwan in 1992.'

The UK has also pushed exports as a way to keep aircraft lines open. When England's Royal Air Force decided to end its procurement of the Tornado fighter, 'Prime Minister John Major travelled to Riyadh to confirm that Saudi Arabia would move ahead with contracts' for the plane. At the time, Major hailed the Saudi sale, saying, 'Orders abroad mean jobs at home.'

Source: Arms Trade News, Nov. 1993.



Irradiation out

Two United States poultry farms, the only ones approved by the US Department of Agriculture to irradiate poultry, have cancelled their irradiation programs with Vindicator Inc, the first and only US food irradiation firm.

The poultry industry's reluctance to embrace irradiation represents a serious setback to Vindicator, which has yet to gain any major food company or supermarket clients and was counting on irradiating poultry to reverse its spiralling losses.

Source: Multinational Monitor, November 1993

Looks good on paper

Under orders from President Bill Clinton, all US Federal agencies will switch to using a significant amount of recycled paper, despite intensive lobbying by the American paper industry. The executive order means that the US Government, the single largest purchaser of paper in the world, will be buying dramatically lower volumes of unrecycled or virgin-grade stationery for its office needs across the US and internationally.

Source: Graphix, November 1993.

Earth News

Forestry Commission 'misleads Minister'

Spokesperson for North-East Forest Alliance (NEFA), Barrie Griffiths, said on 15 November 1993 that State Forests of NSW (formerly known as the NSW Forestry Commission) has been misleading the public and the NSW Minister with false information about current logging operations and the status of old growth forests.

Mr Griffiths was responding to statements on ABC radio by the Minister, Mr Souris, accusing NEFA of a misinformation campaign regarding woodchip operations by Boral Timber Division.

Mr Souris denies that logs from old trees are har-

vested for woodchips, or that trees are felled specifically for woodchips, and asserts that logging for woodchips on private property is limited to "residues from milling" which would otherwise be burnt. We have evidence including photographs from recent site inspections and Forestry Commission documents, that these statements are false, with respect to past and current operations in Gloucester, Chichester and other Management Areas, in State Forests and in leasehold forests,' Mr Griffiths said.

'Even Boral admits that a significant percentage of the total annual export volume from Newcastle is not derived from sawmill residues but from sources which include entire trees felled for woodchipping. On 14 April 1992 in Newcastle local court the operations manager for Boral Timber, Mr Gallagher, admitted that approximately 85,000 tonnes, 25 per cent of the annual volume, of woodchips are obtained from these sources; and recently

Mr George Day from Boral admitted woodchip supplies were currently being obtained from mature forest trees in Barrington Tops State Forest.'

Mr Griffiths said a report on the situation in Barrington Tops and Stewarts Brook State Forests had been presented to the new Commissioner for Forests, Mr Watkins, on November 3, calling for urgent action, but there had been no response.

Mr Griffiths said that the Minister's statement that logging was not occurring in moratorium areas was irrelevant - NEFA has not alleged such operations are occurring.

Mr Souris also said that 92 per cent of old growth eucalypt forest in NSW is already included in reserves. This ridiculous statement comes from the Forestry Commission's Annual Report for 1989/90, in which two million hectares of forest in National Parks is classified as old growth - in fact very little is old growth. NEFA estimates that in North-East NSW less than 5 per cent of Eucalypt forests on good soils and moderate slope remain as old growth - other authorities, such as Professor Recher, cite a figure of less than 3 per cent', Mr Griffiths said.

'The situation in the Barrington region is a scandal. The new Commissioner and the Minister must enquire into the situation themselves, and take appropriate action immediately.'

Further information:
North-East Forest Alliance,
Barrie Griffiths
(065) 77 3105.

Get your action on TV

ASEED UK is inviting campaign groups from around the world to send in video material for *Hot Spots* - a weekly five minute radical environmental activist bulletin to be shown on Sky Television. Sky TV is a satellite station broadcasting to millions of viewers in Europe. It is likely that the program will be shown by other broadcasters around the world in the future. This is the first time that environmental and economic justice groups will have their own regular international TV news.

Each bulletin will carry 4-5 stories which have happened in the last three weeks. Each item will be between 15-90 seconds. *Hot Spots* will be made from footage shot by campaign groups. We are therefore inviting groups to send us video footage of direct actions, press stunts and campaigns events. All formats and quality are acceptable - Hi8, SVHS, 8mm, U-Matic, Beta, even VHS! Send no more than ten minutes worth of footage per story including:

- general shots over which we can explain the campaign issue;
- interviews which give a brief overview of the issue;
- shots of action; and
- a list of what is shot, who is interviewed, and a summary of the main story.

Contact: Thomas Harding
ASEED/Small World 225A
Brecknock Road London
N19 5AA, UK
Tel: 44 71 267 1886

Citizens campaign

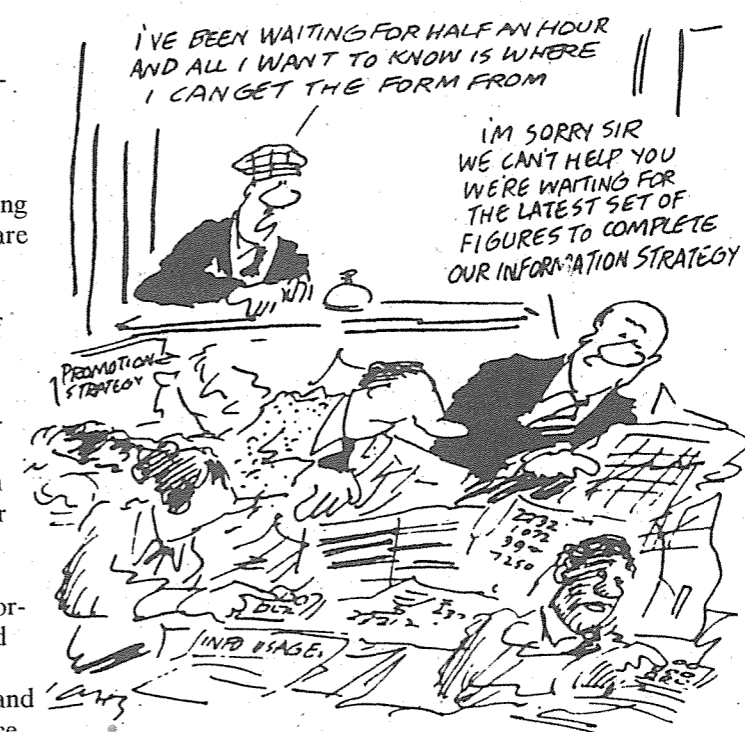
Friends of the Earth Scotland is establishing the Scottish Citizens Action Program on the Environment (SCAPE). The guiding principles of the project are to:

- make individuals and communities aware of their current entitlements and of their ability to secure information in their own right, rather than turn to FOE to act on their behalf;
- train people to make use of freedom of information legislation and the information gathered as a result; and
- promote good practice in regulatory authorities through establishing systems and making responses which indicate a more open culture.

The impetus for the program came from a study that found few people were aware of their rights and that even when they were anxious about an environmental problem, they lacked the confidence to go to the relevant authority to ask for information. A survey carried out by FOE Scotland reinforced this.

It was found that 50 per cent of Scottish local authorities were unable to let FOE volunteers see a public register of air polluting industries, despite being required to do so by legislation. In some cases the authority refused to allow access as they had misinterpreted the new law.

Freedom of access to information is seen by most green groups as critical for securing environmental im-



provements and for monitoring compliance with regulations. The impression can be created, however, that this is a role to be carried out by powerful organisations, like Friends of the Earth, on behalf of the public, rather than equipping citizens to use such information on their own behalf.

A key component of the SCAPE program has been the publication of *Protecting Our Environment - A Citizen's Guide to Environmental Rights and Action in Scotland*.

In addition FOE Scotland has set up training courses for people interested in the problem of air polluting processes. Information about everything from incinerators to car spraying workshops must now be held on a public register.

Source: FOE Link,
October - December 1993.

Worst case scenarios

The United States *Clean Air Act* is about to undergo new changes. The new 'worst case scenario' provision due to be incorporated into the legislation in late 1993 will require companies to publicly declare the worst that could happen if high risk chemicals are released through equipment failure or human error.

While the new provision cannot guarantee that companies will accurately estimate risk, its unprecedented demand for an assessment of what is truly 'worst' will make under-reporting difficult. The provision will expose which companies are putting communities at risk and may provoke communities to develop more robust emergency plans.

Source: FOE United States
Newsletter, October 1993

Australian National Pollutant Inventory

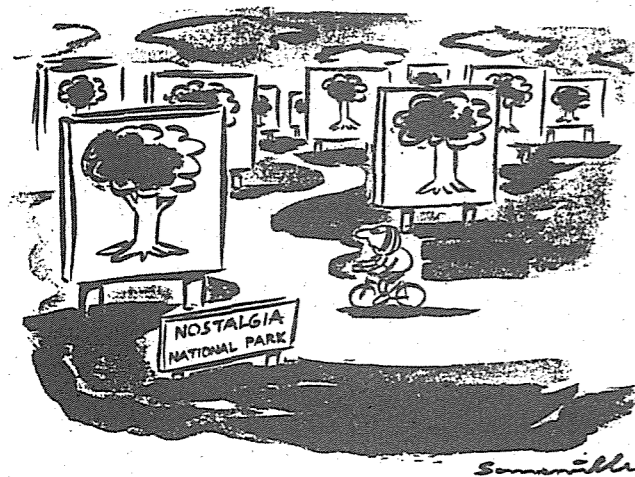
Prime Minister Keating, in his December 1992 Statement on the Environment, committed \$5.9 million over the next four years to establish a legislated National Pollutant Inventory (NPI) in consultation with the State and Territory Governments. The Inventory will progressively bring together data on the emission of pollutants to the air, water and land.

Overseas experience has shown that pollutant inventories hold promise as a tool for risk reduction for three reasons: by being publicly available they do involve the public; they provide an impetus to move from end-of-pipe controls to multi-media reduction; and inventories provide a baseline.

The National Pollutant Inventory will bring together data on emissions of concern under a common management system, with the objectives of:

- minimising pollution and waste through increased awareness, with considerable potential for cost-savings;
- answering public calls for public right-to-know;
- linking data on pollutants of different types and sources;
- tracking trace hazardous substances which aren't being monitored systematically in the ambient environment; and
- aiding pro-active Government planning of environmental management.

Source: The Environment
Portfolio, 1993.



Cartoon: Phil Somerville in 'Blank'n'white'n'green' (see review p 39).

Doing politics differently —the WA Greens

What do the Greens (WA) stand for and where do they come from? What is the framework for what they do and the decisions that they make? Dhanu River from the office of Senator Dee Margetts looks at their origins and expresses some of his thoughts on the Greens.

THE GREENS (WA) was formed from the felt need for a political alternative. The ALP had gone New Right and there seemed little chance of reforming it. The Democrats existed, but did not seem more than reformist. The Nuclear Disarmament Party (NDP) had come and gone with what was seen as a 'take-over attempt' by the Socialist Workers Party. People committed to the environment, social justice, peace, and philosophies of widespread social change started to feel the only way to be represented politically was to set up new parties.

The Greens (WA) was formed through amalgamation of four political parties. The oldest was the Jo Valentine Peace Group, formed around the core of the support for the old NDP and the Senator originally elected as an NDP candidate. Then there was the Alternative Coalition (AC), running mainly in Perth with a strong social justice-human rights-Aboriginal rights platform coupled with concern for the environment. There was the Green Party, based in North Fremantle and associated with the national network of political Green Parties, and the Green

Development Party, a network of green people, alternative types, farmers, woodworkers and others in south west WA. Green Development brought an awareness of rural issues, an emphasis on regionalism, and inputs from radical eco-philosophies.

After fighting one election separately, the four groups amalgamated. It was a somewhat stressful process bringing some very divergent positions together, with the Jo Valentine Peace Group, Alternative Coalition and Green Development agreeing to come together first as the Green Earth Alliance. This became the Greens (WA) when the Green Party joined, allowing the use of the registered name 'Greens'.

While the point should not be overdrawn, it can be said that the nature of the Greens (WA) was formed in the amalgamation process. Green parties everywhere generally give credence to the 'four pillars' of Green ethics; ecology, social justice, peace, and participatory democracy. In the Greens (WA) these all took on certain strengths and meanings. The input from Jo and her group and the many people who worked with People for Nuclear Disarmament (PND) and its precursors were strong elements in the Greens (WA) and a lot of Jo's emphasis on peace issues continued when she became a Senator from the Greens. Dee Margetts, as a former representative of PND and long-time peace campaigner continues that emphasis.

As an amalgamation of at least two 'Green' parties, and a party that identifies itself primarily as Green, there has always been a predominant focus on environment issues. The AC, as a party mainly involved in social justice brought in many activists for whom social issues are their major focus. While each group may have had a predominant 'flavour' and brought skills in specific areas, all recognized the validity of all the issues, and their interlocking nature.

One of the things that most distinguishes the Greens (WA) is the emphasis on participatory democracy, although this has also led to many of the more intense discussions and was one of the main points of dissension in the amalgamation of the Green Party and



Senators Dee Margetts and Christobel Chamarette face the media on the 1993 Budget. (Photograph courtesy Canberra Times)

the Green Earth Alliance. It continues to be a point of ongoing discussion with the national Greens. The ultimate structure of the political party 'Greens (WA)' is the result of finding ways to bring four very diverse groups, and many interested newcomers, together in a way that they all felt they had clear input and a measure of control, and yet could form a functional organisation.

Participatory democracy

Basically, our view is that participatory democracy means that people have power over the decisions made concerning them. This is *not* the same as representative democracy, where people have some choice over who will make decisions in their name. Three issues and principles arise out of this.

The first is the commitment to small scale. The more people that are involved, the harder it is to be heard, the harder it is for the group to understand and accommodate real and specific

problems that arise. A first principle is to keep groups small and push for as much self-sufficiency as possible, since this gives the group the greatest autonomy and control, as well as enabling greater diversity.

The second issue is that of information. It is not possible for people to contribute intelligently or meaningfully to decision-making without adequate information. Conventional politics says: let the experts decide for you. Green politics says: information must be passed around, not just 'made available' but communicated. In practice this is difficult. How much information do we need and can we use, and how much time and energy does all this take? Again, the Green ideal is to reduce the demand, to move away from the situation where global decisions which will affect the framework of human society and activity are made constantly in our name in a jargon-laden techno-speak that may take years to unravel. Instead we would see

regional control and self-sufficiency with technical processes being closed loops, not based on unseen despoilation and exports of wastes to other communities or global commons.

A third issue is time. It is not possible for everyone to be involved effectively if there are hundreds of major decisions being made each week in different aspects of our lives before we even hear about them. Participation in decision-making works intrinsically against rush, although if there is genuine urgency people are capable of mobilising an immense energy quickly.

The Greens (WA) is a confederation of Local Groups which function as the primary decision making bodies. It tries to embody participatory principles in its structure. Each group sends a representative to a Reps Council. The representatives cannot make decisions, they are there solely to represent the views of their group, stating any formal position and trying to fill in the gaps about where the thinking of the group

is at. They also are there to listen and take back any issue needing decision. Obviously this takes time and commitment and an issue for decision can go back and forth between local groups and the Reps Council several times. Greens policy is formulated in policy working groups (open to anyone), and then must go through a process of gaining the approval of the membership through publication and discussion in local groups. Local groups through Reps Council can approve 'interim policy' with a less involved process.

Real-life politics

So much for the ideal. Unfortunately, the federal political process is representative not participatory, deals with huge issues, Senators deal with hundreds of bills each session, with possibly hundreds of amendments each of which can change the meaning of the bill. Bills come onto the floor, and may be gone in twenty minutes. Even huge and contentious issues like Mabo or Industrial Relations only get debated in Senate for a week or less. Communication is very poor with the media doing almost *no* reporting of issues, although they will give blow-by-blow descriptions of the presumed emotional states of politicians during crucial moments or particularly abusive harangues.

The Greens (WA) are fortunate to have two Senators in parliament. Given the numbers, and a system of mindless voting along party lines, this means that when the Government and Opposition disagree, the Democrats and the Greens have the choice of passing what is before it at the end of the legislative process, or killing it. In between, they can try and push for amendments.

The Green Senators are committed to holding their position responsibly, voting on every bill, knowing what every bill is about, trying to make it better if it is not very good. It is frustrating, because it is reactive. There is no real power to set the agenda. Very often, bills or amendments from the Greens or Democrats get voted down by the two big parties. Environmentally damaging bills get through when the two big parties vote together. It is incredibly

frustrating to see such unanimity in parties normally at each other's throat. The only thing the Senators can do is ask who wins, who loses, what it means, and whether the result on balance will be better or worse. There is no time to go through the processes we wish, nor is policy always clear on an issue.

Lots of people have asked whether politics doesn't eventually corrupt. The response I give is that one can choose to be principled, or to play the game. Once you play the game, you may as well go all the way, but it is far easier to be principled than to try and play the game a little. In that regard, one thing the Greens decided, is that they would not make cross-issue deals. We will not trade support for wholesale sales tax for intervention into Creery wetlands for example. We address sales tax directly and the responsibility of the Commonwealth for internationally significant wetlands directly.

A lot of people have criticised the Greens for this failure to 'make deals'. But means become the ends, and back-room deals ultimately destroy inner integrity and democratic form. The principle we've followed has led to far more fundamental changes in process. John Dawkins, in the meeting when the budget talks 'collapsed' said that 'one thing you can claim as a major achievement is that the budget process from now on will be a negotiated one'. When a party makes deals, there is no need to negotiate. The Government just says, 'What do you want in return for passing our bills?', and the horse-trading commences. When no 'deals' are struck, each bill becomes an issue. Unless it is prepared to negotiate on the Senate floor, the government must negotiate beforehand. It is dragged into more participatory processes, at least needing to recognise the democratic framework of the constitution, and opening decision-making to far wider participation and input.

This gives us new options to introduce issues and further change process. While the Greens have no illusions they can set the agenda of government, being in on budget formation does mean we can be much more affirmative in putting up ideas and directions for change. We

will also be able to bring up environmental issues in an effective way.

The Greens and issues

One of the least fortunate aspects of the Greens in Senate is the appalling reporting of issues in the media. The budget process really set the tone. The Greens' position was fairly clear from the very beginning. The sales tax was unfair, the tax cuts benefited mainly the rich. The Greens put out several press releases and statements explaining that the tax cuts would see half the population get nothing and most of the benefit falling to the top 20 per cent while the cuts were to be paid for by sales tax hikes. We opposed the changes on basic equity grounds and managed finally to get compensatory measures for the less wealthy half of Australians.

The petrol tax, while supportable on environmental grounds, was simply going into general revenue. No effort was to be made to reduce car use or provide alternatives to cars, to reduce the lead in petrol, to promote efficiency, urban restructuring, public transport or any of the other things that would allow reduction of car use as a benefit. We wanted to see the regressive taxes countered so the poor were not paying for benefits to the rich, and wanted to see something real done about transport. We wanted to see some commitment to getting industry to change, and not just making often unavoidable car use more expensive. We tried to get some attention focused on energy and transport, and proposed major amendments most of which were voted down by the two big parties against the Greens and Democrats. The media ignored this issue, and focused on wine.

Even though a lot of attention was given to the 'wine issue', almost no attention was given to the issue itself; whether wine should be taxed the same as beer simply because it 'has alcohol'. The Greens position was that they should not be, because the employment profile, profit levels, ownership pattern and regional implications were entirely different. The wine industry is rurally based, owner-produced, has low levels

of profit and high levels of employment, sees most of the money circulated in the region, and works synergistically with other industries - hospitality, tourism, artisan craftwork, and so on - which form the major alternatives to extractive industries like logging and, in the WA south-west, mineral sands mining. Beer production is a large, industrial, highly mechanised and centralised industry owned mainly by transnationals, with low and declining workforces and large profits that are mostly expatriated. They are not the same industries and so should not be taxed the same. As far as I know, no media report looked at these issues, in spite of Greens' press releases and statements.

And then there was GATT. Senator Margetts brought up the issue whenever she could - fairly often - but it was not an issue on which there was to be a vote. Almost the only media mention was in a two and a half broadsheet page tirade against the Greens by Laura Tingle of the *Australian*. Tingle was abusing the Greens over the budget without managing to mention substantive issues and in the process mentioned the Greens' opposition to GATT to show what 'real fruitloops' they were. It was good because we got a letter printed as 'right of reply' and put our position on GATT before the public.

A one-issue party?

Some criticism was levelled at the Greens for being concerned with the Budget and Mabo, 'and not with the environment'. The first sitting we hit in the balance of power was the Budget sitting in which Dawkins unveiled his four year 'master-plan'. This meant that most of the bills we had to deal with were Budget and economic bills.

In spite of the activity on the budget, the Green Senators did get involved in a lot of environment issues. Aside from GATT, the Senators spent time with the activists in south west and south east forests, are actively fighting to stop the despoilation of Creery wetlands and Ningaloo reef, fighting the iron ore transport through Esperance, working with communities of Jarrahdale and Serpentine trying to stop mineral sands

miners who have pegged their towns, fighting the CALM amendment bill that gives the WA Conservation and Land Management department the right to sell exclusive right to 'flora' and includes a directive to the Director to 'promote and encourage the use' of flora, mainly in biotechnology terms. The Senators also actively fought to reduce the woodchip licenses, put up a urgency motion on clearing of old-growth forests, and had some success improving the bill to levy ships to cover

"There is a limit to what can be expected of people in parliament given the realities of politics. That does not mean nothing can be done."

the cost of oil spillage. They have also put up the 'toxic chemicals - right to know' bill to make industry responsible for informing communities of the nature and risks of chemicals it is using.

There is a limit to what can be expected of people in parliament given the realities of politics. That doesn't mean nothing can be done. Much more can be done now than before the 'balance of power' situation, when Christobel or Jo were simply ignored, where their vote didn't matter, but generally the Greens (or the Democrats) cannot put up a bill that has a chance of passage. The Greens may be higher profile than before, so there may be more chance of getting public attention for issues, but the media still only reports what they consider newsworthy, and will only report it their way.

The Greens (WA) as a party supports the Senators strongly. In WA, members of the Greens are generally activists who are involved in politics as 'one more way to promote change'.

They are heavily involved in the Conservation Council, WA Forest Alliance, Landcare groups, Community Aid Abroad, and a whole range of groups. It needs to be remembered that grassroots means people being active, and it is popular activism which will create the pressure for change.

1994 - the year ahead

The Employment and Regional Development task forces will probably provide most of the foundation for budget decisions. They also present a real opportunity to look at fundamental issues in Australian society. How is work arranged, how are profits distributed? Do we want to work less so that everyone can work? What is real regional development, the development of regional self sufficiency, a regional culture that exists in harmony with its environment, or the development of roads and extractive industry so that people can ship in transnational products? What is a sustainable society? Do we need to produce more or learn to consume less without consigning 15-20 per cent of the population to the scrap-heap?

With proposals for new rounds of fuel taxes to pay for jobs, and proposals to dramatically increase road building, there is an opportunity to challenge many of the principles of transport, production, energy efficiency, and urban design.

With the intensification of biodiversity issues, there is the need and opportunity to develop real challenges to genetic engineering and the patenting and designing of life. There is also the opportunity to shift the focus from 'use of biological resources' back to conservation of diverse ecosystems and ecosystems in all their diversity.

It should be an interesting year, and hopefully the environment movement will become more broadly active. Public activism is needed keep the environment on the agenda.

Dhanu River works in the office of Dee Margetts and these opinions are his own, not those of the Greens (WA) or Senators Chamarette or Margetts.

Nice names – pity about the policies – industry front groups

Recent years have seen the rise of corporate environment organisations in the United States. Bob Burton looks at this phenomenon and similar developments in Australia.

THE NATIONAL Wetlands Council, Clean Sites, Consumer Alert, and People for the West! – all sound like organisations we'd like to get involved in, subscribe to their newsletter or even listen to a news story about.

Before you get too enthusiastic a little investigation would reveal that the National Wetlands Council argues to make it easier to develop on wetlands, Clean Sites is concerned about the costs of toxic cleanups, Consumer Alert opposes government regulations concerning product safety and People for the West! opposes the imposition of

royalties on minerals from public lands.

Dig a little further and you will discover that the National Wetlands Coalition has as members Shell Oil, BP, AMAX, Exxon; Consumer Alert boasts the support of Chevron and Exxon; while People for the West! has as contributor Kennecott Corporation, Cyprus Minerals, Chevron USA and many others.¹ If you went to the conference of Environment and Conservation Organisations you would find yourselves in the company of many of the above.

Mark Megalli and Andy Friedman in a study of corporate front groups in

the United States noted that:

the rise of corporate front groups in the US is a recent phenomenon, a direct response to the burgeoning consumer, citizen and environmental movements. Before these movements took hold in the late 1960s, major corporations delivered their messages through their lobbyists in Washington. The names of these traditional associations told the stories – National Coal Association, Chamber of Commerce, American Petroleum Institute. But as public-interest groups began to win widespread public support, it became clear that new mechanisms were needed to deliver the corporate message. If Burger King were to report that a Whopper is nutritious, consumers would probably roll their eyes in disbelief... But when the American Council on Science and Health and its panel of 200 expert scientists report that Whopper are not so bad consumers might actually listen... Increasingly big business is creating front groups to influence legislators, the media and consumers. These corporate front groups advertise, hold conferences, publish newsletters and reports, write editorials and appear on talk shows in an effort to sway public opinion toward industry views.²

Megalli and Friedman identified a number of characteristics of industry front groups: the use of a scientific, public interest or green sounding name; a corporate agenda with grassroots involvement; and, sometimes, a short life-span.

While the role of many of the groups is to mobilise pro-industry supporters their names are designed to ensure that people listening to their media message get past their name. If the name of an organisation sounds like it is a pro-environment group it is more likely to have an impact in neutralising or countering support for environmental protection by public interest groups.

According to Megalli and Friedman 'front groups' funding, control and

membership are usually exclusively corporate although groups often purport to have high grassroots involvement in one of these areas to give an air of authenticity'. While some corporate fronts rely solely on their name and comprise no more than corporate members, those industries that have had difficulty retaining favour via their traditional top-down methods have sought to build coalitions with other groups such as labour, recreationalists and grassroots people.

George Frampton, President of The Wilderness Society (US) stated that 'they claim they lead a grassroots movement, but they are in fact speaking for industry and their grass is well watered with corporate money'.³ It is however important to recognise that some of these groups do tap a real community concern that will not simply go away if dismissed as corporate fronts.

The other manifestation of industry fronts is temporary coalitions under a reasonable sounding name that lobby on a particular issue or piece of legislation and then fade away. The Clean Capital Cities Committee was formed in 1987 to fight a proposed mandatory bottle deposit law in Washington DC. The group, which was created by beverage companies, bottlers and grocery stores dismantled when it succeeded in defeating the bill. Another example is the Clean Air Working Group, which fought to weaken the *Clean Air Act* of 1990 and dispersed upon the bill's passage. The group was the creation of several coal companies.⁴

The anti-environment movement in the US

Ron Arnold, from the Centre for the Defense of Free Enterprise and one of the leaders of the pro-industry movement, told a pesticide lobby group in 1984 'it takes a movement to fight a movement'. Another anti-environment movement adviser at the same seminar Dave Dietz of Oregonians for Food and Shelter told the meeting that a citizens agency can attack environmentalists in ways that industry never could. It can create media events of its own and in the process divert the time and money

of environmental groups into defending themselves.

By the late 1980s the emerging anti-environment movement, initially focussing on pesticides, developed into broader areas such as mining, forestry and private landowners issues. It also encompasses anti-gay, religious and pro-gun groups. It is now a growing movement aimed at undermining environmental standards and laws that limit the activities of government agencies, individuals and corporations.

Ron Arnold stated: 'Our goal is to destroy, to eradicate the environmental movement. We're mad as hell. We're dead serious, were going to destroy them'.⁵

A 1988 conference of such groups in Reno published a manifesto which reflects the flavour of the movement, some of its policies include support for:

- passage of a Global Warming Prevention Act to convert in a systematic manner all decaying and oxygen using forest growth on the National Forests into young stands of oxygen producing, carbon dioxide absorbing trees to help ameliorate the rate of global warming and prevent the greenhouse effect;
- amendments to the *Endangered Species Act* to specifically classify the appropriate scientifically identified endangered species as relict species in decline before the appearance of man [sic], including non-adaptive species, such as the California condor, and endemic species lacking the biological vigour to spread in range such as the wildflower Pipers harebells; and
- legal changes so that any group or individual challenging by litigation an economic action or development on federal lands and subsequently losing in court shall be declared 'not acting in the public interest' and required to pay to the winner the increase in costs for completing the project plus money damages for loss of economic opportunity. Congress should provide for obstructionists to indemnify American industry against harm when they use the law to delay economic progress...⁶

The anti-environment movement has already demonstrated its ability to build substantial support for legislative initiatives that would have major impacts on the environment. For example, in Washington State the proposed Property Rights Protection Act, which would have barred the state from regulating landowners use of own property, passed both houses in 1989 and was only stopped by the exercise of a veto by the Governor.

A National Recreation Trails Fund Act of 1990, which would divert gasoline tax fund receipts to build trails for off road motorised vehicles, is still in the pipeline.

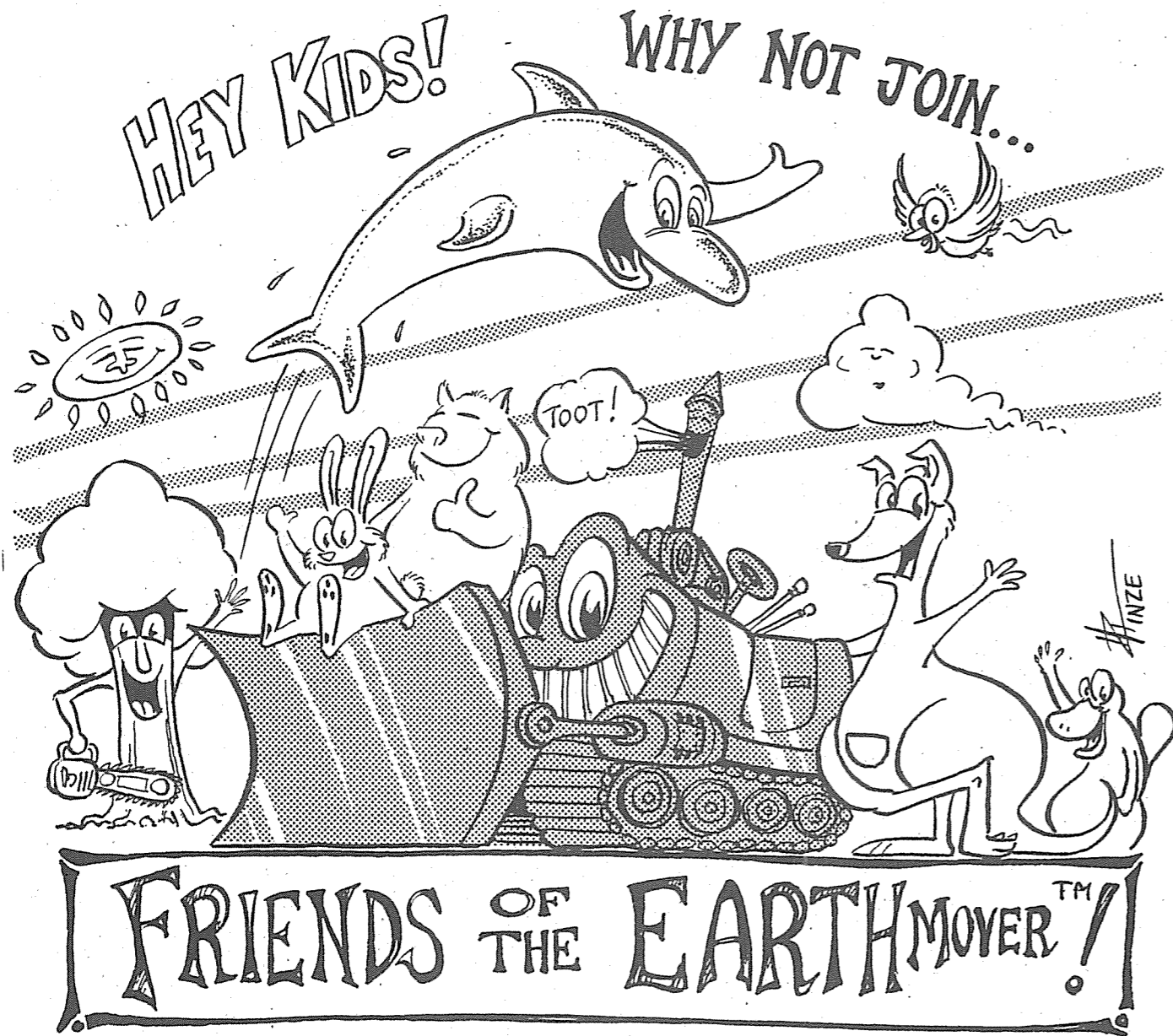
Corporate fronts in Australia?

Given that there is no such overt movement in Australia how does one determine whether their influence extends this far? The challenge is to try and distinguish between the aspects of pro-industry campaigns that are nothing new and those which have emerged only recently and bear remarkable similarities to recent events in the US and Canada. The danger of course is to interpret everything as a well organised industry conspiracy and in so doing not only magnify their role but obscure the concerns that allow them to undertake grassroots mobilisation.

The Forest Protection Society

The Forest Protection Society is an organisation that could be described as preferring old growth forests in the horizontal plane instead of the vertical. Its style of operation is remarkably similar to that of the 'Share our Forests' groups in British Columbia and other groups in the Pacific North-West of the US. Are they a front group? Well let's say there is some interesting documentation on their activities that raises one's suspicions.

When the Forest Protection Society was launched on 23 November 1987 it was announced that the network would be backed by the ACTU and the Forest Industry Campaign Association



(FICA). The FICA Executive Officer stated that the community group network would be independent of existing bodies but would be funded by the industry to get it off the ground.⁷

A leaked set of minutes from a strategy meeting dated 19 August 1988 under the item of 'Long term program' recorded that 'Robyn Loydell discussed activities by her group which involved taking over local environmental meetings, with the result that they became distracted from their ongoing campaign. Robyn's group actually controls the voting on several groups and could therefore vote to have them join the Forest Protection Society'.⁸

An advertisement by the Forest

Protection Society for its Tasmanian State Coordinator position, gave as its contact Dr Robert Bain from the National Association of Forest Industries.⁹ It is worth noting that the Forest Protection Society not only uses an industry spokesman as its contact for positions vacant ads but also shares the same post office box as the National Association of Forest Industries.

A press release issued on 24 June 1991 at the ALP National Conference used APPM (Australia's largest wood-chip exporter) Public Relations Officer Mr Chris Oldfield as the contact.¹⁰

A special mention of the Forest Protection Society in the Forest Industries Association of Tasmania 1992

Annual Report which that 'FIAT is providing assistance and support on an ongoing basis' whilst claiming that the 'Forest Protection Society remains an independent organisation'.¹¹

What to make of all this?

It seems inevitable that Australian industry groups will seek to emulate their North American counterparts and increase the use of punitive legal actions. It is therefore vital that environment groups ensure that they have a much greater access to legal services and a greater awareness of what is happening in North America.

As Mark Megalli and Andy Fried-

man noted 'for those industries that perceive themselves as under attack from citizens organisations, however, front groups are an ever more popular tool. They promise to proliferate unless citizens groups can successfully unmask them'. An increasing level of information sharing between groups, both within Australia and overseas, will be important to alert others within the movement as to what is going on. Simply revealing their backing and real agenda will only adversely affect a part of their constituency. Ultimately it must be recognised that different values and perceptions of economic prospects are the basis for the gap between environmentalists and supporters of many pro-industry groups. Some differences are irreconcilable especially those based on recreation preferences. For example debate over the hunting of wildlife, off road recreation vehicles and other issues associated with management of natural areas are not economic issues but value based.

Ultimately the biggest single factor in the effectiveness of anti-environment groups is the level of grassroots organis-

ing. Such groups are most effective at organising in vulnerable and resource dependent towns especially in rural areas which tend to be more conservative. In planning campaigns it would be wise to learn from what is a reasonably predictable pattern of corporate campaigns. Campaign strategies of the 1980s are far less likely to work in the 1990s. Anticipation, innovation and grass roots mobilisation will be the hallmarks of the successful campaigns of the 1990s.

What you can do

If there are groups that you consider suspicious it is worth collecting their public statements and publications. The author is interested in hearing of other groups and details of their activities.

Please forward any information to Bob Burton Ph: (002) 349 366 or C/Wilderness Society, 130 Davey Street Hobart 7000.

Bob Burton is a Research Officer with the Wilderness Society in Tasmania.

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Not a front group, but ...

Obtaining support from industry does not necessarily make an organisation an industry front group. Sometimes groups obtain industry money and proceed to go about tasks without fear or favour. And then there are other groups which make you wonder, not so much for what they do, as for what they don't do.

Australians for Animals Co-ordinator, Sue Arnold, says there is growing concern among grassroots groups over the activities of the Australian Koala Foundation (AKF).

'We know what the AKF doesn't do,' said Ms Arnold. 'Here's a list:

- the AKF does not fund koala hospitals or carers;
- the AKF does not fund acquisition of habitat. (We've lost count of how many groups have asked the AKF for funds to acquire sensitive habitat);

- the AKF does not fund or take legal action to save koala habitat;
- the AKF does not recognise the effects of logging on koala habitat in the North East and South East forests;
- the AKF does not fund community groups;
- the AKF ignores the failure of Governments to set up properly enforced managements plans, and the need for legislation to protect koala habitat;
- the AKF believes the issue of whether Victorian koalas should be culled or not 'should be discussed behind closed doors.'

So what is the Australian Koala Foundation *doing*?

The AKF wants to set up a Koala Atlas using donated computer software to map sensitive koala habitat along the Eastern Coastline which they will sell to Councils. Why are they duplicating work being car-

ried out by the National Parks & Wildlife Service? For whose benefit? 'This year Brownies all over Australia raised \$60,000 for the AKF. School children throughout the country have sold gum leaves and worked hard to raise funds for the AKF,' said Ms Arnold.

'The AKF has done a great job marketing the koala, in chocolates, on rice packets, dolls, souvenirs, selling its logo to business', she said. 'In fact marketing seems to be the primary focus of the Foundation.

'The koalas are too important to be left to a high profile Foundation which, on the face of it, is cashing in on the koala, not only in Australia but internationally.

'There is no evidence that the AKF has saved one square inch of habitat anywhere, much less responded to requests for help which would have directly and immediately saved koalas at risk.'

The muzzling of the Dingo Forest Mob

SLAPP – Strategic Litigation against Public Participation – does it exist in Australia? Is it a useful term? James Prest looks at the SLAPP concept and what's happening in the United States and draws comparisons with some Australian experiences.

JUST ANOTHER 'interview' thought Chris Sheed, Australian forest activist. During the May 1993 interview, he told the familiar story of the trashing of the ancient forest heritage for 'essential' purposes such as forklift pallets and telegraph pole stays. He made the usual plea for support. What he didn't know was that the NSW Forestry Commission was listening and taking notes.

In June 1993 Chris Sheed and 'unnamed persons' were summoned to appear in the NSW Supreme Court by the NSW Forestry Commission. The undertaking sought by the Commission was that Sheed and 'unnamed persons' be restrained from 'conduct for the purpose of and having, or likely to have, the effect of soliciting unknown persons from trespassing' in the Dingo and Bulga State Forests in NSW – the forests Sheed was referring to in his interview.

The 'unnamed persons' were also later dragged into the Supreme Court –

32 people, many of whom had only a tenuous connection with forest protests and some not at all.

Although Justice Windeyer rejected the 'unnamed persons' aspect of the claim, nonetheless it appears that the Forestry Commission used the proceedings to subpoena police records of all the 32 defendants. As one activist said: 'it appears that the aim has been to create personal profiles of the opponents to old growth logging'.¹ (see *Chain Reaction* Number 69, 'The right to protest under threat' for more detail.)

SLAPP suits

Harassment of a similar kind has become so common in the United States that it has been given a special name: the SLAPP suit – Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation. What makes a SLAPP suit? There are four features:

- politically active defendants;

- allegations including interference with contract, defamation, conspiracy, intimidation, nuisance, and abuse of process;²
- damages claims exceeding the real extent of losses; and
- inclusion of 'unnamed persons' or 'John and Jane Doe' in the list of defendants.³

Thousands of these suits are filed every year in the United States. In a nine year study of 228 suits filed since 1983, it was found that defendants were sued for an average of \$9 million damages. The highest claim was \$100 million.⁴

Most SLAPPs in the US are filed in disputes over metropolitan land development issues. Other targets are citizens who speak out against pollution, health hazards, or destruction of wilderness. The most frequent filers are real estate developers, property owners, alleged polluters, public utilities, police officers, and State and Local Governments.⁵

The target is anyone who speaks out. The commonest actions provoking a SLAPP are collecting signatures for a petition, filing litigation, making formal protests to government, reporting violations of the law, appearing at public hearings of Committees, boycotting or organising pickets and demonstrations. SLAPP suits are an attempt to 'privatise public debate'.⁶ According to a Canadian analyst: 'the real purpose of a SLAPP is to intimidate activists...into silence, to chill like minded onlookers, and to force activists to squander valuable time and scarce funds on a concocted legal battle which can drag on for years, instead of the original issue.'⁷

The tactic of using a lawsuit as a means of gaining information about the inside workings of protest groups is not new. It was attempted as long ago as 1982 in California when the Coors beer company sued two political groups who were promoting a boycott of its beer. Coors sought and gained access to membership lists, and information about the group's internal procedures and funding sources, but access was overturned on appeal.⁸

The 'unnamed persons' aspect of the Dingo mob litigation has also happened before overseas. In the West

Coast Canadian province of British Columbia, two recent SLAPP cases have involved such claims. On Earth Day 1991, 35 activists trying to stop logging in the Tsitika Valley on Vancouver Island were sued by logging company McMillan Bloedel claiming they were: engaged in an unlawful conspiracy; injuring the company's business and reputation; interfering with business; and creating a nuisance. McMillan Bloedel demanded C\$102,000 damages plus unspecified general and punitive damages, plus costs, and interest. They included 'persons unknown' and the 25,000 member Western Canada Wilderness Committee as targets.

Further south on Vancouver Island, 37 activists, John and Jane Doe, 'Persons Unknown', and the Carmanah Forestry Society were the target of a SLAPP filed by New Zealand multinational Fletcher Challenge, for having dared to protest the company's clear-felling of temperate rainforest in the Walbran Valley.⁹

Canadian logging corporations are also claiming civil damages whenever someone is convicted of criminal offences arising from blockades. Imagine being convicted for trespass arising out of blockade protest and then being served with a writ demanding the payment of damages to logging contractors! Defenders of Clayquot Sound on Vancouver Island have been sued for damages because of alleged losses in timber sales.

Linguistic imperialism?

Is the term 'SLAPP' a gimmicky Americanism? Is it useful in Australia? To answer this question, we must classify the types of SLAPPs. There are three different scenarios:

- SLAPPs against blockaders;
- SLAPPING of persons who sue government or corporation using 'citizen suit' provisions; and
- SLAPPING of people who take the lesser step of complaining about corporate behaviour to government through official channels by signing petitions, speaking out in the media or at Parliamentary Committee hearings or making FOI requests.

The inventors of the term, Penelope Canan and George Pring of the Political Litigation Project, University of Denver, Colorado, argue that it isn't pointless, as 'it helps people by identifying what is happening to them, and gives them psychological support, because they know it is not just them getting sued'. The reason why SLAPP won't reach the same proportions in Australia is because there are fewer citizens suing companies and government for their environmental misdeeds. Apart from NSW, there are no 'open standing' provisions in Australian environmental laws which might have allowed anyone to sue the government.¹⁰

Many SLAPPs in the United States are 'counter-litigation', filed when citizens sue company or government over dodgy government approvals.

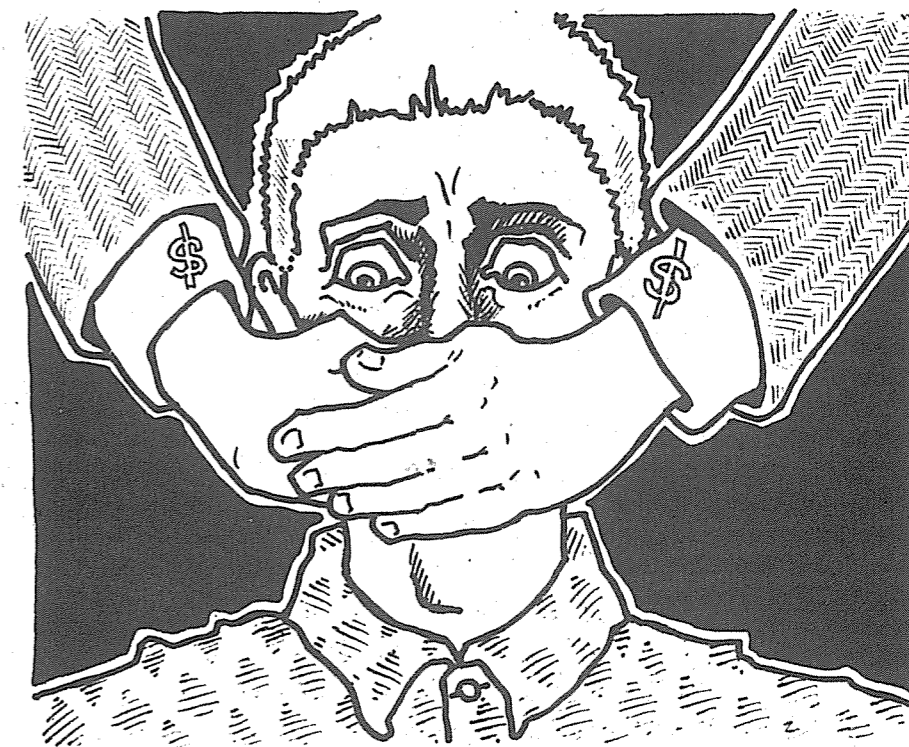
Is SLAPP redundant?

A claim that SLAPP is the latest development of 1993 in the anti-dissent war would be inaccurate. In the US, the 'counter' suing of activist environmental plaintiffs has been around since the early 1970s.¹¹ In Australia, trade unionists have been harassed with legal methods ever since unions existed, and

so have environmental and heritage activists for a long time before 1993. One of the principal weapons is the old favourite – the threat of a defamation suit. In only one recent example, Greenpeace was threatened during its campaign to expose pollution being dumped into Melbourne's waterways by pesticides manufacturer Nufarm.¹² Defamation is a key part of SLAPP tactics in the United States.¹³

Last year, the Natural Resources Defence Council (NRDC) successfully brushed off a law suit from apple growers for 'product disparagement'. NRDC had agreed to be interviewed as part of a *60 Minutes* show about the fact that Uniroyal's apple additive 'Alar' was a probable human carcinogen.¹⁴ Also, in a Texas SLAPP case, a woman who described a landfill facility as a 'dump' was sued, and her husband was also sued because he 'failed to control his wife'.¹⁵

But even the more bizarre SLAPP tactics are not 'new' to Australia. An incident from 1983 shows that the 'unknown persons' tactic was employed long before the attempt at muzzling the Dingo Forest mob. In November 1983, six Adelaide heritage activists opposing the demolition of the 1859 Aurora



Hotel were served with writs demanding they cease picketing the Hotel. Development company Boulderstone asked the South Australia Supreme Court for an injunction restraining the Aurora Six and 'their servants or agents' from picketing, and indicated their intention to claim massive damages. The threat of being forced to pay Boulderstone's legal costs, as well as damages, was sufficiently large for five to undertake not to picket the site, being unable to run the risks. The attempt to gain an order against 'unnamed persons' was rejected by Justice Matheson.¹⁶ The law suit made it clear that it was very dangerous for anyone with a public profile to be associated with the protest. The hotel was demolished on 2 December 1983.

Anything new about SLAPPs?

It represents a trend to resorting to civil claims for damages rather than criminal law to suppress. The new developments in Australia are: unnamed defendants; mega damages claims; and the rediscovery of ancient offences. Local corporate lawyers are already hard at work identifying tools available to restrain dissent. Two recently compiled attempts to catalog available weaponry are both extensive and detailed.¹⁷ They suggest resort to some ancient nasties such as unlawful association and assembly powers, and a host of anti-union torts. This suggests that the SLAPP phenomenon is not so much about the invention of new forms of legal action, but the dusting off of forgotten ones.

For example, when the NSW Police Service rediscovered the ancient anti union tort of intimidation lurking in section 545B of the NSW Crimes Act in 1993, they wasted no time in using it. In April, activists at the Badja State Forest in the Deua Wilderness in NSW were charged with 'intimidating' a logging contractor who was in fact 600 metres away at the time. The activists were superglued and bolted with Kryptonite locks onto machinery, but were found to have 'intimidated' the logger. The ugliest aspect of these convictions was that the guilty parties were required to pay economic compensation to the log-

ger. For one defendant the bill amounted to \$1,700. The charge continues to be used. In September 1993, four protesters in the Nalbaugh State Forest (Coolangubra) were also charged with intimidation.

Do SLAPP's Scare?

Empirical research from the United States suggests that some SLAPP targets are intimidated by the suit, but others become more activated than ever before. Perhaps this is because SLAPPs are typically 'legally meritless suits'.¹⁸ Sheed of the Wingham group said 'we've been encouraged by it'; Canan and Pring found that 83 per cent of SLAPP suits were successfully defended.¹⁹

This does not mean that SLAPPs are seen as ineffective – as their main purpose is to scare, intimidate and divert activist resources and attention.

There are three ways activists can respond. The first is to 'SLAPP back', by filing counter-suits. In one US action, an activist who had been sued for \$40m by a Silicon Valley developer, SLAPPED back, winning \$260,000 in damages, successfully claiming malicious prosecution and abuse of process. Such tools are available in Australia. In a more extraordinary case, a group of US farmers who were sued for defamation by an agribusiness company counter-claimed, and were awarded \$10.5m damages and \$3m in costs.²⁰

The second defence is to campaign for the introduction of anti-SLAPP legislation, copying laws passed in California and New York in 1992.²¹ The third is to establish an Activists Legal Defence Fund, and to assist existing organisations such as the Environment Defender's Office to help activists under seige.

The connection between all these disparate stories is the ancient theme of corporations and government using the law to silence opponents. Tools exist to challenge SLAPPs, and half the battle is knowing that other activists are being SLAPPED.

James Prest is studying law at the Australian National University.

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Friends of the Earth



Special feature

Chain Reaction Number 70 January 1994

Friends of the Earth Australia

Friends of the Earth (FOE) is a federation of autonomous local groups operating under an agreed set of principles.

FOE Australia functions both through local groups, and on the national level through appointed spokespeople, the national magazine - *Chain Reaction*, National Liaison Officers and representatives at Peak Conservation Organisation meetings.

As a grassroots and decentralised organisation, FOE has traditionally operated through the efforts of the local groups. Each group determines its own priorities, funding and campaigns. As a result of the local focus there has not been a high profile of the organisation nationally. This situation is changing through the formalisation of 'spokespeople' who are authorised both national meeting to speak on behalf of FOE Australia, and through increased networking between local groups campaigning on similar issues.

At FOE Australia's annual national meeting, policy, funding, and campaigning priorities are established. In recent years, the FOE network has initiated national policies which then guide the work of local groups as they establish new campaigns.

National Liaison Officers have two roles: circulation of information from FOE International and other

local and international environment groups, and decision making, whereby policy, funding and campaign proposals are decided through ballots. There are often challenges in maintaining constant contact between groups throughout Australia because of the cost of such long distance calls and travel.

FOE Australia changes in size as new groups become established and join the network and other groups leave. FOE offers support and assistance to groups of people who get together and decide to start their own FOE group. There is an accreditation process, where potential groups submit a constitution to the liaison officers who circulate it to existing groups who then vote to approve the new group's using of the name 'Friends of the Earth'. Local groups are completely autonomous, benefiting from the reputation gained by FOE in Australia over the past twenty years. By co-operating with other groups on local and national campaigns, these local groups, in turn, help to strengthen FOE Australia.

THE NATIONAL magazine of Friends of the Earth, *Chain Reaction*, aims to be educational, to provide debate among activists, and to address campaign issues of FOE groups.

The *Chain Reaction* editors are elected by the annual national meeting and are accountable to

FOE Australia through the national meeting and ballots. The magazine is not directed by any particular FOE group and is effectively autonomous.

National Liaison Officer/s have a constitutional role in mediating any disputes about content should they be raised by FOE groups.

Chain Reaction has a circulation of approximately 4,500 with about 1,400 subscribers, including a high proportion to schools and libraries. The magazine is distributed to members of most FOE groups although this is effectively a decision of each FOE group. Most local groups publish their own newsletter which they circulate to their members. *Chain Reaction* is also sent to member groups of FOE International.

FRRIENDS OF the Earth Australia exists under the global umbrella of Friends of the Earth International (FOEI). FOE was founded as an environment group in the US in 1971 and has since developed into one of the largest federations of organisations in the world with fifty-two independent member groups committed to the preservation, restoration and rational use of the environment.

Each group is unique and autonomous within the FOEI network. All member nations have responsibilities to FOEI, and a

commitment to the FOEI regulations and by-laws. These are decided upon, altered or maintained at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

FOEI Executive Committee (ExCom) consists of a Chairperson, a representative of the FOE group who is to host the following year's AGM and representation from seven FOE member nations. All are elected during the FOEI AGM. The daily workings of the network are maintained by the FOEI Secretariat based in Amsterdam. The Secretariat publishes a newsletter, *LINK*, six times a year. *LINK* updates FOE groups on internal news, lists current contacts within the network and informs its readership of debates and activities of member groups, and of campaign developments.

FOEI campaigns on a range of issues as international campaigning facilitates a more effective and global vision of the issues under debate. Lobbying in international forums such as UNSED, GATT talks or G7 on behalf of FOEI is another valuable function of this work.

FOE Australia each year appoints an International Liaison Officer/s to keep in contact with FOEI and other overseas environment organisations. The International Liaison Office deals with day to day requirements and correspondence, and acts as a clearing house for information from overseas. The importance of sending an Australian representative to the FOEI AGM has been recognised, and Australia is becoming more active in the organisation. The 1993 AGM was held in Jakarta in October. The two delegates representing FOE Australia were members of FOE Fitzroy and FOE Sydney.

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Twenty years on ...

Friends of the Earth (FOE) officially began in Australia in 1973, with a group in Melbourne which identified with the philosophies of FOE in the United States. For many, the establishment of FOE was important because it offered and continues to offer an alternative to the often hierarchical structures of other environment groups by choosing to work on a grass roots activist level. From the first, FOE in Australia called itself a radical ecology group.

Early records of FOE's activities are sketchy or non-existent, so the stories about the beginning of the organisation have depended mostly on oral history. It should be borne in mind, therefore, that many of the dates that follow may be incorrect or at least unclear.

1971 saw the formation of a group at Adelaide University called 'Social Action', which later became Friends of the Earth. This group campaigned on issues such as waste, pollution, an anti-Coca-Cola campaign, and the French tests in the Pacific. In 1973, the group in Adelaide was visited by Peter Hayes from FOE Melbourne who had official permission from overseas to use the name 'Friends of the Earth' in Australia. Close co-operation developed between the two groups, and Friends of the Earth started to expand.

Chain Reaction first began as the 'Greenpeace Pacific Bulletin' in 1974, with the united effort between the developing FOE groups and Greenpeace to oppose nuclear testing in the Pacific. It continues today, and acts as the official magazine of Friends of the Earth Australia, while also providing an

alternative media source for other environmental groups and issues.

Friends of the Earth in Adelaide was formed in 1975, deriving from the original group on Adelaide University campus. Friends of the Earth in Sydney formed initially on the Sydney University campus around 1974, and now has expanded to become one of the largest of the FOE groups in Australia.

Many Friends of the Earth groups have formed and dispersed over the years since the early seventies. With an organisation such as FOE, which works within a grassroots, consensus based framework as much as possible, most groups face problems in funding activities. In a time of recession, such as now, there are even less resources to help support small groups, and so in the last two years FOE has seen many of the groups desist. Most groups rely on memberships, donations and fundraising or benefits for money, though groups may also receive grants from various governmental departments for either long term or short term projects.

Some groups form in response to a particular issue or event in their region and so may have a short life span within FOE Australia. Others remain small but active. FOE in Australia is important as an organisation because it allows a support structure to be easily accessible to smaller pressure groups while at the same time offering guidelines and philosophies that help with the running of such an organisation.

These feature was prepared by *Chain Reaction* as a brief explanation of the structure and activities of the FOE Australia network. There is a list of the current active groups around Australia and each group may be contacted separately for details of membership and of how to become directly involved. Reports from the groups give an indication of recent activities and are in no way comprehensive.

FOE Fitzroy

Friends of the Earth (Fitzroy) spent the first part of 1993 moving to new premises in Collingwood. This required extensive renovations, and took an enormous amount of time, effort and resources. With the building complete, we are once again campaigning on a wide variety of issues.

Gungalidda-CRA campaign

One of FOE Fitzroy's greatest successes this year has been the **Gungalidda-CRA campaign**, which ran from April to August. This concerned the CRA-proposed lead/zinc slurry pipeline from the Century mine deposit at Lawn Hill, in Queensland's North-East through to the Gulf of Carpentaria. The proposed pipeline would pass through traditional land of the Gungalidda People, and has considerable potential for serious environmental damage, as well as affecting traditional food sources and damaging sites of significance. FOE Fitzroy worked with Wadjularbinna, a member of the Gungalidda People who are part of the Doomadgee Community, against the proposal. CRA has its head office in Melbourne and the campaign involved targeting the Annual General Meeting held in April, drawing the attention of shareholders to the nature of proposals such as the pipeline and CRA's fast tracking of these projects at the detriment of indigenous people both in Australia and overseas. FOE Fitzroy is maintaining links with Doomadgee and will continue to work closely with them.

Water catchment

Within a few weeks of reopening in Collingwood, the **Water Catchment Collective** had established. The initial inspiration came from involvement in Melbourne Waters Sewerage Strategy, and the campaign then diversified into a number of other areas. Melbourne Water is the government authority responsible for supplying water and

treating liquid wastes for the city of Melbourne and surrounding region. At present, sewerage treatment is based on two large systems (Werribee Sewerage Farm, west of Melbourne, and the South East Purification Plant). Melbourne's growing population and associated urban sprawl has forced Melbourne Water to investigate cheaper sewerage disposal options such as decentralised alternatives to large scale sewerage treatment plants. FOE was approached to comment on the options identified by Melbourne Water. In addition, the collective put in submissions and held workshops on the draft Water Catchment and Land Protection Legislation currently being developed in Victoria.

The proposal to establish a crude oil super tanker facility at Stony Point in Westernport Bay is another campaign focus. The collective is working with local groups around Westernport and also larger urban groups like Greenpeace to oppose the development.

The Victorian state budget allocated \$225 million to extend the Eastern Freeway. The collective has linked with the existing campaign to protect the Koonung-Mullum Creek valleys. Freeway routes often follow creek valleys, and as these valleys can support important remnant vegetation, freeway campaigning should be seen as a vital catchment issue.

Nuclear issues

1993 has been a year of roundabouts and swings for anti-nuclear activists; some good news, some bad.

The pro-nuclear lobby in Australia and particularly the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) suffered a major rebuff to its preferred vision of an expansion of the nuclear cycle in this country when plans for the construction of a new research reactor were not approved.

A government appointed Review Panel will now weigh up public opinion and the pros and cons of such a reactor.

FOE Fitzroy **Anti-Uranium Collective** played an active role in the process of the Review Panel's inquiry which decided upon a five year moratorium on any plans for a new reactor. Given the resources that were devoted by the nuclear industry to attain a positive result from the Review Panel process, the ultimate decision is a major achievement for anti-nuclear activists.

The Collective is also campaigning in the following areas:

- watching brief on existing uranium mining operations;
- opposition to attempts to begin mining uranium at the Jabiluka/Koongarra deposits in the Northern Territory;
- opposition to current 'burial' options for the treatment of radioactive waste and developing critical strategies for the handling of radioactive waste;
- opposition to CRA's continued uranium exploration/development in the Karlamilyi/Ruddall River National Park in Western Australia;
- liaison with other national and international groups working to end the nuclear cycle; and
- promotion of renewable energy sources and energy conservation.

Genetic engineering

The **Anti-Genetic Engineering Collective** has continued to attract new members and has undertaken a lengthy period of self-education on the many and varied aspects of the new technologies. The collective has continued networking and information exchange activities and acted as FOE spokesperson on the issue.

In the past twelve months the collective has prepared submissions to the National Food Authority (regarding labelling of novel foods) and the Federal Government's Plant Variety Rights Review Committee. The collective has also responded to release proposals and release guidelines from the Genetic Manipulation Advisory Committee.

Current projects under way or under consideration include:

- a series of education leaflets;
- a national labelling campaign;
- assisting in the organisation of the Feminist International Network of Resistance to Reproductive and Genetic Engineering (FINRRAGE) International Conference to be held in Melbourne in 1994; and
- using the mania provided by the film *Jurassic Park* to highlight the dangers inherent in genetic engineering.

World heritage

FOE Fitzroy has joined with FOE Nouveau on the World Heritage Listing for the **Lake Eyre Basin Campaign**. This involvement evolved out of working with the Arabunna Peoples' Committee on monitoring the Mound Springs affected by Roxby Downs and a feasibility study for a national park in the Lake Eyre region. The *Finniss Springs Station Feasibility Study* was completed in 1993.

FOE Fitzroy also joined the Arid Lands Coalition, a coalition of Australia wide environment and other groups involved in arid lands conservation and land management issues. FOE Fitzroy has specifically taken up the function of coordinating the lobbying of Federal politicians to support World Heritage Listing, this has been quite successful so far. Individual members are also involved in field trips to the region.

Bookshop

The **Friends of the Earth Bookshop** exists as a political and community resource. Run by a collective of paid and unpaid workers, the Bookshop provides educational resources and a point of information exchange for local groups, individuals and campaigns. The stock includes a wide range of books on topics ranging from Aboriginal history and culture to hazardous chemicals, also t-shirts, stickers, newsletters and leaflets produced by various community campaigns. The Bookshop also has many locally produced items, such

as handmade paper. The Bookshop, as one of the two businesses connected with FOE (Fitzroy), pays a monthly levy to FOE, which in turn assists to fund the campaigns run through FOE as well as public education activities of the office.

Forests

In August 1993, the **East Gippsland Forest Network**, a Melbourne-based activist group, became a FOE campaign known as the **FOE Forest Network**. Its main area of activity is the old growth forests in Victoria's East Gippsland region. It is campaigning to have a truly representative park system established there. A festival held at Goongerah in November 1993 was followed by direct actions through the summer.



Food campaign

The **Food Campaign** collectively runs the largest wholefoods co-operative in Australia. The Campaign stocks a wide range of dry foods much of which is organic and biodynamically grown and sells in bulk to minimise packaging and waste. The Food Campaign stocks produce from the local area as far as possible to support small growers and businesses and to maintain an active knowledge of the practices of the suppliers with whom they trade. The Campaign also trades with other co-operatives, particularly when buying from overseas, through organisations such as the World Development Tea Co-op. Voluntary labour sustains the Co-op by helping to reduce wages, which in turn keeps prices low and the high quality maintained. The Food Co-op challenges people to fundamentally change habitual practices of food consumerism. A conference is planned for early 1994 on food, ecopolitics and sustainable agriculture.

General

The emergence from self-imposed building renovations sees FOE Fitzroy in a very enthusiastic and active stage of growth. Membership continues to climb (currently at around 2,000), and greater initiatives are being taken in small-scale and 'one off' campaigning. This has involved a vast array of issues, from the massacres of Yanomami Indians in Brazil, to proposed mining legislation in Victoria, support for local Melbourne and rural issues, and ongoing commitment to supporting Koori struggles.

FOE Fitzroy sees 'Paying the Rent' as being a fundamental starting point in supporting sovereignty and economic independence for Aboriginal people.

There is within FOE Fitzroy a strong commitment to feminist issues also. There is a sixty-fourty employment policy within FOE Fitzroy's paid employment, and a majority of the workers, both paid and unpaid, are women. There is, of course, a constant need to address and re-address the workings of the organisation under feminist principles, and as a part of this there is presently a policy on sexual harassment being worked upon by active members.

Campaign contacts for FOE Fitzroy

Water Catchment Collective
Karri Giles
Forest Network
Louise Mathieson
Anti-Genetic Engineering
Clive Rosewarne
Anti-uranium
Ila Marks, Dave Sweeney
Lake Eyre
Ila Marks, Clive Rosewarne
Bookshop
Lyndall Barnett, Linette Harriott
Food Campaign
Beth Cameron, Leanne McLean
Office Collective
Cam Walker, Lee Tan

FOE Sydney

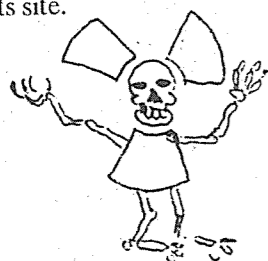
Friends of the Earth was established in Sydney in 1974. Over 1993, FOE Sydney campaigned on six issues:

Nuclear

Australia's only nuclear reactor, a HIFAR research reactor in Sydney, is nearing the end of its 'useful' life. FOE Sydney submitted evidence to a Commission of Inquiry looking at whether Australia needs a new reactor, and, if so, where it would be located.

The review was deficient in a number of respects, notably in its treatment of reactor safety issues and the safety of HIFAR which was glossed over.

FOE Sydney questioned in its evidence to the Review, whether it was worth spending \$200-400 million on a facility that would simply make Australia eleventh or twelfth in the global neutron-scattering stakes, and pointed out that neutron-scattering dependent research constitutes only a small proportion of the total research activity carried out by ANSTO at the Lucas Heights site.



Waste minimisation

It is estimated that Sydney has landfill sites available for refuse (garbage) disposal until 1997. FOE Sydney has been working in the Waste Crisis Network, a coalition of environment groups, to lobby the government to reduce the amount of garbage being produced.

FOE Sydney has developed a comprehensive waste minimisation strategy which has been adopted by Friends of

the Earth Australia and in principal by the Nature Conservation Council of New South Wales.

The principle of the Waste Minimisation Strategy is viewing products from a cradle to grave approach and making Industry take life-cycle responsibility for the products they produce.

FOE Sydney has produced a report on the Container Deposit Legislation (CDL). It is estimated over 3,000 jobs would be created in New South Wales if CDL were effected.

A campaign to post back a Tetrapak to the Minister for the Environment and/or to the Chair of a parliament joint select committee upon Waste Management is currently running. FOE Sydney has advised the parliamentarians on this Committee through a Reference Group set up for this purpose.

The Parliamentary Committee succumbed to industry pressure to reject Container Deposit Legislation, claiming that it would make kerbside waste disposal uneconomic. This is despite the fact that half of the kerbside waste is organic matter that the committee wants to see composted and twenty per cent is containers that would fall under CDL legislation. They claim CDL is a thing of the past, yet it is the backbone of the European recycling industry.

FOE Sydney called for the dumping of garden material to be banned by 1997, and this was accepted by the committee. Industry's success was the recommendation that waste disposal be privatised. The environment will be endangered by this recommendation as the drive for profit will lead to the maximising of waste tipped or incinerated.

A grant was received from the Commonwealth Environmental Protection Agency to publish a book on large-scale composting methods. This book has been well received.

FOE Sydney is a member of FOE's international Sustainable Packaging Action Network.

Global warming

FOE Sydney lobbied for strong actions to curb greenhouse gas emissions which were taken up as recommended by the Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) Committee set up by the Federal Government. There was partial success in having the ESD Committee recommendations adopted by Australian governments.

The Federal and State and Territory governments signed the Inter-Governmental Agreement on the Environment in December 1992, which incorporates watered-down ESD recommendations.

These will have to be enforced if the actions of the National Grid Council (NGC) are any indication of government resolve.

The NGC is made up of the eastern States and the Federal Government to arrange the interconnection of the State electricity grids. The NGC has issued forecasts which do not take into account the twenty per cent reduction strategy incorporated in the Inter-Governmental Agreement on the Environment.

FOE Sydney has taken a leading role in the Sydney Greenhouse Network through lobbying of State politicians, and are working with local governments in instituting energy efficient building codes.

Employment

FOE Sydney took part in the first of a series of workshops to address future employment strategies and their linkage to the environment. A submission was put to a Federal Government Inquiry on 'Environmental Policies which Stimulate Employment Growth.'

Education

FOE Sydney contributes articles to three Spanish language newspapers on a bi-weekly basis. News and views of FOE campaigners are regularly aired.

Transport

FOE Sydney developed a major report on pedestrian rights in the inner city of Sydney stating that pedestrian rights must be given priority over motor cars. This has been welcomed by several politicians, but planning is controlled by a State government appointed committee which supports the car lobby.

Evidence was submitted to the Industry Commission Urban Transport Inquiry in which pedestrian amenity and car use in cities were addressed.

Water

The largest blue-green algal outbreak in recorded history occurred in New South Wales during November 1991. FOE Sydney made submissions to the NSW Blue-Green Algae Taskforce and the Commonwealth Senate Select Committee looking into the broader issues of the environmental impact of water use from inland rivers.

Two points were made. The use of river water has grown rapidly since the initial irrigation of cotton in the early 1960s, leading to a situation where instream ecological degradation is very damaging. Also, the amount of phosphorous in the river-bed no longer makes it a variable in determining a blue-green algal outbreak. Reduction of the phosphorous intake will only happen when the sources are stopped.

FOE Sydney is campaigning to establish a set of management principles aimed at ensuring ecological sustainability of the river systems of inland Australia. These are:

- to restore, maintain and protect the biological diversity and life support systems of the inland rivers;
- to recognise that maintenance of the biological diversity and life support systems depends on near natural water flows (quality and quantity) reaching the whole system including billabongs, flood plains, swamps, groundwater recharge areas, ephemeral lakes and the sea;

- to maintain the natural regime in unregulated rivers and simulate the natural regime in regulated and quasi-regulated rivers;
- to restore the natural characteristics of the stream channels;
- to ensure ecologically sustainable land management practices throughout river catchments;
- to ensure through appropriate management of surface and ground waters that inter- and intra-generational equity is not jeopardised; and
- extractive use for any purpose - urban, industrial or agricultural - should be subject to constraints and efficiency encouraged through both comprehensive demand management and higher prices.

Networking

FOE Sydney places high value on networking and is involved in the following networks:

- Nature Conservation Council of New South Wales;
- Waste Crisis Network;
- Coalition for Urban Transport Sanity;
- Inland Rivers Network; and
- liaison with Greenpeace and local environment groups in opposition to the nuclear reactor.

Campaign contacts for Sydney

Nuclear
John Hallum
Waste minimisation
John Denlay
Water
Dietrich Willing
Global Warming
Dietrich Willing
Transport
Ted Floyd
Employment
Ted Floyd
Education
Dianne Midis

Contact your nearest Friends of the Earth to join in with the campaigns mentioned or to start some more!

Call, write or fax.

Telephone numbers are:

National, international and FOE Fitzroy (3 lines):

03 419 8700

FOE Sydney:

02 281 4070

Chain Reaction:

06 248 0289

FOE Maitland:

049 331 307

FOE Maryborough:

071 23 1895

FOE Willunga:

085 56 2252

FOE Perth

09 321 5942

FOE Nouveau

FOE Nouveau, the metropolitan Adelaide Friends of the Earth, has about forty members focusing principally on urban issues.

The Organising Connective takes care of the day-to-day running of the organisation. Representatives from campaign groups meet fortnightly, and bi-monthly General meetings are held at which policy decisions are made, guest speakers are invited and campaign reports are given. Each campaign group meets more frequently to discuss strategy and to plan upcoming actions.

One of the campaigns currently under way is the Green Cities Project, which looks towards Adelaide becoming an ecologically sustainable city. The group is currently updating Volume One of the Green Cities Handbook, and preparing Volume Two on food production, housing and energy.

The Transport Alternatives group has prepared a workshop kit to be presented to community groups. Transport Alternatives aims to raise awareness of transport issues such as streets for people and traffic calming, and improved access to adequate public transport by proximity. It also aims to encourage local community groups, residents associations and environment groups to take up the campaign and define their regional transport needs, and assists by co-ordinating inter-group meetings. Responses to the kit will be collated into a report for FOE Nouveau in mid 1994.

In March 1993, the FOE Nouveau Forest Campaign participated in the worldwide anti-Mitsubishi banner drop, and continues to participate in actions against Mitsubishi's involvement in the logging of south-east Asian rainforests. The Campaign is currently working towards producing a Good Wood Guide along the same lines as that of the Rainforest Action Group.

Members of FOE Nouveau have been instrumental in working towards the Lake Eyre Basin becoming a World Heritage area. The group worked and liaised with numerous governmental and non-governmental organisations, including FOE Fitzroy, as well as carrying out its own research into the proposal.

FOE Nouveau has a bi-monthly newsletter, produced by a small collective within the group. The newsletter contains articles concerning campaign areas, background information and meeting times.

FOE Nouveau has maintained an interest in the Climate Change negotiations and the GATT debate, although neither have as yet developed into campaign areas within the group.

The Soft Energy/Anti Nuclear campaign continues, having appeared before the State government inquiry into the Electricity Trust last year. A paper on barriers to the introduction of sustainable energy is in preparation.

Several FOE Nouveau members are working on formulating a position for the Conservation Council groups and FOE Nouveau from the High Court's Mabo court case rulings and the subsequent debate over Native Title Legislation, and have offered support to the Green Alliance in preparing policy documents.

As with many of the other FOE groups in Australia networking with other green and political groups is fundamental to FOE Nouveau's philosophy. Meetings are held twice weekly with other groups such as the Australian Conservation Foundation, Greenpeace, Conservation Council of South Australia and The Wilderness Society to discuss current campaigns and organise joint activities.

The office of FOE Nouveau is shared with the Peace Action Collective of South Australia and the Left Alliance at the back of the local community radio station, 3D Radio.

FOE Perth

Friends of the Earth (Perth) is another of the smaller FOE groups, working in conjunction with other environmental and peace groups in Western Australia. The two main areas that the group campaigns on are transport alternatives for Perth and surrounding suburbs, and a seed bank in Coolgardie which is still in its early days of development.

It is hoped that the seed bank project will provide a central place for deposit of samples and/or information about various regional environments which will then be catalogued and stored, providing a means by which to account for the existing environment within a designated region, by creating a storage house for specimens as a form of investment in the future of the communities and environments from which the samples came.

The seed bank intends to furnish samples of a wide variety of species of indigenous (and perhaps introduced) specimens from the region, thereby saving elements of remnant vegetation for use at a later date, as well as increasing awareness and understanding of the regions heritage.

Retention of remnant vegetation is an important yet difficult task, requiring careful planning and implementation in order to be successful.

An ecosystem may become stressed without certain specimens of flora, which causes problems for future generations and leads to the loss of systems through an imbalance in natural relationships.

It is hoped that the seed bank will achieve a broad degree of public acceptance, support and participation, as well as bringing people from various backgrounds and interests closer together by unifying their efforts to care for the environment, and may in time become a model for further similar projects elsewhere.

Friends of the Earth Australia groups

National Liaison Officers

312 Smith Street
Collingwood Victoria 3066
Tel: (03) 419 8700 Fax: (03) 416 2081

FOE International Liaison Office

312 Smith Street
Collingwood Victoria 3066
Tel: (03) 419 8700 Fax: (03) 416 2081

Chain Reaction

PO Box 45
O'Connor, ACT, 2601
Tel. & Fax: (06) 248 0289

FOE Adelaide University

C/- Clubs Association
GPO Box 498, Adelaide, SA, 5000

FOE Fitzroy

312 Smith Street
Collingwood Victoria 3066.
Tel: (03) 419 8700 Fax: (03) 416 2081

FOE Sydney

PO Box A474
Sydney NSW 2001
Tel: (02) 281 4070 Fax: (02) 281 5216

FOE Snow

PO Box 31
Cooma NSW 2630

FOE Nouveau

PO Box 3231
Grenfell Street Adelaide SA 5000

FOE Maitland

16 Banks Street
East Maitland NSW 2323
Tel: (049) 331 307 or (049) 337 412

FOE Perth

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

FOE Maryborough

5 Clayton Street
Maryborough Qld 4650
Tel: (071) 23 1895

FOE Willunga

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

How to form a Friends of the Earth group

A five step guide to being active in one of the largest environment networks in the world

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

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

FOE Willunga

Friends of the Earth Willunga has existed for nearly a decade. FOE Willunga has sub-groups on recycling, alternative energy and planning. Activities of the group include an annual Kite Day which points to the wind as an alternative energy source and is held at the same time as the Adelaide Grand Prix.

The Willunga area, located on the urban fringe of Adelaide in South Australia, is at a crucial stage in its development and planning. There is considerable pressure and potential for large urbanisation in what is currently predominantly a rural area.

The Willunga Basin was once a main area for almond production. This is and has been reducing and vine production is taking over. The area boasts one of the main wine producing areas for the country in McLaren Vale.

There are perceived environmental problems as broadacre land is turned over to vines. This increases the pressure to remove what little native

vegetation is left for stock cover. The Fleurieu Peninsula now retains less than five per cent of its native vegetation, and that includes conservation parks.

Two nearby areas of conservation significance, the Aldinga scrub and the Aldinga Reef, are deteriorating from poor farming practices and a poor stormwater management program which involves the rehabilitation of wetlands adjacent to the Aldinga scrub.

Buffer zones are to be set in place around the Aldinga scrub through a supplementary development plan to purify stormwater and replace habitat. These initiatives have come from FOE Willunga and through constant lobbying State, Local and Federal Governments are beginning to respond.

Another of the group's activities is the lobbying of government departments. A three-tier government working group has been formed following the lobbying of local Federal member of Parliament, Gordon Bilney, former State Environment Minister Kym Mayes and the Willunga Council.



Through such lobbying, it is hoped that the funding of the rehabilitation of the wetlands, protection of areas of Aboriginal significance and other projects can be spread over the three spheres of government.

May 1993 saw the election of the Secretary of FOE Willunga to the position of Ward Councillor on the District Council of Willunga. This role includes being council representative on the Animal and Plant Control Board, the Main Street Programme, the Primary and High School Council. Willunga Council already recycles its effluent water through a wetland system to strip nutrients to be re-used on sporting facilities. This contact will obviously strengthen the interaction between the local council and FOE Willunga.

Willunga was the location for the FOE Australia national gathering held in January 1994.

FOE Maitland

The Maitland branch of Friends of the Earth began in 1989, when a group of concerned young mothers decided that the ideals espoused by Friends of the Earth matched their own ideas on environmental issues.

Current membership is around forty people, mainly women, and is concerned with involving and educating the community through its three active sub-groups. These are:

- Education/Display which gives talks to various community groups on waste minimisation and recycling, as well as preparing displays for stalls and for the local Library with

themes such as 'Don't Take The Wrap' which targets excessive packaging;

- a Tree Planting group which is involved in the collection of native seed for the purposes of propagating trees for use in community tree plantings. As well, the group has established a small permaculture garden on approximately a quarter of an acre, and is involved in a Bush Regeneration project. In 1993 alone over 1,000 trees were propagated from seed;
- the Recycling group has the somewhat arduous task of liaising with local council and attempting to persuade it of the need to establish a kerbside recycling service for the local community. A petition for the establishment of such a service had over 2,000 signatures as at the end

of 1993. The group also updates recycling information and attends seminars on recycling and waste minimisation.

All group members are encouraged to lobby politicians on various environmental issues - the most recent being the Barrington Tops Wilderness proposal.

At the monthly General Meetings representatives from the three sub-groups report on their activities. The group as a whole decides at these meetings which campaigns or activities need attention and tasks are allotted accordingly.

New members in the area are welcome, and can contact the group through the address supplied.

FOE Snow

Friends of the Earth Snowy Mountains, known as FOE Snow, is situated on a local farm. Like most of the FOE groups in Australia, the philosophies of FOE Snow are very grass roots, concentrating principally on community acceptance and popularity. Being active in the South Eastern region of New South Wales calls for a certain amount of discretion as the Monaro region is renowned for its anti-green sentiments, indicated by the fact that the Monaro was the only electorate to increase its National Party voter base in the 1993 Federal election.

One of the smaller FOE groups, FOE Snow focuses particularly on community gardens established in Cooma. Active members of FOE Snow pay particular attention to how the local press and community perceive the group and what they associate the group with. FOE Snow has managed to generate an extremely favourable image via the local press, the community gardens being the main vehicle for this so far.

The Cooma Community Gardens began when Friends of the Earth Snow members obtained the use of some land centrally located in Cooma within a few hundred metres of the main hospital. The soil is in pristine condition thanks to the organic growing practices of the previous owners, and deposition of silt from regular flooding by the 'Cooma creek'.

One section of the project is dedicated to a giant Mandala garden which will take several years to establish. The other section, 'the Community proper' is where members of the public are able to grow their own vegetables. This whole section is set amongst a huge fruit orchard and is irrigated.

So far, community response has been limited, and the future of this project will have to be evaluated in Spring 1994. It is an exciting concept, however, and similar garden projects are beginning to be seen in pockets throughout the country.

The local Skillshare office is running a permaculture course taught by one of the members of FOE Snow. Practical

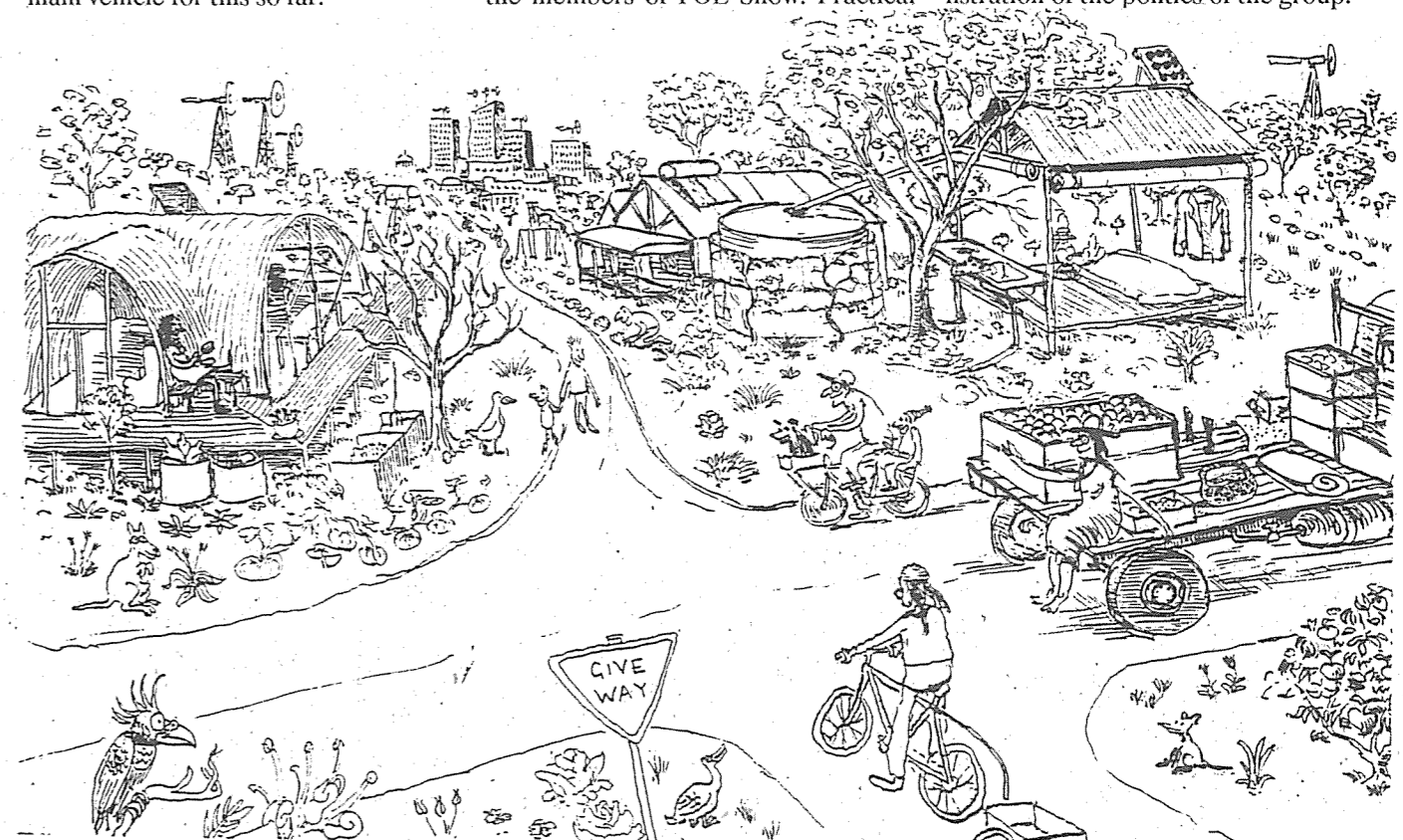
sessions are carried out at the community gardens and more courses have been scheduled.

The group has also been involved in producing Global Kindness bumper stickers which are being distributed widely, helping to raise funds for ongoing campaign costs of the group.

Regionally, there has been a lot of activity throughout the south-east forests, with campaigns such as the Tantan-galo campaign and more recently, the Badja blockade.

The Alpine Dingo, an endangered species in the region, has become the focus of attention and debate recently, causing FOE Snow to become involved in campaigning to increase public awareness about the animals and explode the myths about dingoes in general.

A particularly local focus continues to motivate FOE Snow to respond to specific regional problems and issues. Projects such as the community garden provide a practical and positive demonstration of the politics of the group.



Peak Conservation Organisation meetings

Peak Conservation Organisation (PCO) Council meetings began in 1985. These meetings are an opportunity for 'peak' environment groups to meet with the Federal Minister for the Environment and include a representative of each state (usually the conservation council, or an appropriate environment centre) and the national groups.

Recently the Council accepted a restructured format for meetings. The changes include extending the meetings

from a previous two day conference to five days with an increased emphasis on inter-group communication and less on

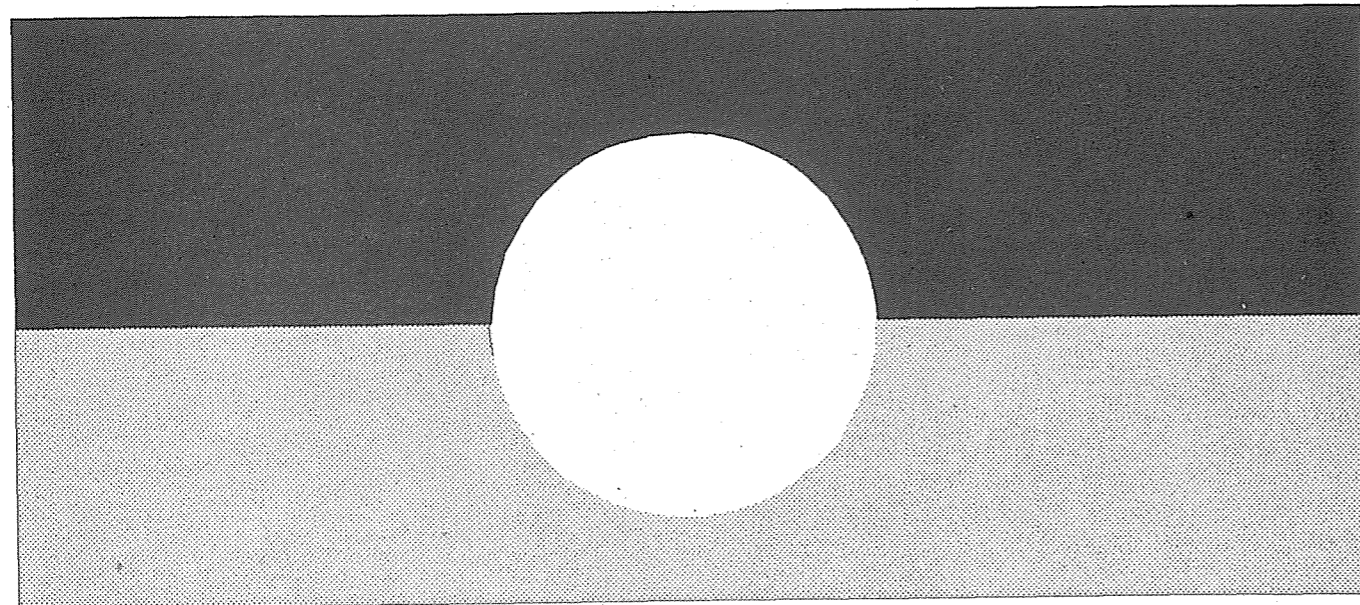
... the real power to make decisions rests with local communities and through voluntary co-operation between individuals and groups within the environment movement.

individual groups meeting with the environment minister. A Secretariat for the Peak Council has also been established to co-ordinate and organise the peak council meetings.

Traditionally, Peak Conservation Organisation Council has been an opportunity for groups to give information to the Minister and request action on specific issues.

In 1993 the Council agreed to broaden its focus and use the meeting as a chance to visit other Ministers and representatives of federal departments as well as spending more time co-ordinating the campaigns of the individual environment groups and taking joint action through the media.

As FOE doesn't have a local group in Canberra, the funding received to send delegates to Canberra adds to the peak council's considerable importance.



Pay the Rent

FOE Fitzroy has long had a commitment to **Paying the Rent** to the Koori community in Victoria. In 1993, the International Year for the World's Indigenous People, FOE Australia also adopted the policy Pay the Rent.

The concept of Paying the Rent was acknowledged at least as early as 1837, but was formalised in the 1970s by Aboriginal activist Dennis Walker, who

encouraged non-Aboriginal people to pay one per cent of their annual gross income towards a local community controlled Aboriginal organisation with monies collected going into trust funds then used by Aboriginal organisations.

By Paying the Rent, non-Aboriginal Australians recognise prior occupation and Aboriginal sovereignty and Aboriginal communities can become

increasingly self-determining, and less dependent on the federal and state governments. It is more than a financial commitment. It involves a re-assessment of non-Aboriginal people's relationship to the land and to its sovereign custodians. It is a way of confronting white Australia's history and healing the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

International Friends of the Earth meeting

Clive Rosewarne reports back

THE FRIENDS of the Earth International 1993 Conference was held 15-21 October in the village of Cisarua about 70km south of Jakarta, Indonesia. Delegates representing 46 countries attended (six countries had no representation) and observers from ENDA-Senegal and India. With secretariat staff and many WALHI members, around 100 people were in attendance. Clive Rosewarne (Fitzroy) and Dietrich Willing (Sydney) represented from FOE Australia.

WALHI (Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia), was the host group. This large and well resourced federation of over 400 non-government organisations (NGOs) was running a week of events before and during the conference celebrating its 13th anniversary. We attended some events as their guests including a seminar on the Human Dimensions of Environmental Sound Development, which focused on Indigenous people's rights, and the WALHI anniversary dinner.

The conference was a mixture of business sessions and workshops, with an ever changing agenda as some issues ran overtime, although to all the organisers' credit it never got out of hand. Sessions were run in the three official languages of FOEI: English, French and Spanish.

The AGM voted to accept four groups as full members: AECO-Costa Rica, Sobrevivencia-Paraguay, Adit-Toto and Georgian Green Movement-Georgia. Two new groups were accepted as associate members Ecologist Movement of Macedonia, formerly the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Rainbow Movement - Czech Republic. Terra Viva - FOE Ecuador's membership was revoked as this group had not fulfilled any of its commitments to the network on an international or regional level, other groups in Ecuador will be considered for membership of the International network in the future.

The Executive Committee has nine positions, these being seven generally elected representatives, the Chairperson elected separately and a place for the group hosting the next AGM. The new Executive Committee for this year

is: Chairperson - John Hontelez, AGM 1994 representative is vacant pending confirmation of a host group, FOE Scotland, FOE Uruguay, Walhi-FOE, Indonesia, FOE Philippines, FOE USA, FOE Togo and FOE Poland.

There were a variety of workshops covering issues of regional and international significance. These included report backs and proposals for FOE International campaigns. Forests, women and development, tourism, energy, wetlands, trade and environment, Multilateral Development Banks and sustainable agriculture were some of the many themes discussed. The proliferation of International Campaign proposals has prompted a tightening of the guidelines for future years to try to ensure that FOEI campaigns can be realistically considered and will actually happen and be carried through after the euphoria of the AGM has subsided.

One campaign that will raise FOE International's profile is the Multilateral Bank Campaign. 1994 is the 50th anniversary of the Bretton Woods conference that set up the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. FOEI will mount a campaign around the theme 'Fifty years is enough'. There is planned a week of actions around the time of the original Bretton Woods conference and this will coincide with this year's World Bank meetings.

Some issues covered by groups in 'our region', (Japan to Australia and all points between) include: dams/rivers/barrages (water issues), Asia Pacific Economic Conference, forests, wet-

lands, biotechnology/human genome project/germplasm, nuclear issues, toxic waste trade and tourism.

There were slide shows and informal information sessions for delegates to share information on their group's activities. I showed slides from the Lake Eyre Basin region and introduced them with background material on FOE Australia and in particular work FOE Australia groups have done with Aboriginal communities, including the Pay the Rent Campaign. This issue was of interest to some South American groups working with indigenous people. The slides went particularly well with those unused to desert landscapes. The introduction to FOE Australia helped put our work into an economic and distance framework.

Various delegates at the AGM were interested and impressed with the work of FOE Australia groups, and wanted more information on food co-ops, Pay the Rent and other Indigenous Peoples' issues, water campaigns, tourism and the Lake Eyre Basin World Heritage campaign. FOE International is an important network of environmentalists campaigning in a variety of styles on a variety of issues. Getting together certainly helps stimulate ideas and reinvigorates everyone. However working together to help strengthen campaigning is the next important step to maximise the potential the network represents ...

Clive Rosewarne was a FOE Australia delegate to the 1993 FOEI conference.

Resources

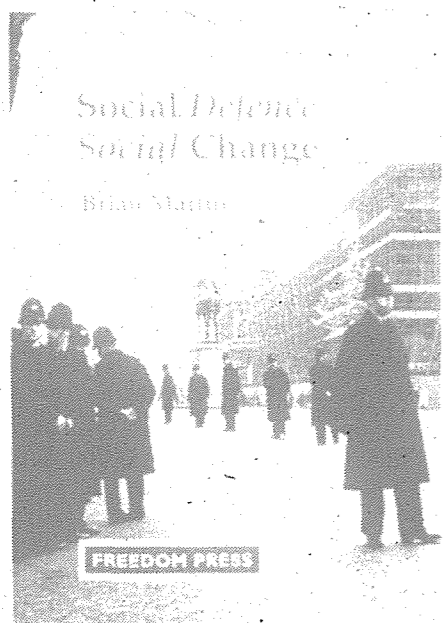
Social Defence Social Change

Brian Martin Freedom Press
London 1993, 157pp

Social Defence Social Change argues for social defence as a grassroots initiative linked to challenges to oppressive structures in society such as patriarchy, police and the state. Filled with examples from Finland to Fiji, the book also provides a provocative survey of radical alternatives in politics and economics.

As the author states 'social defence should be part of a process of social change'.

Available from: Freedom Press, 84b
Whitechapel, High Street, London
E1 7QX Ph: 44-71-247 9249



Return it to the Earth: guidelines for composting in Australia

John Denlay, Friends of the Earth,
40pp, 1993, \$12.50

This report explores the full spectrum of issues associated with municipal scale composting. Much of the information was gathered by the author, John Denlay, during a 1992 fellowship to Europe and North America. The report argues that government waste management strategies must focus on composting if Australia is to meet its waste reduction targets.

The report reviews the best of the world's collection systems, composting technologies, approaches to marketing, education programs and government policies and then outlines a composting strategy for Australia. Underpinning the strategy is the call for a ban on dumping garden waste.

Available from: Friends of the Earth
(Sydney), Suite 8, 4th Floor, 134
Broadway Sydney NSW 2007 Ph:
(02) 281 4070 Fax: (02) 281 5216

The Mabo package

Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Commission (ATSIC),
Canberra, 1993, free

A package of material on the Mabo judgement is being distributed in limited numbers by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). It includes brochures such as 'Rebutting Mabo myths' and 'Plain English guide to The Mabo Decision for the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities' as well as guides to using the Native Title Tribunal and Federal Court for Native Title and compensation claims and 'right to negotiate applications under the Native Title Act 1993'.

Available from: ATSIC, PO Box 17,
Woden, ACT, 2606. Ph: (06) 289 1222

The Environment Portfolio

Department of the Environment,
Sport and Territories, AGPS, 1993,
111 pages, free

This report provides an overview of the policies and programs undertaken by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment.

Part One describes the legal and administrative setting for protection of the environment in Australia and the Territories. Part Two describes the major cross-sectoral issues which provide a policy framework for portfolio activities. Part Three describes policies and programs aimed at improving the availability of environmental information. Part Four sets out particular environmental issues and the Commonwealth Government's responses.

Available from: Commonwealth
Environment Protection Agency,
PO Box E305 Queen Victoria Tce,
ACT 2600 Ph: (008) 811 109.

The SAP in the Forest

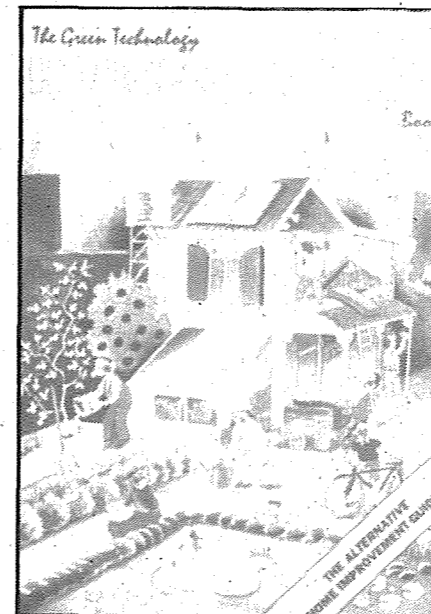
Friends of the Earth (England,
Wales and Northern Island),
London 1993

This report gives detailed evidence of the links between Structural Adjustments Programs (SAPs) and deforestation. Case studies on the Philippines and Guyana show how the SAP policies of the World Bank and the IMF have been largely tailored to the foreign policy objectives of powerful aid-givers like the United States.

The report recommends that measures be taken to ensure that conditions linked to IMF and Bank SAPs are routinely assessed for their environmental and social impacts.

Available from: Publications Friends
of the Earth, 26 - 28 Underwood St,
London N1 7JQ Ph: 44-71-490-2665
Fax: 44-71-490 0881
Email foe@gn.apc.org

Reviews



The Green Technology House and Garden Book

Edited by Michael Harris and Claire
Beaumont, ATA Publications, 1993,
203 pp, \$19.95

Reviewed by Sandy Robinson

About 12 months ago I moved house again. Thinking about it, I have lived in nine different abodes in the past ten years, four of which I owned and could change around as I please.

The move to the current house was with a feeling of real commitment to developing a much more environmentally friendly dwelling and surrounds than I had in the past.

So when I was given a copy of *The Green Technology House and Garden Book*, declaring itself to be 'The Alternative Home Improvement Guide', I seized upon this as an opportunity to

right past wrongs and improve my performance. I launched into the book looking for some good practical ideas, within my capabilities, to change my home environment.

Alas, it proved not the book for me. This is not to say that it won't be a useful book to others with different information needs or with more time and manual skills.

The book has a range of very interesting information. The section on alternatives to chemical paints, varnishes and glues is only introductory to the topic but sufficient to set me off to find out more and try the alternative products.

The energy saving checklist for potential home buyers or builders is a great practical tool and simple to use. Reading on through the next chapter, about turning a 'disaster' into a low-energy house, the information ranges from immediate practical solutions to proposals involving a greater degree of time and commitment.

This format of initial simple information to more complex articles is again the approach for the chapter on 'Greening Your Garden' with useful information on non-toxic pest control through to specifications on how to build a window-box greenhouse.

Beyond this point in the book questions arise for me as to who this book is aimed at and what do the editors hope to achieve? There were a number of the inventive solutions in the 'Getting Practical' chapter but by the end of the article, they turned out to be not all that practical in their current form.

This is followed by a chapter on a number of people's long term experiences with alternative technology and

approaches to community living, generally describing evolving solutions to individual situations. The information is there but it requires more thought for the reader to obtain 'guiding' information.

The final chapter is a top idea for those of us not in the know. It contains lists of suppliers of alternative products mentioned in the articles (with addresses and contact details), other information sources and more books.

As I said at the outset there will be many people who will no doubt find this book and valuable. However I think its format is similar to many of those 'alternate' books and magazines we have on the shelf. They are full of interesting articles about a range of ideas but we don't use these publications on a day to day basis to improve those 'ungreen' practices we all have. Working parents lack the time to tackle the more complex projects and the mobility factor also presents a dilemma of the unlikelihood of reaping long term benefits.

On the other hand, the sections like the energy-saving checklists, retrofitting your house and non-toxic gardening were short, simple and told us what to get out there and do now!

It is possible some simple home guides on single topics such as alternative cleaning may appeal to a wider section of the community and result in more widespread adoption of the practices promoted. The section from this book would be an ideal starting point.

Sandy Robinson is a member of the Wilderness Society and has a degree in Agriculture from the days when they used big horses with white socks.

Reviews

Toxic Nation: the fight to save our communities from chemical contamination

by Fred Setterberg and Lonny Shavelson, John Wiley & Sons, 1993

Reviewed by Randy Payton

Citizens organizing against toxics in their communities constitute possibly the fastest growing, grassroots social movement in America today. In response to the vacuum left at the community and neighborhood levels by the 'mainstreaming' of national environmental groups, grassroots anti-toxics groups represent the best of what 'environmentalism' means. *Toxic Nation* by Fred Setterberg and Lonny Shavelson is probably the best single exploration of this 'new wave' in environmental organizing, to date.

The chapter 'Sally Teets and the Small-Town Toxic Rebels' is particularly instructive. Sally Teets was a mostly non-political housewife until events prompted her to organize her friends and neighbors to beat the waste haulers (the infamous Waste Management, Inc.) threatening her town with a projected 7-mile high waste dump. Interestingly, after beating the haulers, a return to 'civilian' life after a year of using her wits as an anti-toxics 'warrior' proved an anti-climactic let-down for Sally. Happily, she found a new life as Midwest Organizer for the Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste, probably the best national resource organizations for grass-roots groups and organizers. This writer met Sally when she spoke at a town meeting in 1989. Her infectious enthusiasm for 'fighting

the power' is craftily brought across in *Toxic Nation*.

At the centre of Uniontown, Ohio stood the (aptly named) Industrial Excess Landfill - 750,000 metric tons of toxic waste deposited throughout a 30-acre dump. Methane was to eventually vent up from the dump, collect inside one fashionably quaint tract house and explode. One would think 'the problems of Uniontown seemed sufficiently vast and dramatic to warrant the predictable clamor of a well-organized and outraged citizenry', à la Sally Teets's working class community in Spencerville. Wrong. The authors found in the Uniontown anti-toxics 'organization' a case study in how *not* to beat back waste haulers. They sat in on one of the group's 'meetings' where the five members talked federal regulations, meeting with the EPA, filling group's 'data gap,' with more 'technical' information, *ad nauseum*. Without a 'mass base' the group was 'all mouth and no trousers' - no numbers to back them up. The authors opine 'what the group seemed not to have learned - in fact, forcefully rejected - was the central lesson of almost every successful community group's long struggle: the battle was not technical, scientific, or medical; it was political'. The 'dedicated, but seemingly disconnected committee of Uniontown appeared to identify too thoroughly with its peers in government and industry to stage a real rebellion'. The authors report such half-baked observations from Committee members as: 'What we need is a powerful person at the top who can apply pressure.' 'People like us don't change the system,' insisted another member, arguing that direct confrontation was messy and ineffective. Sports coats and ties, cashmere sweaters and heels? At an anti-toxics meeting? Uniontown continues to get the bum's rush from the EPA bureaucracy and overrun by the waste haulers.

Toxic Nation also reports that the Sierra Club, the National Resources Defense Council, National Audubon Society, and National Wildlife Federation have all erected new headquarters in New York and Washington DC, 'drawing fire from the grassroots over

the sway of Potomac conservationists'. (Greenpeace's willingness to extend its skills and experience to local anti-toxics struggles, the authors point out, continues to be exemplary.) The authors go on to report how 'environmental respectability ... smoothed the way for the leaders of the large non-profit organizations to identify with their peers in the profit-making sector - including executives in corporations viewed by many people in toxic towns as environmental enemies'. What are we to think when the chairman of Waste Management, Inc., our own local bad guys, joins the board of the National Wildlife Federation and becomes a major donor?

The authors state: 'Not only had their government abandoned them. Not only had the large environmental organizations - Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, the Audubon Society, and the rest - shown no interest in their resistance ... The truth about toxic America was considerably worse. People in small towns and working class communities were actually being targeted for toxic waste dumps and incinerators that would not be politically feasible in more affluent locations.'

In communities across the US, the authors find hope in a citizenry 'emerged and ready to fight - and armed with a ferocious new faith in the country's resiliency' from the mining town of Yukon, Pennsylvania, where nurse Diana Steck and her group fought to shut down a hazardous waste dump to Emelle, Alabama, where Blacks and whites worked together fighting against the dumping of PCBs in their community. The authors point to continuing grassroots resistance to the opening of a dangerous toxic waste incinerator by citizens in East Liverpool, Ohio as a 'bellweather' struggle to the grass-roots environmental movement nationwide.

Toxic Nation can be read as a manual of ideas and strategies for grass-roots anti-toxic action as well as an action-packed, page-turning thriller. What more could you ask? Check it out.

This review was originally published in Clean Water Quarterly No. 1 Fall '93 - Winter '94.

Black'n'White'n'Green

Edited by George Hirst, Envirobook, Sydney, 1993, 127pp, \$12.95

Reviewed by Kate McCann

Black'n'White'n'Green, edited by George Hirst draws together an impressive array of Australian cartoonists to comment upon the plethora of environmental crises facing us today. It is by no means the first collection published dealing with these issues and, unfortunately will not be the last as we look towards a future wrought with complex environmental problems needing to be confronted.

Born from a travelling exhibition of the same name, the collection is not a definitive political cartoon book but certainly sits comfortably amongst a growing number in the genre. Popular cartoonists include the ever-incisive perennial, Bruce Petty, Patrick Cook, Tanberg, Glen LeLievre and, thankfully, a ground swell of women cartoonists like Judy Horacek, Barbary O'Brien and Susan Wicks beginning to address the gender balance in published car-

toons and who have appeared in *Chain Reaction*.

Political cartooning in the nineties is a difficult pursuit. As environmental disaster plague us over generations, it becomes more difficult to effectively highlight the problems in fresh and poignant ways. This, however, we must always try to do, for the cartoon remains one of the most effective remedies for absolute hopelessness. If we can see, in

one isolated moment, the absurdities of the world we've created around us, perhaps we may begin to discover ways of dismantling it to create a more rational and sustainable place to live. Perhaps *Black'n'White'n'Green* can help us on our way.

Kate McCann is a cartoonist in struggle and an active member of Friends of the Earth Fitzroy

In a Wilderness of Mirrors

by Ric Throssell, Left Book Club, Sydney, 1992, 196pp, \$14.95

Reviewed by Mark Delmege

I was lucky to come across this book and the author at the Left Book Club stall at the Fremantle May Day celebration.

Not having read fiction for quite some time I found the literary style a little hard to follow at first but I was soon absorbed into the mystery and sadness of the main character Selwyn Joynton.

'Comrade' Selwyn was an activist in the Student/Worker Solidarity Committee during the anti-Vietnam war movement. His sometime lover Marietta falls pregnant and they marry.

But he lives a lie. His marriage is neither loving nor happy and doubts soon arise as to his political convictions as well.

His short travels overseas take him to revolutionary Granada, the Seychelles and Uganda, all former British colonies. Selwyn's role in these events is one of messenger as he passes on items from what appears to be British Intelligence to counter-revolutionary forces.

The decay of the once mighty empire is matched by the festering relations between Selwyn and his wife Marietta and son Jack.

'The story that I have told is fiction, but the great world events it recounts are true.' Throssell writes in the epilogue.

Ric Throssell's forty years in the Australian foreign service provide him with a worthy insight into these events and the personal foibles of Selwyn Joynton are a lesson to us all.

I enjoyed this book and I think you will too.

Mark Delmege is currently working on a history of the CIA in Australia.

"In war, children,
there are winners and losers..
we are the losers.."





...AND I SAY RECYCLING
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MAKE US DO MORE WORK
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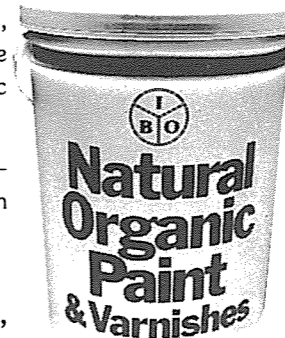
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Fantastic books at the Friends of the Earth Bookshop

The Seed Saver's Handbook (for Australia and New Zealand) Michel and Jude Fanton \$22.95

Michel and Jude Fanton, the founders of Australia's Seed Savers' Network, show how gardeners can protect our global food heritage - and eat it too. They describe the seed collecting, growth cycles, propagation, cultivation and traditional kitchen and medicinal uses of over one hundred vegetables, culinary herbs and edible flowers.

Ecological Economics The Group of Green Economists \$22.95

The Green Economists - who are associated with the German Greens, and draw on environmental, women's and human rights movements - argue for practical alternatives to the economic problems caused by two centuries of market-led industrialisation and European colonial rule. These alternatives mean an ecological and social reshaping of industrial society and policy towards the Third World and consider the world economy as a whole.

Places of the Soul Christopher Day \$24.95

Christopher Day trained as an architect and sculptor. In addition to designing buildings in accordance with ecological principles, he offers world-wide consultancy on the development and rescue of places both indoor and outdoor.

Challenging conventional architectural practice, Christopher Day demonstrates how we can reinstate the human factor and building design can start with people and place and develop organically from these foundations.

Our Rights - Activists Rights Handbook Activists Defence Network (2nd NSW and Federal Edition) \$6.50

This book by activists for activists uses lessons from collective experience and is designed to be carried on a demo, used as a reference at a campaign meeting or as a text for progressive educational courses. It starts from the proposition that we have basic human rights independent of the state or legal system. This book assists when our assertion of these rights puts us into conflict with the forces of the state. It covers criminalising political dissent; common charges and their defences; students' rights; trade unionists and industrial penal powers; police and our rights; prisons; dealing with lawyers; self representation and court procedure; the media and media accountability.

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