EDITORIAL

chain reaction
vol.3 no.4 1978

This edition of Chain Reaction was written and produced by women who were concerned with the position of women in the environment movement and in society as a whole.

By working together on this issue, we have all learnt a lot in the sharing of skills, cooperation and constructive criticism which took place. During the production of the magazine feminist issues, so often put to the back or ignored, were brought to the front and we hope worthwhile discussion resulted within the movement on account of our presence.

This is not and was not intended to be a definitive journal on feminism and ecology. To date very little has been written on this topic, however many feminists in the environment movement are becoming concerned, meeting together and discussing the issues.

When it was first suggested we have a women's edition of Chain Reaction women all over Australia became interested, many supplied the articles and ideas in this issue so in the next months we hope to get more interesting and non-competitive nature is potentially one of the most egalitarian and therefore profoundly radical movements of today. * * *

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Women often have difficulty being accepted as an integrally important part of any decision making within the movement. In a competitive hierarchical system those who have not been conditioned to be part of a power structure, as have many men, find their ideas and actions at worst ignored, at best tolerated. Those women who do not see entering this hierarchy as a viable approach have found very few avenues open for their energies.

In the political arena, women are often seen as a conservative force, with more women that men voting for conservative governments. Trade unions and other organisations in the work force have been a major element in the radicalisation of many employees. Since the 1900s, relatively few women have been in the work force, or exposed to such influences. The woman at home is isolated from many of the more progressive movements and thus becomes a supporter of the conservatives.

In the home, women are blamed for continuing the consumer cycle that is a basis of our capitalist society. The stream of garbage that results from increasing quantities from the suburban home is destroying the earth. The home and the woman however are not the originators but rather the victims of this system. It is the patriarchal capitalist society which continues the cycle by using women in advertising to define the standards by which they will be accepted. Women are used by bosses, exploited by advertisers, cheated by manufacturers and blamed by society. Once women realise this the greatest potential for change lies in themselves.

Feminists do not want to set up yet another hierarchical structure to run the world. Feminism with its loose structure and non-competitive nature is potentially one of the most egalitarian and therefore profoundly radical movements of today. * * *

"Women must see that there can be no liberation for them and no solution to the ecological crisis within a society whose fundamental model of relationship continues to be one of domination."

Rosemary Ruether "New Woman, New Earth"
but the government had used herbicides such as 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T in the atomic tests. This was to determine if there are any health hazards in connection with the tests.

The first man to seek compensation died of acute leukemia early in February, 1978. Extracts from a letter from his wife reveal that he believed the government was responsible for his illness.

"They didn't even give those men protective clothing. All they did afterwards was dust them off and hose down their boots. They didn't change clothes until hours later.

"Through the pressure of the news media and the Disabled American Veterans Association my husband, Paul, has finally received 100% disability — but the government still won't come out and admit that his illness has resulted from the atomic test he was in."

"He told one reporter he felt cheated out of half his life and he only hoped he could live long enough to see the government admit its responsibility to him and all those other 100,000 of men like him who were used in those atomic tests. After Hiroshima and Nagasaki they should have known."

"Another Mother For Peace" is attempting to make the consequences of nuclear war real and visible.

"Hundreds of atomic bomb tests were held in Nevada. ... but the government denied their responsibility to the men involved."

"Another Mother For Peace" charges the American Energy Commission (National Regulatory Commission/Energy Research and Development Association) and the Department of Defence with criminally inhuman actions in deliberately exposing 100s of thousands of Americans to atomic bomb radiation.

- failure to notify these men of the grave health risks to which they were exposed, so that they could get proper medical examinations and treatment.
- refusing to provide service-connected disability payments to those suffering damage from these tests, and death benefits to their families.

Above, ground nuclear tests were stopped after the U.S. and U.S.S.R. concluded a test ban treaty in 1962. "Another Mother For Peace" December 1977.

FRENCH ELECTIONS

With general elections in March, French ecologists are facing their first chance to enter the political arena. It appears likely that they will be a decisive factor if the election is a close one, as is expected.

A recent poll in the daily "Le Figaro," shows that French youth is supporting the ecological banner.

Out of a sample of 5,000 female and male students 33% said they would vote for an ecological candidate should one be presented at the forthcoming Presidential election.

However the ecologists' loose coalition, made of over 100 local and regional groups, is suffering from internal dissent. The disagreements are seen to centre around the issue of whether ecology should become a political force in itself or as an influence to already existing political structures.

In their statement they conceded that the potential risk that x-rays themselves cause cancer could outweigh the benefits of detecting a malignancy early. As a result, they have recommended that routine x-rays should be restricted to women over fifty and younger women who stand a high risk of developing breast cancer. How long before they too are excluded?

The Ecologist, Nov. 1977

X-Ray danger

In the last four years, 280,000 American women have had breast x-rays in a programme sponsored by the National Cancer Institute. Last month, however, the NCI made a sudden volte-face. Having spent thousands of dollars persuading everyone that x-rays were safe, and routine breast check-ups essential, they have finally come to realise what the majority of us knew already, i.e., that they were wrong.

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URANIUM MINING: LEGAL?

Last December, Pancontinental Mining and Queensland Mines bought out environmental impact statements for their uranium projects at Jabluka and Naharak. We were able to put a series of questions to the Department of Environment, Housing, and Community Development. The most important single conclusion to come out of our analysis of the companies' statements was that all the companies mining uranium in the Afligator Rivers region are likely to cover their workers with a higher cancer risk, and will probably have to break the law on radiation safety.

If uranium mining does take place, it will do so under the provisions of the "Code of Practice on Radiation Protection in the Mining and Milling of Radioactive Ores." The Ranger Inquiry recommended that this code, based on International Labour Organisation, and International Atomic Energy Agency work, and US practice (which has already put a number of mines out of business), should be made law. In its statement on August 28th giving the go-ahead on mining, the government promised it would do this.

The Code of Practice seeks to limit the risk of lung cancer in uranium miners to 1% or 2% by ensuring a dust-free exposure to radon gas and its decay products, which in the 1870s caused 75% of the miners of the Austro-Hungarian empire to die of lung cancer. Studies done by the US health department show there is still a high death rate amongst uranium miners.

Research done at FOE Carlton, the conclusions of which have been cross-checked by Professor Thompkins of Queensland University and Melbourne University's radiation protection officer, Robotham, indicates that the conclusions of which have been published, are averages. FOE N.Z. reports that gasoline in car exhausts are said to be a cause of cancer of the mesothelium.

Dr. B. Gandeva who has been studying the problem for twenty years rejected government claims that "there was no human health risk associated with the levels of radon". He claims that radon from the decay of uranium can cause an incurable cancer which may not show until twenty, thirty or forty years after initial exposure.

Recent investigations have found that following the closure of the companies' statements for the uranium projects, the amount of radon from reprocessing of uranium waste products is much higher than was anticipated. Perhaps Professor Thompkins of Queens University, Ontario, has been of a surprisingly low standard.

The Bramble Report, produced by experts in Britain, found that even animals kept in intensive units generation after generation still retain their instincts, and they never lose their desire to react to natural stimuli, such as pecking at a worm or rooting in the soil. Contrary to claims that animals do not suffer because they do not "know", the Bramble Report recommended animal experimentation in Great Britain, found that "animals suffer still in the same way as human beings". In the intensive units, because the animal society is disrupted, one wonders if scientists have forgotten that hens are capable of laying eggs.

FOE N.Z. takes mining lease

FOE N.Z. reports that gasoline in New Zealand has a lead content between 30 and 50 parts per million. Lead pollution is consequently something fierce.

Every year in New Zealand approximately 7 million layers, 63 million broilers (chickens we eat) and 100,000 pigs are reared intensively. In the broiler industry this involves keeping the chickens in almost completely ventilated and illuminated, each chicken with only half a square foot of space, fed on synthetic food, and killed at 8 weeks of age when the bird has reached maximum protein potential for minimum food intake. Layers suffer a similar fate except they live out the 18 months of their life in a wire cage with usually 3 or 4 hens to a cage, unable to stretch, unable to scratch in the earth or make a dust bath.

Intensively reared animals are fed on synthetic foods, taking money and effort in rearing, reducing the potential for minimum food intake. Radon works out at a very low standard. "Powdered cellulose" i.e. sawdust! Canada has already banned the bread because it is a high percentage of "powdered cellulose" i.e. sawdust! It is a high standard. Perhaps Professor Thompkins of Queens University, Ontario, has been of a surprisingly low standard.

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ABORIGINES

how mining will affect them

“We are black people, that is why you don’t believe us, that is why you decide you want the land quickly and the Government who is in charge of us all doesn’t ask us black people first about the land … it seems like we have no land, us who are black. We don’t keep each other’s word; we keep your word but you don’t keep ours.

The issue of aboriginal land rights goes hand in hand with the uranium mining issue. Most of the uranium in the Northern Territory is on land traditionally occupied by aborigines. There are mine sites in the Oenpelli Reserve and nearby in the Kakadu area: in fact, most of the area is under claim by the aborigines. The mines will be close to Oenpelli, where tribal people live, and they will be greatly affected by the mining and the miners, perhaps irreversibly affected. The aboriginal people are frightened: some of them have seen what has happened at other mining areas.

The Northern Territory is on land traditionally occupied by aborigines. There are mine sites in the Oenpelli area; the area is under claim by the aborigines. The mines will be close to Oenpelli, where tribal people live, and they will be greatly affected by the mining and the miners, perhaps irreversibly affected. The aboriginal people are frightened: some of them have seen what has happened at other mining areas in the Northern part of Australia and do not want the same thing to happen to them.

The effect of mining on the aborigines’ way of life is devastating. Mining canteens bring people in contact with alcohol. Rachel Maralargurr, in evidence to the Ranger Inquiry, said:

“I was born at Oenpelli. This is where I grew up and where I have always lived. Now I want to talk about why we are frightened. We don’t hate it if they dig the ground, but we are frightened. That is what we absolutely hate. Aborigines are powerless to stop the destruction that mining brings. Just the children grow up; some of them are brought up to be domestic staff. And I was actually brought up here to be a domestic servant for white officers, and the women were to be domestic servants. The men were to be labourers.

The aborigines’ communities cannot survive when they are thrust into contact with white people. If the aborigines owned their land they could stop these things happening; they could keep people out. But the Land Rights legislation has not given them a piece of land. They have to fight every case in the courts, at a cost of thousands of dollars. Ironically, the money for fighting these battles is come from mineral royalties: the aborigines are expected to let the land be dug up before they can afford to claim it.

Uranium mining is not the only kind of mining which has eaten into the aborigines’ land. There is bauxite mining at Goove, Weipa and Aurukun, manganese at Groote Island, traditional aboriginal land all over the country has been taken for mines. This is no accident. Mining companies know that if they find minerals on land which is occupied by white people they will have a struggle to dislodge them, and will have to pay heavy compensation. So instead they prospect on “unused” land. For years prospectors have been going onto aboriginal reserves without getting permits and going to places where other white people are restricted from going. Aboriginal land rights are a relatively recent idea (dating from the last Labor government) and mining companies did not think they would need to consider the aborigines’ wishes seriously. These mines are a long way from permanent settlements of white people (other than the miners themselves) and hardly anyone knows or cares what goes on up there. The aborigines are afraid of people wanting to stop the destruction that vast mining projects cause.

Bauxite mining requires huge areas to be strip mined. The refining process leaves behind it ponds of “red mud” which has been treated with caustic soda. Red mud kills fish, as it is so alkaline that no seed can take root in the red dust. The Weipa aboriginal settlement is like an island surrounded by a sea of man-made dust. The land where they used to gather food, with its network of myths associated with land-forms, the sacred places, is now devastated. The psychological effect is impossible to imagine.

— Barbara Hutton

URANIUM MINING IN AUSTRALIA

audio-visual kit

62 slides with accompanying tape, showing

• the impact of mining in Arnhem land on aboriginals' wildlife
• the economic implications of mining
• opposition to nuclear power

This kit has been highly praised by aboriginal organisations, conservation groups, and teaching associations.

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Photo from "Uranium Mining in Australia" (see facing page).
The Antarctic Treaty Nations see Antarctica as a potential source of food and of fossil fuels. They are at the moment working on a "Conservation Regime for Antarctic Marine Living Resources", and are already discussing the question of mineral exploration, is as yet neither technologically nor economically viable.

The so-called "Conservation Regime" actually encourages the exploitation of marine species. In the final report from the Ninth Consultative Meeting it is stated that "the word conservation... includes rational use, in the sense that harvesting would not be prohibited". It goes on to say that "the regime would exclude catch allocation and other economic regulation of harvesting." It is obviously an exploitation, not a conservation regime.

Antarctica is the last remaining relatively unspoiled area on earth. Everywhere else the destructive hand of people can be seen, with its resulting ugliness - affecting sight, sound and smell - and contamination of water systems and of the atmosphere. Even in Antarctica the activities of people outside the area have polluted the seas; the ice (radiation levels have increased beyond normal background radiation levels); and animal species (DDT has been found in penguins). To eliminate these effects we would have to stop activities that produce these pollutants on a world-wide scale.

Antarctica should be preserved not only because it is the earth's largest remaining wilderness but also because of the possible global consequences of any interference to it.

Nuclear wastes in the ice?

Another threat to the Antarctic region is the possibility of dumping nuclear wastes there. While at present the Antarctic Treaty prohibits the dumping of wastes, the very fact that it is included in the treaty suggests that it was and perhaps still is regarded as a serious possibility. It would be very convenient for nuclear nations - out of sight, out of mind. The first suggestion was to melt the wastes into the ice. The dangers, however, from such a storage place are great because the constantly-moving ice layer could damage or crush containers. It is also thought possible that the ice could melt with the radiated heat from the slowly degrading radioactive materials, dislodging the ice into the surrounding oceans.

Currents from the rich bottom water of the Antarctic flow north, till the warming waters well up to the surface, carrying nutrients which feed the phytoplankton that grows in the sunlight. The surface water flows back to the Antarctic, completing the never-ending cycle. The whole southern ocean depends on this cycle to sustain its ecosystem. The ecosystem of Antarctic waters is extremely fragile and could easily be disturbed.

Antarctica's effect on weather patterns is another area of concern. The winds that scurk the earth's surface are directly affected by the temperature difference between the Antarctic ice and warmer Northern zones. It is not known whether and how human activities may interfere with the weather patterns, or with the Antarctic ecosystem. It is certain however that they could induce another ice-age or the melting of the poles, which would raise the world's sea-levels, perhaps submerging coastal cities. Once a change in the weather patterns occurred it would be difficult if not impossible to reverse. Influences from outside the Antarctic, such as the buildup of CO2 causing a hot-house effect, or the increase in airborne dust particles reflecting more heat - could trigger off the change.

Another possibility, from within the region, is that an oil spill (which would be impossible to clean up with present methods because of the extremely cold temperatures) could cover a sufficient area of the ice surface to affect its ability to reflect the sun's radiation. The ice would then begin to warm up and melt. The effect would multiply in relation to the amount of melting area and would be uncontrollable. There is much dispute over the possibility and likelihood of this happening but it seems ridiculous to risk this situation while uncertainty exists.

What will happen if we overfish krill to the extent that catch exceeds regenerative capacity? Looking at previous similar situations this is very likely. Consider the world total fishing record. In World Watch Paper 14-Re-defining National Security - Lester Brown explains, "The productivity of scores of oceanic fisheries is falling as the catch exceeds their regenerative capacities. In a protein hungry world, over-fishing has recently become the rule, not the exception... Between 1950 and 1970, fish supplied a steadily expanding share of human protein needs, but in 1970 the trend was abruptly and unexpectedly interrupted. Since then the catch has fluctuated between 65 and 70 million tons, clouding the prospects for an ever-bigger catch. Meanwhile world population growth has led to an 11% decline in the per capita catch and to rising prices for virtually every edible species."

It would not be necessary for us to fish even to the extent of catching regenerative capacity of krill to affect the Antarctic environment. The Antarctic marine eco-system is extremely fragile. The biomass, population dynamics, ecology, biology and distribution of krill are not clearly understood. The Antarctic treaty nations are formulating an exploitation regime that defines conservation as "rational harvesting" and resource as any species, "not limited to commercially exploitable species". Given our record in exploitation of other species it is reasonable to assume that the Antarctic marine eco-system has very little chance of being unaffected unless some radical
changes in thinking and action take place very shortly. If krill were used to feed millions of people who would otherwise starve and if krill were the only possible solution to this problem, we would obviously have to consider closely whether it would not be better to risk the destruction of this unique environment and the possible wide-ranging consequences. Again previous experience has shown that the food is unlikely to get to those who need it. Krill has already been exploited to a limited extent by Russia, Japan and other nations. It seems to have been so far mainly for stock-feed. The world's economic system is based, at the moment, on ability to pay rather than on need. It is likely that richer nations will be able to pay more for this commodity, to use for feeding stock, than the poorer nations who need it to feed to humans. Therefore the richer nations will get it. It is well known that fruit has been allowed to rot on trees, grain mould away in granaries, and that governments have said to farmers not to grow food while people starve. Redistribution of food and full use of supplies would seem to be a more permanent solution to the problem.

Even if this is done it may no longer be possible to support the world population. Erosion of soils, desertification, deforestation and over-fishing are leaving the earth more and more unable to sustain past yields. Food must not only be redistributed more equitably, but the rehabilitation of the earth's ecological systems needs urgent attention. The exploitation and eventual destruction of another ecological system seems short-sighted to the point of blindness.

Oil from Antarctica is seen as an answer to the energy crisis. This solution to the problem can only at best be short-term and at worst could have wide-range consequences on the earth's weather patterns and ecological systems. It would seem more logical to develop longer-term solutions, to be found in the use of renewable energy sources. It seems that the reason for the exploitation of Antarctica is greed, not concern for humanity. The treaty nations want to gain economically from 'their' area, and they want to retain control of it.

Given the realisation that the Treaty is beginning to collapse in its original aim of preserving Antarctica and reserving the area for scientific research, consideration must be given to some different form of control. Firstly, the area should be declared a Natural Wilderness Area. Secondly the exclusive club of nations that now forms the Antarctic Treaty should have no special privileges and all nations that show an interest in the preservation of Antarctica should share in the management of the area on an equal basis to interested states. Every attempt must be made to protect this last remaining unspoilt continent.

Linnell Scobieh, Antarctica Collective, Friends of the Earth, 51 Nicholson Street, Carlton, Vic.

The Treaty Meeting referred to above was the Special Antarctic Consultative Meeting held in Canberra Feb. 27-March 17. Three newspapers, called "ICE" were printed during the course of the Meeting by a group of FOE people there. These are available from FOE at a cost of 10c each.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

IN A NUCLEAR STATE

Nuclear power has been alternately envisaged as a panacea for the world's energy ills (clean, safe, and so cheap they'd pay you to use it); as, theoretically, Pure Alchemy; and as a technological Messiah discovered in the nick of time to save the world from the energy crunch. The Faustian bargain made, and — presto! The flagging fortunes of capitalism, consumerism and consumerism are revived.

Sadly, this vision has not yet to pass, and it is apparent that capitalism has spawned yet another dinosaur — Tyrannosaurus Rex. (Tyrannosaurus Rex was a vicious carnivore and became extinct during the Ice Age due to its inefficient metabolism and excessive size.) Like Oedipus Rex, this particular offspring seems destined for the destruction of its economic parent.

Of our new term for nuclear power, Tyrannosaurus Rex, it is the tyrans which strikes us. It is particularly apt, since as our society is integrated into this particular technology, it will be increasingly monitored by tyrannical and authoritarian governments. It is this aspect — the impact on our fundamental freedoms — which concerns me here:

The Natural Law of Nucleardom

— that erosion of a citizen's liberties increases exponentially in direct proportion to a country's involvement in the nuclear fuel cycle.

It is outside the gambit of this article to reflect upon the political economy of nuclear power — suffice it to say that even taking the most naive and optimistic view of Western "democracies", the unprecedented toxicity of the materials used or produced (i.e. Plutonium, Strontium 90) make stringent security measures inevitable. Sir Brian Flowers, Chairman of the Royal Commission into Environmental Pollution, stated

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"I do not believe it is a question of whether someone will deliberately acquire plutonium for the purposes of terror blackmail, but only when and how often.

To give but one example of the legislation enacted to counter this threat, Britain on 23 February, 1976 passed the Atomic Energy Special Constables Act. This Act gave the Atomic Energy Agency a permanently armed constabulary with wide powers to police plutonium and related installations. It empowers them to carry arms, and arrest on suspicion and without a warrant. The special constables are responsible only to the relevant minister (via his authority over the AEA) rather than being answerable to parliament. This places them well outside normal judicial control as an independent judiciary. By the year 2000 the special constabulary would have expanded to about 3,000 men.

The British National Council for Civil Liberties announced that 'the brutal message of the Atomic Energy Act seems to be that plutonium is now the possession of the state, and that if it is in one's possession then it is a question of whether one will be arrested or not. The state has absolute power over it, and those who are found in illegal possession are answerable to parliament. The notification is made that there have been breaches of Section 46, punishable by a maximum period of 20 years imprisonment (Sections 44, 45, 46).

Key sections which infringe the liberties and right to protest of all dissenting Australians include:

1. Sections on breaches of security (which deal with communication of 'restricted information'). Breaches could incur penalties of up to 20 years imprisonment.

2. 'Restricted information' is very broadly defined by the Act. This severely restricts public access to information, particularly if, as suggested, we develop enrichment plants.

3. The defendant may be convicted on the 'circumstances of the case, his conduct or known character as proved' (Section 47). This might be, if we may take the Special Branch affair in South Australia as an indication, membership of the ALP, FOE or the Australian Conservation Foundation, or attendance at a demonstration.

The Prime Minister's stated intention to collect dossiers on anti-uranium protestors may signal his aim to use section 47. Under this section the normal penalties of up to 20 years imprisonment for obstructing the carrying out of an operation or attendance at a demonstration.

"The use of the Atomic Energy Act now makes an outlaw of any worker, union or Australian citizen who does not fully comply with the mining and export of uranium." He further termed it the 'legislative equivalent of war on any person opposing the government's hasty commitment of Australian uranium to the unstable and dangerous nuclear fuel cycle'.

The citizen's response.

The State, in this hasty attempt to usher us into the Atomic Age, has thrown down the gauntlet: the main thrust of the legislation is directed at unions and workers. This demonstrates the government's belief that it is easier to control a worker-citizen alliance than an effective civil disobedience movement. The Atomic Energy Act is an isolated instance; others include the Fues, Energy and Power Resources Act (WEPA, 1974), the Vital State Project Act (VSP), the Official Secrets Act; The Commonwealth Employees Secret Manual Protection Act (now Quantum Hogg) "No law is enforceable if its application is not absolutely necessary. If a sufficient number of people choose to disregard it," Law ought to protect people, not property. As pointed out earlier, the Fraser Government has shown a flagrant disregard for such principles.

A primary purpose of politics ought to be to protect human life and expand the freedoms enjoyed by some to all on an equal basis. If this is not the case, "To the extent that legislation is inconsistent with the legitimate aims, in his judgement, or employs means subversive of and menacing to the values a just government must uphold, civil disobedience is an effective means of dissent to a successful tactic for opposition, and an integral part of any strategy for change." - Christian Bay.

Law requires our compliance and consent. As citizens we must neither comply nor consent to the use of the Atomic Energy Act. Democracy is threatened not only by institutional and legislative structures of the modern state. It is threatened too by the existence of attitudes of conformity, uniformity, obedience to external authority and dependence on a leader, by the Huxhman within us all. These are the lymphatics of any totalitarian society. They are the death of democracy.

Non-violence.

I emphasise the non-violent aspect since we cannot oppose the violence of the Atomic Age simply by transferring it from one group to another, by substituting new injustice for the old. The same personal qualities which are essential in all ways to a non-nuclear future, must be a part of the means we use to achieve that state - which is after all not merely a set of social and political structures but a way of being, a state of individual consciousness. The means then, not only reflect, but determine the end. This must be the politics of an altered society.

The Clamshell Alliance and the success of Seabrook.

In a previous edition of Chain Reaction there was an account of the Clamshell Alliance's occupation of a reactor site in Seabrook, N.J. (March 1977). The clear message from the Seabrook demonstration was that non-violent civil disobedience is an effective means of dissent to a successful tactic for opposition, and an integral part of any strategy for change.

Its extraordinary success appears to have been determined by the following factors: (this is drawn from a transcript of an interview with Peter Jones, a participant in the occupation who has wide experience in Europe and the USA.)
1. Structure — core units were affinity groups — an idea borrowed from the Spanish Anarchists — where the participants form small groups which trust each other and have done non-violence training together. These groups draw strength from the social bonds forged through the mutual sharing of experiences prior to the occupation; talking out fears, sharing food, making music etc.

2. Clear articulation of aims so that all understood why they were there.

3. Decisions made by consensus — legitimacy through consent not authority, solidarity through trust, not via obedience to an appointed leader or a priori acceptance of authority.

4. Plenty of time to plan tactical decisions as to where civil disobedience could be effective. For example they did not take on an operating reactor, but occupied the site before it was built.

5. Non-violence — to avoid serious confrontation, no one who was not in an affinity group was allowed to take part in the occupation, but an alternative demonstration was arranged.

6. Practical assistance — the groups took names of the occupiers, addresses and details of jobs, dependents etc, in case of arrest. Legal aspects were clearly defined in printed leaflets. Possile action was acted out (by role-playing) so that they could anticipate likely problems — eg, what food to take and clothing to wear (glasses are usually smashed by police, sharp objects should not be carried in pockets etc.). They also acted out the policeman’s role in order to understand their position and to learn how to lessen violence, perhaps to see them as potential allies. Peter Jones made the point that “A lot of police will do anything to avoid physical violence”. They also acted out what to do when police are violent — rolling into a ball to protect the kidneys, staying together, linking arms etc. — and ways of maintaining morale; cheering when someone is dragged off, rather than being intimidated.

7. Decisions made by consensus, reaching into a ball to protect the kidneys, staying together, linking arms etc., and ways of maintaining morale; cheering when someone is dragged off, rather than being intimidated.

8. Mutual support, sharing of experiences prior to the occupation.

9. Non-violent discipline which secured public support and sympathetic media coverage.

10. The stark reality of the nuclear state looms ahead. Steady and remorseless erosion of our liberties will be not merely incidental to, but in fact the lynch pin of such a state. Action today while we still have liberties to defend, may be the only alternative to a belated attempt to swing the clock back.

Anne Doble

Footnotes

1. While nuclear technology is the logical society — the key characteristics of which, being about hierarchies, inseparable distribution of power and income, unequal division of labor and, recently increasingly central control — nuclear power also holds the incipient seeds of capitalist destruction, being economically irrational, socially undesirable, demonstrably unsafe and politically suicidal.


4. During the South Australian Inquiry into the Special Branch of the police force, Mr. Justice White said of police files, “Some well-known moderate figures have recorded about them scandalously inaccurate opinions about their political standing ... The mass of information about Labor organiz­ations and personalities must be contrasted with the paucity of information about the Liberal Party and the Country Party. One of four cards on the latter parties characterized a senior Liberal Parliamentarian as a Communist because some decades ago he had been seen at or near a Communist bookshop” — National Times, 23-29 January, 1976, p. 7.


6. The use of defence legislation to protect overseas mining companies and their domestic counterparts — i.e. the notion of opposition to a commercial enterprise as equivalent to treason — gives an insight into the nature of this government and its interaction with business interests.


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because women suffer. Because women were deemed useful only for reproduction and child-rearing in the eyes of a male-centred society, we valued men, and gave them the title of "Father of the Year." This is not only a reflection of our powerful and dominant society, but also an indication of the sexism that exists in our culture.

In terms of their ability to be good fathers we valued men, and gave them the title of "Father of the Year." This is not only a reflection of our powerful and dominant society, but also an indication of the sexism that exists in our culture.

Men are fighting, not for self-determination, but for energy control. Part of retaining energy power has been the control of women, of races, of labour, the oppression of people who do not fit into the status quo, the conditioning of children to fit into a pre-ordained order. Women, especially those who claim to be fighting for a better world, must be prepared to be active to eliminate oppression, to share power. If they do not do this, they will be seen to be battling for their own power, battling to be in control, and not battling to remove the structure which allows oppression to exist.

The civil liberties perspective on nuclear power illustrates this. Men argue that civil liberties will be destroyed in a nuclear society. Women agree. We point out that we already live in and are oppressed in a society that has created this oppression. Women explore the avenues which men take for granted should be given to all people NOW.

Here are a few examples:

1. The Right to Speak.
Women are socialized into an inarticulate role, to be passive. "Good women, like children, should be seen but not heard." But Feminism is even more fundamental. Women want the right to speak as well as the right to be heard. If a woman speaks, she is considered to be "domineering." However, if a man speaks, it is considered normal.

2. The Right to be Valued.
Women are trivialized, told we are silly, emotional, neurotic, over-sensitive, etc., chatter-boxes, irritants, etc. Feminist perspective is given, at best, tokenism, e.g. "Let the women have a go." "We will listen and seriously consider what they say." The male still believes that he can lead away from oppressive power-hungry/dominating forms of behaviour. We have had notable success in our fight for self-determination, not just for women, but for all oppressed groups.

Men in traditional movements, such as environmental, anti-nuclear movements, must be willing to examine and stop forms of oppression which prevent individuals and groups from active participation (eg. committees, directives, procedures, forms of behaviour. We have had notable success in our fight for self-determination, not just for women, but for all oppressed groups.

In our struggle for a post-nuclear future it is necessary to examine in great detail alternative forms of energy. How are we to use the energy of the future? We must ask ourselves: Who owns the energy? Is it controlled by the state or by individuals? What are the implications of the use of energy for society? We must be prepared to consider feminist guidelines. If they agree that politization (not just radicalisation) of all people is important and necessary for an effective movement, they must take the needs of women seriously, must encourage women to initiate activity, to make their own decisions, to be autonomous.

This is very important, because we cannot successfully fight the nuclear society by setting up, as an alternative, patriarchal organisations. Women have broken out of the child-bearing role because of the greater possibility of choosing whether or not to reproduce and because of economic demands. We have taken an active role. The control of our own energy would eliminate oppression. It would destroy the power of one group over another.

Oppression is caused by a desire to control other groups and this is dominant in our society which has been created and ruled by men. It may be a male characteristic and is certainly an integral part of male conditioning. It is men who fight to gain power, who have created this patriarchal society, with its sexism, racism, class, and culture. Men are creating nuclear power. Under this system, men fight everyone else, and even themselves, for such a goal.

Male-run industries, governments, societies, have been responsible for the development of an 'energy short' world, one which distributes the energy it has in a shamefully unequal manner. The Industrial Revolution was a revolution important, mostly, because once energy was controlled, so were people. It was, those who control the most energy (people or mechanical) ultimately win. With dependence on external sources of energy (oil, gas, coal), nuclear reactors, etc. people are dependent upon those (men) who control the energy. This increases the probability of oppression.

Marxism and capitalism are popular theories about who should control the means of production of energy. But Feminism is even more fundamental. Women want control of reproduction (for the sake of our bodies, for ourselves, for the sake of the world). Women want control of our own energy, not as a means of oppression and exploitation. This is reflected in feminist practices.

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PROGRESS, PATRIARCHS AND NUCLEAR POWER

Almost inadvertently I was interviewed last year for an article about women and the anti-uranium issue in Women's Day. I made sure that at the end of the article all the statements of the National Uranium Moratorium were listed. My name and work address were included too. Since the article appeared in January a steady trickle of 23 letters a day has appeared in my mail. These letters are from women whom the anti-nuclear movement has not reached yet — they display a concern and sensibility that make the “activist” realise that there is a deep-seated unease amongst Australian women about uranium issue which has not been allayed by pro-nuclear propaganda. Many of these letters were written to me by women who had never before heard of uranium — they are clear expressions of the anxiety about the uranium industry that is not just the dread of radiation but the dread of future consequences. Only one letter said “I am opposed to uranium. It is the most destructive and powerful substance in the world today. What safety precautions can be taken? There are none. It simply has to be left in the ground. That is the safe way.”

Several women expressed their delight at having come across such an article and many wished the anti-uranium movement well. It is a humbling experience to read through these letters but it also makes me rejoice in being a woman, sharing common concerns with other women whom I'd never meet.

Deirdre Mason

Melbourne
**PETFOOD AND PERFUME**

**exploitation of the whale**

_Barbbara Hutton_

Whale products.

Although we know that Australia takes hundreds of whales each year, it is hard to find out what products they end up in. Most of the sperm whale meat and spermaceti from sperm whales is sent to England. It probably comes back, in the form of chemical compounds, leather goods, printers' inks, cosmetics etc. The flesh, blood and bone are used as fertilizer or protein additives for stock-feed and pet food; especially pet-food which is made in West Coast.

When buying pet food (tinned or dehydrated) read the label. It shows whether the pet-food contains beef, mutton, fish, cereals, protein additives (plus the usual vanilla, sugar, chlorine chloride etc) there are grounds for wondering what kind of protein additives are contained. The whale-kangaroo or just horse? If it were something acceptable, like soyas-beans or yeast, you would think the label would say so.

**Chicken food.**

Fish food and fertilizers also often contain mysterious kinds of blood and protein solubles.

**Submissions to the Inquiry.**

Anyone can make a submission to this inquiry — the more the better. If the inquiry is flooded with submissions the Judge will realise that there is great public feeling against whaling.

Friends of the Earth will be recommending that:

1. Australia cease whaling.
2. Whaling be prohibited within 200 miles of the Australian coast.
3. The importing of products containing whale derivatives be stopped.
4. Australia should retain its quota of whales without killing them.

The last recommendation is quite important. Australia has a quota of 713 whales to kill this season. If it simply gave up whaling, its quota would be given to another country. As far as the whales were concerned, it wouldn't make any difference whether Australia gave up whaling or not; the same number of them would get killed, and it is important to hang onto the quota, and it is possible. Canada has already done this.

We are now looking for other organisations that will support these recommendations, and are willing to put their name to them or write their own submission against whaling. We are also investigating cruelty in the killing of whales, alternative sources of oil, such as the jojoba bean, and the degree of public feeling against whaling.

If you can offer any help or information, contact Barbara or Kim, Friends of the Earth, 31 Nicholson Street, Carlton.

**BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY**

It's impossible to tell which companies use whale oil and which don't. In some cases no-one knows what goes into a preparation except the chemist who makes it up, and guards the secret. However, if you use make up there are some available that certainly don't contain whale oil. Blackmores, Beauty without Cruelty, coconut oil etc. Perfumes don't normally contain ambergris.

Beauty without Cruelty aims to demonstrate to people that it is unnecessary to buy any cruelly derived products and that alternatives are available.

For hundreds of years whale oil was the oil that lit the lamps of the Western world. The baleen of the baleen or whale-bone whales, such as the bowhead and the grey whales — the smallest of the toothed whales — the smallest are the dolphins and porpoises were often carved with pictures and known as 'serenash'. When electricity became the generator of light, other uses were found for whale products. Sperm oil is used in fine machinery, such as clocks, and in high-friction engines. There are many other uses. Hundreds of Australian companies have been circularized by Project Jonah asking whether they use whale products. About half of those written to have never replied to letters or followed up.

Project Jonah have a list of companies who have replied to the letters and do not use whale products, so that you know if you buy from them you are not supporting the slaughter of whales.

If you care about other life forms besides human beings, if you regard life as a totality rather than a one-sided exploitation by humans, the time to act is now. Join the fight for the whales — work with a group like Friends of the Earth or Project Jonah. A change in the psychology of human beings is essential if there is to be any wildlife left in the world. The arms race is another part of the conflict between selfish and sick mentality that prevails in the corridors of power of governments all over the world. What arrogance is it that causes us to think of ourselves as superior life forms? The agony of the whales is regarded as a symbol of human exploitation of animal (and human) populations all over the world.

From an article by Jennifer Talbot, Project Jonah, C/- VEC, 324 William St., Melbourne.

**BALEEN AND WHALE OIL**

**Resources**

Friends of the Earth have books, badges, stickers and posters of whale and whalebone groups have set up in various outlets for such items. There are also several films on whale around.

Whales, Dolphins and Men Available from Project Jonah and the Victorian State Film Library (other libraries can probably get it).

In Search of the Bowhead From "Educational Media", 235 Clarendon St., Melbourne.

and from the State Film Library.

Greenpeace: Voyage to Save the Whale From "Educational Media", 3rd Floor, Argyle Centre, 18 Argyle St., Sydney, 2000.

All Created Whales From "Educational Media" (address above).
Feminist anti-nuclear groups have been established in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. Women find it essential to fight the anti nuclear struggle from their own perspective in separate groups.

Sydney WANE, with some input from other groups, explains why: The struggle against Uranium mining is not a struggle in a vacuum. The development of nuclear energy, with all its inherent dangers to the environment and civil liberties, is incomprehensible without understanding the economic and political system it grew out of and is designed to support.

We are up against a system which owns the means of production, and therefore power to make important decisions, are concentrated in the hands of a few — nearly all of them male. It is a system which operates as a condition of its existence, and it is held together by ideologies which rationalize and justify this oppression, using such myths as equality of opportunity and freedom of choice. We observe inequalities of sex, race and class and these are covered up by ideologies of sexism, racism and class which make us accept them as "natural". We want to challenge the common myth in that a "free enterprise" society the ordinary Australian has the same access to power and decision making that is available to the Uranium Producers Forum.

WANE believes that an anti-nuclear campaign should not dwell only on the dangers of the nuclear fuel cycle, but also on the conditions that have created the so called "need" for nuclear technology and on the strategies for such a campaign to be successful.

Why is women's group? WANE was started by women from the Women's Movement. Feminists challenge hierarchical forms of organisation, which inevitably centralize power. It has been shown in many struggles that the end result is determined by the way the struggle was won. It is commonly the case that the existing power structures are used by the opposition in a political struggle they are simply reinforced and repeated even when the struggle is "successful".

We work collectively to minimize the grosser forms of personal powermongering and centralised decision making. Blackwork is shared, peo- ple take turns to chair meetings and there are opportunities for all members to participate. We derive strength from acting in groups rather than individually.

We consider that good personal interaction is the basis of all meaningful political action — that good fun means a good business.

The left and peace movements have often appealed to women on the basis of emotion and motherhood, an appeal which reinforces the patriarchal society and discourages women's active involvement.

WANE assumes that all women have intelligence and understanding. Previously, some have tried to manipulate them with fear tactics. The frightening aspects of the nuclear issue should be talked about, but we gain little by playing on people's fears and prejudices. What is needed is a way of helping people to gain a critical awareness. It is therefore of great importance that we break down one of the divisions that lie behind the nuclear industry — that between mind and heart, public and personal, male/world and female/world.

WANE also seeks to break down the authority of experts and scientists. Mostly men — in the Uranium Movement. Their prominence makes people believe that the social and ethical questions about uranium are second to the technical aspects; an assumption that is not correct and does nothing to help the active participation of many women.

We see one of WANE's functions as making inroads into women's politically isolation. We see that it is politically naive to see the question of uranium in isolation and to work on that very, very normal and female function and I resent any attempt to deplete women of their rights or to push women into the technical aspects. Women are human beings. Anti-nuclear struggles can be fought on a political level; personally, people can help each other. Women are human beings. Anti-nuclear struggles can be fought on a political level; personally, people can help each other.

We would like to see a movement of experts and scientists who are predominantly women, and also one of WANE's functions as making inroads into women's politically isolation. We see that it is politically naive to see the question of uranium in isolation and to work on that very, very normal and female function and I resent any attempt to deplete women of their rights or to push women into the technical aspects. Women are human beings. Anti-nuclear struggles can be fought on a political level; personally, people can help each other.

Women should look for a considerably suspicion upon the ecological bandwagons presently being peddled by business and government to overcome the crisis of exploitative technology. To compensate for the failures of the system, the individual consumers will be asked to tighten their belts; the system itself will not be challenged to change.

Women want to see a community of unifying our own individual way.

Gerald Gill "Back to Mother Earth" in Arena No. 34 1974

"The culture which created the ecology crisis has also created our language, our patterns of thought, our whole socially constructed universe; being thus, the creation of conceptual and practical alternatives will be a long, complex and extraordinarily difficult task.

Gerald Gill "Back to Mother Earth" in Arena No. 34 1974

Women are forbidden knowledge and control of the technology that would place their own biological processes in their own hands (contraception, abortion, gynaecology). Thus the structures of patriarchal consciousness that derive their authority from our biological fact are expressed symbolically and socially in the repression of women.

Rosemary Ruether, "New Woman, New Earth" Dove Communications Pty. Ltd., 1975

"I feel that in our society, every day increases the hold that doctors have on our lives. Every normal and female form of birth is a new womanly function and I resent any unnecessary interference in that process, by whatever means. Women are human beings, female human beings, who function as women, instead of as objects in a programmed way; we are human beings, female human beings, who function as women, instead of as objects in a programmed way.

Henny Ligtun, ante-natal teacher in a letter to "Simply Living" No. 4 1977.

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ALIENATION IN A CONSUMERIST SOCIETY

RUTH CROWE

Isolation

One factor contributing to the isolation of women in the suburbs is the reliance on cars. Picketing developments no longer follow the railway lines: they follow the highways. Suburbs have spread beyond the areas that are served by public transport. In one-car families the husband frequently takes the car, to get to work. The wife is left more or less trapped in her home. The children also suffer. Thirty-seven per cent of the population is too young to have a driver's licence. This makes it extremely difficult for teenagers in the suburbs to find jobs which they can get to, and increases the child's dependence on the mother:

"The neighbourhood has disappeared as far as the child is concerned. Without the ability to roam freely, make friends, spend money and participate in recreational activities, a child's world is likely to be determined by his parent's propensity to chauffeur him to activities." The lack of transport would not have such great effect if there were opportunities for participation in community life in the suburbs. People would not need to travel long distances if there were centres where they could meet and share activities; places with facilities for leisure, learning and communication, for all age-groups.

"The age-segregated neighbourhood which became a feasible urban form only when the automobile became commonplace... is the natural breeding ground for insecurity and alienation... While the absence of the aged cheats the child of exposure to how other people live, the absence of young adults makes the neighbourhood teenagers usually cocoon themselves... (they lack) someone just a bit older and more mature, a natural big brother or sister."

The trap of consumerism.

But the problems in our suburbs are much deeper than loneliness, isolation, lack of stimulation and insufficient support services for health and child-care. The increase in child-bashing, suicide and drug-abuse are the symptoms of the breakdown of human relationships in Australia where possession of material goods is substituted for real human interaction. The Knox Project in fact identified the symptoms of consumerism:

"Women described the beginnings (of feelings of being trapped) as the unrealistic expectations they were taught to hold concerning the kind of lifestyle they would lead, 'espoused, housed and pregnant'. The media was blamed for much of this picture that life would be a 'contemporary home filled with the most glamorous up-to-date gadgets' and latest model car and a doting, handsome husband who is supposed to treat her like a queen... the children will be angels and models of good conduct (Letter to the Free Press 5/8/75). The reality where 'her husband is just an ordinary chap... the children scream, fight and get dirty' and the house isolates her from the neighbours she's never had the chance to befriend during her married working years prior to pregnancy, may be the beginning of a downward spiral."

"The word 'consumerism' has been coined to describe the phenomenon of conspicuous waste being made possible through sophisticated advertising and modern technology. The housewife in the suburbs is the main target."

Today, in "advanced" countries like Australia the basic needs are being met for the vast majority of the population. Thus new markets have to be found if the economy is to continue to grow — our present economy can only continue to exist as a growth economy. On a world scale, damage from such "growth economies" can be gauged in the picturesque proportions given by Ivan Illich in "Celebration of Awareness" where he states:

"During the late 1960's it has become evident that less than 10% of the human race consumes more than 50% of the world's resources and produces 90% of the physical pollution which threatens to extinguish the biosphere."

Our suburban homes and gardens, the unprecedented range of our domestic equipment and household luxuries, our fast cars and vast roadways are possible only because we are part of this 10%.

The lifestyle which prevails in Australian suburbs depends on private ownership. Each family is expected to own privately the goods and services which were supplied in the past by the community, for community use. This privatism assists the market in foisting superfluous goods onto the people who live in the suburbs. At the same time women become more vulnerable to sexual oppression as they substitute the possession of things for relationships with people, and identify themselves with the sexist advertising which is an integral part of consumerism."

"Consumer education (has) become consumer manipulation. Market research has discovered that the most purchase-oriented shopper is socially isolated, technologically uninformed, and insecure about her own domestic competence. The new consumer 'educators', the manufacturers and ad. men, sought to cultivate these traits. The TV housewife is anxious about the brightness of her wash, the flavour of her coffee, or the lustre of her floors."

This puts an especially heavy burden on women who are expected more and more not only to keep up with the Joneses but to go one better, and who are being subjected, continually, to programming to give them the Petticoat for more and more goods, as if such things can compensate for the loss of opportunity to satisfy the human yearnings for social relationships unfettered by competition.

...
People must be helped to become aware of these issues, and more important, to see how they can be active in changing the urban setting into a more humane one. This is essentially a political responsibility. There are two main areas where effort is needed.

1. **Demanding that production meets real human needs.** For too many different ways the urban action groups, the trade unions and some of the conservation groups in Australia are beginning to face up to this challenge. At the end of 1977 there was a conference of environmentalists for Full Employment (see CR 3 (2)). This could be the beginning of a broad movement between trade unions, conservation organisations and other community groups for full employment.

2. **Planning our urban areas so that transport energies are saved and opportunities for people to participate are maximised.**

   - "Cities are being built for cars, not human beings, and most damaging of all we are building cities we don't want to live in."**
   - Many diverse groups are active on this issue. For example, in Melbourne the Conservation of Urban Energy Group is producing a detailed plan on how to reduce the use of cars, to do new urban areas and restructure existing areas on a small scale; and to develop mixed participatory communities around strong urban cores served by adequate public transport — see CR, 3 (1) 1977.

**Women in the planning process**

Women have a significant role to play in bringing in these social changes, not only because they are the most affected by them both in the inhuman and anti-social nature of our existing cities, but also because they are not hampered by traditional methods of organisation which have become entrenched in long-established organisations, eg, trade unions.

In many of the newly emerging organisations on urban issues women are the initiators. It is significant to note that in discussions, for example on freeways, whereas the men debate how best to effect the journey, it is usually the women who describe how more human the "front gate" environment would be without the domination of the motor vehicles. Similarly, in discussions on housing there is frequently a pre-occupation by the men with economics — "what kind of housing can we sell?" This tends to favor the nuclear family. They ignore the fact that most people for much of their lives are not living in a family situation, are living alone or in small communities. Women discuss the type of housing; the need for a variety of accommodation rather than the nuclear family stereotype. Women, because of their experience, can envisage a radical alternative on the small scale.

It is no wonder that to date women have played only a minor part in what has been called town planning. The history of town planning in Australia is a story of how good ideas and good intentions have come to nothing. The measure that has been attempted has been frustrated at every level by the influence of private owners of property, speculators and profiteers and the defalcation of economic growth and political power. Under such conditions it is a political realism to do inactivate and almost impossible for women to find ways that they can have some impact on the decisions.

fact it often is impossible for women to see any sense in having any part in such planning.

On the other hand traditionally women have been active on many issues that affect the home and environment — education, child-care, libraries, recreation — but because these have been separated from the general problems of society it has been too easy only for such campaigns to be "things in themselves". Historically the piecemeal approach to planning has always helped to conserve the establishment and to discourage social innovation.

Women are continually being "put down" because technical and administrative functions (in community organisations as well as at government level) are mainly the monopoly of men. This means that the urban movement has been beheaded of some of its most vital parts.

Things will only change when there is a generally accepted vision of an alternative urban lifestyle, in which human relationships are more important than possessions. We have not properly even begun to make such an idea popular. It will take time to do so, but already there are examples of the beginnings of such efforts, involving men, women and also children.

**Alternative movements: the need for a vision of the future**

Some of the urban action groups and anti-freeway organisations have begun to present alternative ideas on city life and anti-uranium demonstrations, and in more intimate meetings between groups.

However campaigns on urban issues still tend to remain on an anti-freeway stage: anti-freeway protests without mention of what sort of life we desire to lead. If the car were not allowed to dominate our urban areas; anti-pollution campaigns with in some way advocating a lifestyle of participatory activities to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels; housing policies which only look at economics and ignore the needs of those who make the buildings their homes; child-care, education — all these issues need to be separated from general community needs; and in most cases on all these issues very little consideration is given as to whether the stilt of these policies will lead to clustering of human activity or not.

More and more people are taking the future into their own hands and setting up community-based child-care, community schools, local food co-operatives, a number of small urban communities, and other small do-it-yourself efforts. But these groups will remain frail and easily co-opted into the conservative stream of established associations unless an overall political movement is developed, with an overall vision into which these small-scale human efforts can dovetail.

The way forward is already beginning to be charted, by groups such as Environmentalists for Full Employment, the Mobilisation Against Uranium Mining, and the Conservation of Urban Energy Group (already mentioned). However it is important to realise that at this stage in history people do not know who to blame for the destruction of their neighbourhoods; or for the suburban void; or for the grand plans for power stations and nuclear reactors. Many people, particularly women, consider politics the last means to redress the situation.

In the past most political demands have been directed to having a public transport, or to the local level on school issues, associations, the protest about something that is concerned with easily defined economic issues (higher wages, lower rates, better school amenities etc). The new issues, involving the human environment, are inherently different. How can we measure the quality of life?

The way forward involves people; the fruit of the movement lies, not only in the immediate results, but in the ever-increasing humanising experience of people. At the same time this movement, which is concerned with so many values, must be "in with everything" from altering the way people approach to planning, initiating and to discourage social innovation.

"Ultimately society as a whole will have to be reorganised by the great majority who are into hierarchical subserviency and great majorit y who now forced into hierarchical subserviency by the fog of age and those revolutionary changes are achieved, a new state of mind, nourished by working community ties, must be fashioned so that people will be able to fuse their experience with all their breadth and with broader social ideals. Indeed, unless this fusion is achieved, these very ideas will remain abstractions and will not be realised at all."

*The Myth of City Planning*, Murray Bookchin.

**Footnotes**


2. The Australian Conservation Foundation newsletter called to the national attention of the hundreds of women who worked on the preparation of this article. The action was publicised in the national newspapers.

3. From "A Collection of Articles for Celebration of Awareness", a collection of articles by Ivan Illich (Penguin Education Special, 1971). The article was first published by the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

4. Dr. Alan Roberts states that, for the individual, "consumption satisfactions are a pale substitute for the satisfactions of social and political life. "Self-management and the Environment Crisis", in Radical Ecology (2) December 1974, is basic reading for those studying for the human future. (Victorian Education Special, 1971). From *The Manufacture of Housework* by Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, in Socialist Revolution (USA publication), 544, November 26, December 1975.

5. The Australian Conservation Foundation newsletter called to the national attention of the hundreds of women who worked on the preparation of this article. The action was publicised in the national newspapers.


**BIKE RIDE FILM**

*FOE BIKERIDE FILM NOW AVAILABLE*

It's called! *Ride Against Uranium* is in colour, 16mm and 18 minutes long. Tells the story of a thousand people making their way to Canberra on their bicycles. On the final day of their journey, just 400 yards from their destination, the cyclists clashed with police in a short but violent episode. Eight cyclists were arrested; the cause clogged the Parliament House, bewildered, frustrated and angry. Of the ten days of filming only a small part was nationally reported only the clash on the bridge.

*Ride Against Uranium* now available for sale from FOE 1977 Melbourne Bikeride Committee, Melbourne.

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The Dying Housewife

Drowning, drowning in a sea of faces.
Plastic, dollried, pretty-ugly faces.
What shall I do?
Shall I swim?
trying so hard to keep up with the old school
but doubting; doubting myself, (where is that ring of confidence?).
What do I do when some annoying, unconventional aspect of my personality
or my looks, (yeah, you're right, I am too fat)
stops me from being a "dolly-bird just like you".
Shall I run on the endless conveyor belt
which is the role and position in life I've been given?
an unambitious member of the work force,
a wife, a housekeeper.
Shall I play blind and say I can't see or hear
the endless pressures you put on me, in the roles
you gave, (oh I know, by divine credence of course) and
the goals I'm supposed to reach, (within "my womanly limitations"?)!
The barrage of advertisements,
creating and maintaining the trends,
the social norm and social pressure,
all play havoc with my insecurities and uncertainties.
Am I too fat?
Are my legs O.K.? (oh, oh, they need shaving again)
Is my face too dull?
It seems like I can't be me,
the me I'd like to be.
Having to play games; your games — your rules.
I spend all my time running around,
— making myself "pretty"/acceptable.
— after the family...
I'm running out of time, (not to mention money).
I know I should be grateful for convenience foods, and so many labour-saving devices
you've created for me;
but why should it be me here....
Alone.
Struggling through the tins, the processed foods;
the pre-packaged, pre-served, pre-digested foods,
that you my friendly manufacturer insist I must buy?
And what if I do play your games?
Shall I also play dumb and say I can't understand
why we're always getting sick;
why the kids are hyperactive, while I feel like death at 35?
Shall I tell myself it's natural to doubt
and criticise myself so much?
Shall I drain my energy and ignore the real struggle
of living?
while I just exist,
( more for the benefit of others than myself).
Would I pass the big test?
Are we to myself, and go on living that lie,
while I see all around and within,
that this society is gradually denuding the earth, (and me)
of all that is natural and living...
as it purifies the air, the water, the soil, ( and my body)
with its shit.
Now they offer us nuclear power;
so we can keep all this, and have more,
much more. (of the luxuries, the waste, the inequalities).
I can sue the time for my choice is now.
My strength is your weakness.
For too long now,
you have lived on my weakness.

— Rosemary Cousins
WOMEN AT WORK

Occupational health hazards

SYLVIE SHAW

With more and more women entering the job market, the problem of occupational hazards is increasing. Both traditional occupations for women, and new occupations which expose women to toxic substances involve health 'hazards, often without the workers' knowledge. Sylvie Shaw, of the Working Women's Centre, examines some of these hazards and the discrimination against women involved in many occupations.

Safety and health at work has never been a vital concern of industry and governments in Australia (viz asbestos) and the health problems of working women have been even more neglected than those of men. Health problems of working women revolve around two main areas: - Health hazards associated with traditional occupations of women, and - occupations which are essential for damaging the foetus, genetically or by transfusion of chemicals across the placenta, which may result in birth defects, cancer, or some other toxic effect on the child.

Chemical dangers

Increasing numbers of women are moving into jobs which present chemical and physical dangers that have not yet been studied. A recent decision by General Motors in Canada has prohibited "fertile women" from working in its battery plant because of fears that lead-oxide emissions in the plant could lead to birth defects. This means that women either have to prove their fertility or be transferred to another job - perhaps with less pay. Yet, as well as female, reproductive systems are affected by lead and chemical emissions. Employers have begun to discriminate against women who might be fertile, instead of making the work-place safe.

One US chemical company using chemicals that cause sterility in men actually suggested that, instead of replacing the chemical, they should employ men who wanted vasectomies! At what cost to their health?

The Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (AFL-CIO) International Union have published a guide to their women members. It says:

"When a woman is pregnant the health hazards to which she is exposed are a threat to her child as well as herself. She must avoid even small exposures to toxic substances ... (and) she must have a clause in her contract that protects her right to transfer to a safer part of the plant without loss of pay or seniority ... for the duration of the pregnancy ... The contract should also require the labelling of substances known to be teratogenic (causes of birth defects) and abortifacients. No woman should ever have to choose between her job security and her baby's health."

The ACTU adopted a Charter for working women at its 1973 Congress. It calls for:

"Health and safety information which is both multilingual and comprehensive to be provided on the job" and "Occupational health services including preventive medical care ..."

Because medical centres in industry are generally controlled by management (which tends to suppress), or are non-existent, unions obviously need to become involved. Two unions which have started sponsoring their own medical services are the Australian Workers' Union (NSW) and the Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union (Vic.).

The Occupational Hazards

Women's dual roles - at home and work - cause excessive fatigue. Women tend to neglect their health because they are too tired to seek medical attention and (to have routine check-ups. Studies by the International Labour Organization have shown that working mothers have less than two-thirds of the free time enjoyed by their husbands. Even when working full-time, women feel compelled (and society pressures them) to devote a large part of their spare time to family chores.

As most women are clustered in low-paid, low-skill occupations with little or no job security, where the work is repetitive and boring, they often turn to psychotropic drugs, analgesics and tranquilizers to help them cope - not only with their paid job, but also with the extra burdens of housework. It is believed that some companies actually distribute analgesics to their workers. It is particularly vital to eliminate the need for such products among pregnant workers, as it appears analgesics cause birth defects.

Women who work as key-punch operators or on production lines often injure their hands and wrists. One woman, working in a printing factory, had to clean toilets and boilers, wash dirty clothes - in addition to her main job. Management safety-experts sometimes point out that pieceworkers remove safety-guards from their machines to increase production - the rate/speed is set so high that workers are endangering themselves to earn a living wage.

A study of migrant women in industry, found that many of them worked under conditions of heat or cold, noise, odour, physical danger, pollution, poor ventilation and lighting - particularly in small factories. Women surveyed complained of headaches, sore eyes, chest complaints and aching legs. Many stood all day on damp concrete floors, increasing the likelihood of varicose veins, others had sore eyes, caused by having to concentrate on fiddly detail work in inadequate light.

Many of the injuries, stresses and strains women have from work appear to them too insignificant to apply for workers' compensation. Many women, particularly migrant women, either do not know how to apply for compensation, do not think their injuries are serious enough, or do not wish to "rock the boat" or get involved in long drawn-out legal procedures. When they do make claims they receive less money than men and cases for women take longer to process to their conclusion.

Sometimes doctors advise injured workers to take "light duties", but an unskilled worker who is told to do "light work" will find it almost impossible to find if she is unable to perform constant manipulative tasks.

All workers should be informed about Workers' Compensation procedures and especially about the potential hazards they work with, so they can take collective action to reduce them and create a healthy and safe working environment.

Quotes

"It's not a hazardous industry, we only need to tell the women to keep their hair short and not to put their fingers under the needle. We have no safety notices. But we have a good safety record."

"Safety regulations are in English but they have pictures. Although, the puns (depicted in safety cartoons) would not come across to the women who can't read English ... We have a good record except for back troubles, which I think are a fiddle."

"If they get a needle stuck in their finger, I pull it out with a pair of piers."

"In two factories producing cheese and light savouries, workers were prohibited from sitting down and were forced to stand for the whole eight (8) hours even though it seemed that their tasks could have been carried out satisfactorily if chairs or stools had been available. Complaints of leg troubles and tiredness were common. At the cheese factory, women were required to clean toilets and boilers, wash dirty clothes - including overalls. They were often left to wash the management and foremen's cars. Canteens in most factories were highly regimented and women rushed back to work on the bell with alacrity prompted by fear. At one tinned food and sauce factory the accident rate was extremely high and in a number of cases involved the loss of limbs and fingers in presses."

From "But I wouldn't want my wife to work here": A study of migrant women in Melbourne Industry - CURA Fitzroy, Vic.

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LETTERS
REPLIES TO CHINA ARTICLE

Ian Pausacker's article, “China, an Environmentalist's Dream?” in the last edition of Chain Reaction has raised a storm of letters from environmentalists and others. China seems to be regarded as a test case in the debate as to whether the goals of socialism are compatible with concern for the environment. I have published as many of the letters as possible. Special thanks are due to us from publishing them all in full.

China - social honesty

The first is an excerpt from a letter by Peter Hayes, one of the founders of Friends of the Earth in Australia. He also visited China, and wrote an article about the country for Chain Reaction, 2 (1), 1975.

Ian quotes the fact that Chinese bicycles have locks. I can only quote many counter-examples to try and indicate that the Chinese are beginning to create a society based on social honesty, not just interpersonal honesty as it were. The first night in our trip, I wandered... into the older parts of Peking. It was quite dark and we walked with some anxiety. Years of anti-communist propaganda and reformative years of childhood left me with trepidations, even after the friendly welcome we had received around mainland China. We came across a street with fruit sellotapes such as those seen in Bangkok or Jakarta. The lights were low in the street, as the Chinese save energy around a street with fruit side-stalls. Ian walked with some reservation about the Chinese life he points to. That's what the Cultural Revolution was all about.

My impression is that we can learn from the Chinese on equity: on the principle of placing the needs of the neediest first. The environment is seen in China as the source of all sustenance — a reality that most rural Chinese are too poor to experience. Food costs nothing like 60-70% of their income as Ian quotes.

A good baseline against which one could measure the Chinese experience is what they have done with their lineal predecessors to leave them with a feeling of the Chinese being improved themselves and the degraded natural environment they inherit. With the two prime-movers of change in Australia being profit and political power, we are degrading ourselves and that which we inherited. It's fair to ask if there's a structural reason for the difference.

A final slap in the face

Letter from W.A. Davis, Victorian ACF Councillor.

The figures in my table are accurate. The Chinese have degenerated since my visit. The cost of living (rent, food, clothing, etc.) has doubled since I was there. We had a... very much aware of the problems and are working to solve them using biological control.

4. Holidays: The Chinese certainly do not work every year. They have two weeks annual holidays plus various national days etc.

Ian quotes the fact that Chinese bicycles have locks. I can only quote many counter-examples to try and indicate that the Chinese are beginning to create a society based on social honesty, not just interpersonal honesty as it were. The first night in our trip, I wandered... into the older parts of Peking. It was quite dark... [Continued in next paragraph]

1. Sprays and Fertilisers: Obviously, with 800 million mouths to feed, their fertilisers must be supplemented with chemical substitutes. However, but most importantly they utilise every available source of natural fertilisers, including vegetable refuse, leaves, wood ash, etc. Concerning pesticides, they are very much aware of the problems and are using biologically derived control.

6. To say the Chinese live a dull drab existence is simply not true. Ian obviously did not see their huge cultural parks, their children's palaces, the travelling minstrel troupes, etc. which visit the communes.

7. Wage gap: On our information, the wage gap which certainly still exists, is nothing like what Ian quotes. The Chinese are very much aware of this problem, both in the medical field, but is a slow process of transformation from Socialism which they now have to pure Communism. They say they could take another 100 years.

8. The final slap in the face from Ian is to say that he was glad to be back in "Clean Australia." What an insult! Without doubt, Chinese cities, considering the population pressures, are amongst the cleanest in the world.

As a final comment, the achievement in just 3 decades, from an illiterate, starving race of slaves of the landlords before liberation, to a well-fed, educated, adequately housed and clothed society of 800 million, is surely a dream to many of us in human history, and to be admired, not ridiculed.

We disagree with Ian's points on pollution. The Chinese are very much aware of the pollution which certainly still exists. I am well aware of the extent of pollution in China. The air is polluted, the water is polluted, the sewerage is polluted, etc. However, I believe we are kidding ourselves if we try to do anything else — who can remain undisturbed from their usual state of pollution? Not me.

5. Sprays and Fertilisers: Obviously, with 800 million mouths to feed, their fertilisers must be supplemented with chemical substitutes. However, but most importantly they utilise every available source of natural fertilisers, including vegetable refuse, leaves, wood ash, etc. Concerning pesticides, they are very much aware of the problems and are using biologically derived control. We would agree on Ian's points on pollution. The Chinese are very much aware of the pollution which certainly still exists. I am well aware of the extent of pollution in China. The air is polluted, the water is polluted, the sewerage is polluted, etc. However, I believe we are kidding ourselves if we try to do anything else — who can remain undisturbed from their usual state of pollution? Not me.

Pausacker's reply

Reply from Ian Pausacker (edited version)

My initial enthusiasm at evoking a reaction from Peter Hayes, Bill Davis and others to my China article when I realised that none of them had really come to grips with what I was saying. My purpose in writing the article was to explain my personal reaction to a vision of China painted by many as an apoplectic utopia. My response seems to indicate horror at me looking at China in a personal way and through western eyes. I am glad to see that Bill Davis and others to my China article when I realised that none of them had really come to grips with what I was saying. My purpose in writing the article was to explain my personal reaction to a vision of China painted by many as an apoplectic utopia. My response seems to indicate horror at me looking at China in a personal way and through western eyes. I am glad to see that Bill Davis and others to my China article when I realised that none of them had really come to grips with what I was saying. 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Sexism in the Environment movement

separatism: is it a valid tactic?

As women become involved in the ecology movement they are faced by the same male domination as elsewhere. Two examples show this clearly: Firstly, in Brisbane in 1976 'Friends of the Earth' organised a Radical Ecology occasion. One of the discussion afternoons was to be on women and ecology. About 30 women and 5 men gathered for the discussion. The first question raised was whether we were being just as sexist as men if we excluded them. After a 45 minute semantic argument amongst the more politically astute members of the gathering a vote was taken and the men were allowed to stay. Both during the 45 minute argument and the ensuing discussion on where women could begin and how they could work and influence other women, the three remaining males dominated. One in particular decided he wanted to talk working-class politics, Marxism, and the bourgeois nature of ecological activism. Not surprisingly, nothing concrete came out of the discussion, but we learnt an important lesson: at times when women do not have the opportunity to acquire the confidence required. In these organisations and also in many of the more loosely-organised ones the generally greater assertiveness of men can result in them getting the upper hand over a subject, and in the more assertive men gaining more skills—since they are the quickest to volunteer for interesting tasks. Many a good idea goes unused by women because women have never had the opportunity to acquire the confidence required. In these organisations and also in many of the more loosely-organised ones the generally greater assertiveness of men can result in them getting the upper hand over a subject, and in the more assertive men gaining more skills—since they are the quickest to volunteer for interesting tasks. Many a good idea goes unused by women because women have never had the opportunity to acquire the confidence required. In these organisations and also in many of the more loosely-organised ones the generally greater assertiveness of men can result in them getting the upper hand over a subject, and in the more assertive men gaining more skills—since they are the quickest to volunteer for interesting tasks.

Feminists often draw a parallel between Man's exploitation of nature and his treatment of women: the idea of "raping nature". It's more than just a metaphor. Whalers off the coast of California used to make a practice of harpooning baby whales, knowing the mother would turn back to rescue the calf and that the calf could kill her more easily that way. That's the kind of mentality we're talking about, and it often goes hand in hand with sexism (whalers' shanties are very sexist).

However the implication is that this exploitative mentality is only found in men. Hasn't it ever occurred to anyone that women could have it too? Women are quite capable of exploitation. Think of the plantation-owners' wives, ordering the servants about, the cultured tones of the upper-class English lady, as she sucks the nanny... the materialisation of some women: their expensive clothes, their shares in mining companies... the cruelty and narrow-mindedness of respectable women who ostracise unacceptable ones like prostitutes etc. I don't think social attitudes will change till women who ostracise respectable ones like blacks by whites, of workers by owners, of individuals by the State, of races by races, have a part in shaping society and passing on its prejudices, and that they could use their influence to break them down.

I go into all this because I think there is great consciousness of sexism amongst men. It's particularly姊妹s (Friends of the Earth) and some men are blaming themselves too much. There is probably a certain amount of sexism in the movement, but certainly not as much as you will find outside it, in other work situations.

Altogether I think the place where I worked (a university) a typist was sacked because she had made a correction (not a mistake) in a letter to the Dean of the Faculty. The situation is the same in most hierarchical organisations: the mining companies have secretaries and typists who do what they're told to the least degree.

In the environment movement, in contrast, women can work more on an equal basis with men. In one situation I met a group of men who were noting the activities of environmentalists, not totally non-sexist. They are supportive, make cups of tea, do the books, clean up, mail out newsletters and lay out pamphlets for other people, answer telephones and ask women for their opinion of the statement 'all the men are the same course).

The least offensive males are the non-aggressive ones who are getting their demands met by claiming to speak for all women. It doesn't mean that they have convinced people, it just means that they have managed to shut them up.

We don't want to see men attacked to the point where they begin to have doubts about their sexuality, and even women are afraid of expressing anything for fear that what they think is just a product of their sex-role expectations. Feminists should strive to break down self-doubt, not introduce a new kind.

When we are talking about sexism, however, the institution of Patriarchy is the immediately relevant one. Feminists believe that the "acceptable lifestyle" for women has been, in so many ways, prescribed by Patriarchal ideologies. Feminist activists, in the environment movement and elsewhere, want all women to recognise our potential power in society. We encourage every woman to strive to break down self-doubt, and to the point where they begin asking questions about themselves. When examples of sexism occur debate must follow so that the implications are fully understood. It is our job to be a constant, ready-made band of blaming feminists for raising political issues, initiate discussion on the topic to encourage greater understanding.

Feminists do not claim to speak for all women. Although feminists believe that all women will benefit from the fighting of sexism, we are painfully aware that many Australian women are politically and economically powerless, and that many people oppose women's liberation. Feminists do not claim to speak for all women. Although feminists believe that all women will benefit from the fighting of sexism, we are painfully aware that many Australian women are politically and economically powerless, and that many people oppose women's liberation. Feminists do not claim to speak for all women. Although feminists believe that all women will benefit from the fighting of sexism, we are painfully aware that many Australian women are politically and economically powerless, and that many people oppose women's liberation. Feminists do not claim to speak for all women. Although feminists believe that all women will benefit from the fighting of sexism, we are painfully aware that many Australian women are politically and economically powerless, and that many people oppose women's liberation.
PACKAGING...

One word that expertly describes the creed of the 20th century Western existence is CONSUMER. We live in a consumer society, in which the roles of factory, shop and home are all run by secretaries, scientists or clerks who are mere subsidiaries to our greatest part, that of consumers. The survival of our economic system depends on that we consume frequently, thoughtlessly, excessively — food, drink, tobacco, cars, refrigerators, drugs, clothes, stereos, televisions, cars, cars, cars. To ensure our co-operation in the game, the manufacturers of industry, advertising and marketing coaxes, carreas and cajole us, until our very existence seems to depend on this and the use of that. And when we've acquired this and used that — throw it away. It's simple. Planned obsolescence is the key factor. The saying "nothing is built to last" is quite true. If it were there would be no need for the consumer to keep consuming and the whole system would grow to a hulk that could not be in a light bulb manufacturers' interest to market a light bulb that last forever; if they did, they would soon be out of business.

All this producing, consuming, discarding leads to waste. Yet, the philosophy of not caring where it came from or where it is going which has characterised and transformed our habits as consumers for so long, must now itself be discarded We can no longer afford to toss valuable resources onto the garbage heap. For if we continue unwittingly to do so, the next byword of the 20th century Western existence will be SHORTAGE.

To the economist, packaging is one of the "growth" industries of our time. But in the eyes of environmentalists, it is one of the biggest drains on resources and single abuses of waste. The necessity of some packaging is quite clear. To protect goods in transit from factory to retail outlet, to contain them, obviously necessary for liquids, and finely divided solids such as sugar, salt and soap powder. For hygienic reasons to protect against moisture and the eyes of environmentalists comes and goes from factory to retail outlet. But to contain them, obviously necessary for liquids, and finely divided solids such as sugar, salt and soap powder. For hygienic reasons to protect against moisture and the eyes of environmentalists is one of the major problems of packaging. Not surprisingly aluminium cans and aerosol spray cans — the cost of the packaging may be as much as the cost of making the content. With cosmetics, perfumes and pharmaceuticals, the packaging must pay far more than the contents.

Yet the amount and type of packaging around a given product is a crucial factor in its sales appeal. If a product looks not only attractive, but substantial too, the consumer may believe the product inside to be superior to others in the range. The extra cost the manufacturer incurring by a small, attractive pack is easily recovered by sales. A hundred thousand tons of packaging. This total is doubling every ten years.

As supermarkets came to dominate retailing so did the pressure for throw away packaging. A new packaging designed to be used once and then thrown away brings greater profits to both the packaging manufacturer and the retailer. It is a package being developed to contain a package being sold. The amount and type of packaging around a given product is a crucial factor in its sales appeal. If a product looks not only attractive, but substantial too, the consumer may believe the product inside to be superior to others in the range. The extra cost the manufacturer incurring by a small, attractive pack is easily recovered by sales. A hundred thousand tons of packaging. This total is doubling every ten years.

...the garbage industry

Ostensibly, this makes life easier for the consumer who can buy the product in conveniently packaged quantities. More to the point, it is easier for the whole complex of industry, advertising and packaging coaxes, carreas and cajole us, until our very existence seems to depend on this and the use of that. And when we've acquired this and used that — throw it away. It's simple. Planned obsolescence is the key factor. The saying "nothing is built to last" is quite true. If it were there would be no need for the consumer to keep consuming and the whole system would grow to a hulk that could not be in a light bulb manufacturers' interest to market a light bulb that last forever; if they did, they would soon be out of business.

For years, packaging used to mean materials such as wood, paper, glass, cardboard, cellophane. But today are designed for convenience. The key factor. The saying "nothing is built to last" is quite true. If it were there would be no need for the consumer to keep consuming and the whole system would grow to a hulk that could not be in a light bulb manufacturers' interest to market a light bulb that last forever; if they did, they would soon be out of business.

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remanufacturing plant. In fact energy use is the biggest drawback to recycling. We use energy — produced from coal, oil, gas — to make the packages and when we recycle a used package we use more energy.

What can you do for the consumer, do? The most important thing is to never underestimate your power. Don’t feel just that you are fighting a huge company you have no power — you do have the greatest power of all: your consumer vote.

• Boycott those products that you believe are excessively package. Where at all possible buy drinks in returnable bottles only and not in non-returnable bottles or cans.

• Don’t buy a package, but a product. Where you have no choice at all but to buy a package, buy one big package rather than a number of small ones (big packages can be used to store things in).

• Support the few manufacturers who are still holding out and sell products in reusable glass containers.

• Contact the manufacturers of packaging, and let them know directly how you feel; as well as indirectly by your choice of what you buy — or more importantly don’t buy — at the shops. In this regard group action is most effective.

• Write to your local council and find out exactly how much you are paying to dispose of your rubbish. You will probably be horrified. Try to publicise the fact through your local media.

• Refuse extra layers of wrapping in shops or at supermarkets — check labels and examine goods before wrapping them down the packaging to its bare essentials and leave the wrapping behind in the shop.

• Join or form a local food co-operative. There you can buy in bulk and save money as well as reducing packaging waste; remember to take your own containers to be filled.

• Most importantly, develop a responsibility for everything you buy. If you do not wish to be responsible for what will ultimately happen to plastic cartoon cans or bottles DO NOT BUY THEM. Realise this is the responsibility that comes with everything that you purchase.

Having all these products of so-called modern technology improved our standard of living? Do we really enjoy life more than ten years ago with aerosol shaving cream, individual teaspoons of plastic wrapped jam in the canteen, milk in cartons, and spray cans of air freshener? Did we really choose this whole mess or was it forced upon us? The first thing that your discard is the "throw away convenience". Disposables are a luxury we can no longer afford. Most packaging still end up as the tip of the iceberg. This is where the packaging industry gets everything wrong, with so much waste, resources and energy supplies. With plastic, recycling is all but technically impossible. The so-called "big growth" area of packaging is used for containers of all kinds of liquids from fruit juice to washing up liquid. Ironically, the advantages that plastic has over other conventional materials — its hardness, durability and virtual indestructibility are the very assets which make it almost impossible to recycle, impossible to reuse.

• Stop the packaging industry being what it is at present — the garbage industry.

Kim O'Sullivan

Bibliography/References

Endnotes

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C.R.A.C.

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Another way in which packaging lowers our standard of living is litter. In an eye sore we cannot escape, but it is more than just that — it is dangerous. We have had thrown away glass bottles for only ten years. We have had to accept feel from broken glass on the beach as a major problem only for ten years. Is this progress?

Well, what shall we do about it — is recycling the solution?

It appears to be a common-sense solution, involving the reuse and remanufacture of the packaging after it has been used. It seems such an obvious thing to do that many people are surprised to find that all the packaging materials — plastics, aluminum, steel, glass and paper — only the last two are recycled to a significant degree, and with paper the proportion recycled is dropping steadily. In fact, recycling of most packaging materials turns out to be a very poor way of conserving our resources and energy supplies. With plastics, recycling is all but technically impossible. The so-called "big growth" area of packaging is used for containers of all kinds of liquids from fruit juice to washing up liquid. Ironically, the advantages that plastic has over other conventional materials — its hardness, durability and virtual indestructibility are the very assets which make it almost impossible to recycle, impossible to reuse.

At present, in Australia, (and many other countries) a large proportion of recycling is going on, but there is a lot of confusion. Broadsheet plastics, aluminum, steel, glass and paper are recycled to a significant degree. Alum in only at the cost of wasting others. Steel can — impossible to recycle but not to reuse. Glass, the other three including tin which is very scarce, go up the stack. The other three including tin which is very scarce, go up the stack. impossible to recycle but not to reuse. Glass, the other three including tin which is very scarce, go up the stack.

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and has had a lifetime's involvement with factory work. She is middle-aged, from a Jewish background, trade unionists.

Zelda points out that "Working-class women very rarely write books because of our inability to write at the level required by male-established literary standards. Nor are many books written about the lives of working-class women because our lives are considered to be too hum-drum." Zelda's life was certainly never hum-drum, and her experiences reflect the extreme difficulties of being a working woman in Australia. As such they are riveting.

Zelda fought and became disillusioned with both the Communist Party and the unions, and ultimately believed that her energies would be best directed in the women's liberation movement. But it took 20 years for her to discover the newly emerging movement, during which time her belief in male power structures, such as most worker organizations, was shattered. It is an extreme standpoint, and a barbed criticism of these groups, but one which it was inevitable for her to come to give her experiences. Whether it is inevitable for all working women is something time will tell - perhaps the publication of books like this one will accelerate a change in the public perception of women's liberation.

It is a predictable, but disappointing fact that most of the feminist literature of the '70s has come from white, middle-class women, and it doesn't require a great deal of thought to see why: loudest voices get heard first. Zelda's life is a predictable, but disappointing fact that most of the feminist literature of the '70s has come from white, middle-class women, and it doesn't require a great deal of thought to see why: loudest voices get heard first. Zelda was beaten and bruised constantly by the various worker organizations she worked with, and was once sacked for daring to confront her communist boss's sexism.
RESOURCES

Stickers
STOP URANIUM MINING  (English, Italian and Greek)
SOLAR NOT NUCLEAR
THE EARTH NEEDS FRIENDS
LET WHALES LIVE
WHALING IS MURDER
URANIUM MINING? NO THANKS!
(sheet of 20 little badge-sized stickers)

Badges
URANIUM? NO THANKS!
STOP URANIUM MINING
LET WHALES LIVE
PROTECT ANTARCTICA ......... All 30c

Also-
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