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**Chain Reaction**

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Contributions to Chain Reaction are invited. Please try to send items typed, on one side of the page, double spaced and with wide margins. Keep a copy. We do not have sufficient resources and people to return manuscripts. These few guidelines help in bringing our the magazine better and faster. The autumn edition will appear in early March 1983. Deadline for features is 7 January 1983.

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We've got lead out of petrol and whales will probably still be around for our kids to enjoy. We're working hard for a fairer distribution of the world's food and an end to nuclear madness, and we've started a recycling campaign. Friends of the Earth is a radical activist group — and that means we don't avoid controversy. We are raising issues today to make a better world.
Bug eats defoliant
A microbiologist at the University of Illinois Medical School claims to have discovered a bacterium that eats Agent Orange, the powerful defoliant used by the United States of America and Australia in Vietnam.

Independence demonstrations in New Caledonia
Independence for New Caledonia, and the problem of uniting trade unions against nuclear testing, basic and dumping in the Pacific, emerged as the two key issues at the second conference of the Pacific Trade Union Forum (PTUF), in Noumea, New Caledonia, 25-26 August 1982. The conference was attended by 78 trade-union delegates from fourteen Pacific countries.

The trades unionists found themselves in the midst of a deepening political crisis in New Caledonia. The Kanak movement of independence movement is facing an unresolved violent conflict from right-wing French extremists, who recently stormed the Territorial Assembly and the independence front Secret Headquarters.

Tainted wheat
India, early in 1982, imported 750,000 tonnes of Australian wheat which contained the powerful defoliant Agent Orange. The powerful defoliant sprayed in India, early in 1982, imported wheat which contained the weed killer. The wheat and the defoliant was sprayed in the wheat, before their own soldiers were deployed.

Ranger dam leaks
The full extent of the Ranger uranium mine in northern Australia has been revealed. The Ranger uranium mine is the largest uranium mine in Australia and the second largest in the world. The Ranger uranium mine is located in the East Alligator River region, which is designated as an 'area of special scientific interest'.

Butler retracts
Harry Butler no longer works for the Australian Country Party. Speaking at the Twenty First World Congress of Landscape Architects he said he would no longer advise the government on the Gordon-below-Franklin scheme because he does not want to see it happen.

Pesticides
The Australian Bureau of Statistics in its Pesticide Survey on the farm used of pesticides and herbicides. However, Queensland and New South Wales included because agricultural authorities in both states have decided that data on pesticides is a low priority.

USA island option
The fate of Tinian, the small island in the Marianas on which the USA launched the atomic bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, will be decided. The USA has changed its policy on Tinian. It is no longer required as a military base. The USA must exercise its option of use of months. It would cost $900 million in 1982.

Hopes that the French government would cease its nuclear testing in the south Pacific have now been dashed with the announcement, 7 October 1982, of a regime of rapid increase in banning on nuclear testing in the Pacific for the second time since 1995 to 1999.

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Public pressure forced the French government's airline to halt their flights to Australia that would make it a better place. 'Surprise is being expressed here as to the way the military pressure of the water in the expansive dam can be used. The water could be released from secret hydrogen bombs. The water would cause the creation of one of the biggest floods the world has ever seen.'

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The petition of certain citizens of THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN PARLIAMENT: TO THE HONOURABLE THE TUMULTUOUS IN PARLIAMENT:

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Source:

formal petitions. The wording in the USA are battling the cancelation of nuclear power plants. Consumers are demonstrating their outrage by marching, blockades and angry meetings with utility commissions.

The strongest uprising is sweeping the Pacific north-west, where thousands of citizens are staging candlelight vigils, burning electricity bills at utility board meetings, and organising blackouts. This consumer uprising was sparked by electricity rates doubling and tripling due to the financial situation of the United Nuclear Public Power Supply System (WPPSS). WPPSS sponsored a five-unit nuclear power project. In January 1982, two of the units under construction were cancelled and ratepayers were left to pay $US140,000 for the cancelled plants. The rate increases were particularly egregious for people of the northwest, an area made up of primarily all-electric homemakers who use electricity as high as 25% and where many farm families require electrically-powered irrigation. If ratepayers in the northwest refuse to pay their electricity bills, as they are threatening, economic analysts believe that WPPSS could collapse.

Consumer groups in Oklahoma are urging ratepayers to withhold their participation and protest against the $US350 million in costs for the cancelled Bok Foss nuclear units. In Tennessee, 16,000 people signed a petition protesting against charges for six delayed Tennessee Valley Authority nuclear plants. In Ohio, a state court sided with consumers and ruled that utilities cannot charge customers for the $US246 million in costs for the cancellation of two Erie and two Davis-Besse nuclear units.


USA ratepayers revolt

Hawaiian land rights

A spokesperson, Kawehi Kanada, of the conclusion of the report, that the land rights of the Hawaiian people are a self-determination as a sovereign people, are recognized by the Hawaiian Constitution. The report states that the Hawaiian government has recognized the sovereignty of the Hawaiian people and has agreed to negotiate with the Hawaiian government on matters of land use and development.

Rainforests

A NSW state cabinet committee decided on 26 October 1982 to protect rainforests from logging by declaring many areas as national parks and providing a $1 million subsidy to the timber industry to allow costs for the alternative timber. The committee also decided that the number of national parks be increased from 30 to 40. A total of 50,000 hectares of rainforest is to be declared.

Backstage

Not to do so would be self-defeating as it is clear that there is yet no adequate strategy on the policies of the environment. And far from being defeated, we believe we can only promote successful strategies if we have a political and social vision of the environmental situation. Activists, after all, must know that the vision of the future is what will be achieved for the environment and the way of life thoroughly if any of our progressive movements are to be successful.

The above list is by no means an exhaustive list of the issues that are currently of concern to the environment. It is meant to give a flavor of the range of issues that are being discussed and the variety of approaches that are being taken to address them.

Not just green

Regular readers of Chain Reaction will have noticed a distinct shift in content of late. For some time now we have been under a lot of pressure to work more on the environment and its impact on the world around us. This pressure has come from various sources, including the Reagan-appointed National Hawaiian Study Commission, which has made a number of recommendations to the Hawaiian government on matters of land use and development.

National Con

Alistair Michin is far too polite a politician for my liking. In the discussion paper Towards a National Con Strategy (Chain Reaction 29), while one must agree with his critique, there is much more that is wrong with the document. An outstanding weakness of the Strategy is its glaring omissions. Note some of the omissions.

1. The Strategy does not consider the role of the economy in the environment. It is clear that the economy and the environment are interdependent and that both must be managed in a sustainable way.

2. The Strategy does not consider the role of workers in the environment. It is clear that workers have a right to participate in decisions about the environment.

3. The Strategy does not consider the role of the environment in the economy. It is clear that the environment is a key factor in determining the competitiveness of industries.

4. The Strategy does not consider the role of the environment in the quality of life. It is clear that the environment is a key factor in determining the quality of life for all people.

5. The Strategy does not consider the role of the environment in the distribution of power. It is clear that the environment is a key factor in determining who has power in society.

Warning

I would like to warn Chain Reaction that the magazine is getting too safe and too academic. We need more articles on the environment and its impact on society. We are not working towards the destruction of the environment; we are working towards its protection.

Congratulations on publishing the article by Kimberley O'Sullivan in Chain Reaction 28.

Kimberley, like any other FOE (SA) officer, had the right to be read, to have her thoughts published. R Wilshire, Perth, WA

You are invited to write up your interest in Chain Reaction with your comments on the magazine's editorial focus and any other issues of interest to you. Letters longer than 200 words may be edited or not be printed. Write to Chain Reaction, Room 14, Floor 4, 57 Swanton St, Melbourne, Vic 3000, Australia.

Backstage

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Land rights after the Games

The 1982 Commonwealth Games provided an opportunity for Aboriginals to expose Queensland and federal governments' racist policies. With the Games over, Harold Klein analyses the effectiveness of the Black land rights protest.

The campaign for Aboriginal land rights, conducted during the Commonwealth Games, started badly with the official body, the Black Protest Committee, organising only one rally, on 26 September, leading up to the Games. The committee had vigorously opposed any action during the Games as a diversion from its proposed cultural festival.

The committee also failed to organise any billeting for Blacks arriving from interstate and the reserve, forcing them to camp at Musgrave Park. These problems resulted in a bitter meeting of Blacks where the Black Protest Committee resigned and a new Black leadership group, the National Black Unity Committee, emerged and established itself in the Park.

...the consensus approach to decision making at the Park, the relaxed pace and a willingness to respond to events as they developed, produced a community that provided the necessities of the Black land rights movement based in grass roots communities.

For the community, the Black land rights movement was not the key to winning land rights — what was really important was the campaign in Australia. As Ross Watson, the editor of Black Nation remarked:

The fact that all the Black agencies, institutions and government funding could not provide a meaningful program of activity reflects the government's racist attitude and the stumps led to money allocated to the Black community. We're not going to let a government-controlled Black fund body tell us what we're going to do. We are going to plan our own activities, our own strategy, and take action ourselves.

The Blacks' ability to organise is the most effective weapon against the domination of the white community.

The Black land rights movement was the successful organisation of the community. We weren't going to let government money dictate our strategy.

The Blacks' ability to organise is the most effective weapon against the domination of the white community. We weren't going to let government money dictate our strategy.

Exploiting the hydro job myth

By Bob Beatty, Tina Perinotto and Keith Tarlo

Employment has always been the bottom line of arguments in favour of flooding the Franklin and Gordon Rivers in South West Tasmania for hydroelectricity. Supporters of the scheme argue that it will provide jobs in construction and operation, and indirectly through electricity generated. Yet despite continual hydro development and a 5% increase in power consumption since 1970, Tasmania had an unemployment rate of 10.1% in September 1982 and workers were being laid off from the very industries which benefit most from cheaper electricity.

Prominent among arguments in favour of the Gordon-below-Franklin scheme is the need to maintain the Hydro Electric Commission's construction workforce as a source of jobs. How important is it?

As of 30 June 1981 the Hydro Electric Commission employed 4682 people, of whom 1617 were directly involved in construction. The HEC suggests that 3574 jobs depend on its construction activities if both directly and indirectly employed workers are included. This is 2.1% of Tasmania's workforce of 173,600.

The nation's largest hydro project will maintain an average of less than 600 jobs in the Commission's construction workforce over the 15-year construction period with a peak workforce of less than 1000. When completed, the scheme will employ only 29 people for operation.

Despite claims that the HEC's workforce is a stabilising influence on employment in Tasmania, it fluctuates considerably in size and composition, and declined overall by 1000 between 1966 and 1979. Labour turnover was much higher than the Australian average for both staff (four times the average) and award employees (eight times). Labour shortages on construction sites were made up by advertising interstate.

The major reason for the labour shortages for the hydro construction program was the need to use the success of the campaign during the Games to recruit Black land rights activists and bring about a united Black protest movement. The campaign was the emergence of a united Black protest movement based in grass roots communities.

From there on there was another march to the QEII Stadium, a picket of Malcolm Fraser's attendance at the Brisbane Greek Club. These actions resulted in a total of 373 arrests. In the hearings arising from these, Bob Weatherall of the Foundation of Aboriginal and Islander Research Action said:

I'm only guilty under white law. I'm not guilty under Aboriginal law. I have the right to walk on my own land.

The real choice is between dams and alternatives which meet Tasmania's employment and energy needs.
was raised both in the public sector and on the open market. In this way hydro-electric development draws capital away from less capital-intensive works such as schools, health services, public housing, and transport, and from private sector activities such as home building and local industry. Long-term employment per dollar invested in these activities is clearly far less than the 29 jobs created by investing in a $440 million power scheme.10

Those who support the Gordon-below-Franklin scheme claim that 4000 jobs will be lost if the scheme does not go ahead. This is not so. Such statements imply a simple choice: either a dam or no scheme at all. In reality, it is a choice between dams and a number of alternative ways of meeting Tasmania's energy needs, on which has job-creating effects. The most commonly discussed alternative is a thermal power station using local Tasmanian coal from the Fingal Valley. A single unit 200 MW thermal station would create permanent jobs for 70 operators and 150 coal miners, compared with 29 operators on the Gordon-below-Franklin scheme. In total, a 1-unit thermal station would provide 52400 job years against 25540 job years spread over the construction and decommissioning life of the hydro scheme.11

Further, these jobs would be created in the southeast of the state rather than in the isolated and temporary hydro-construction camps.12

Proposed by two scientists at the University of Tasmania, Chris Harwood and Michael Haslett, to meet Tasmania's energy need until after the year 2000 through a comprehensive program of innovation, improving the energy efficiency of homes, commercial and factories, and cogeneration of electricity as a by-product of existing industrial processes such as steam raising. This program would create 5300 job years spread over 15 years, but would cost much less than building a dam. Harwood and Haslett argue that the remaining capital should be used to provide infrastructure for industries to provide jobs for Tasmanians.13

Neither of these energy alternatives helps the specific employment problems of Tasmania's west coast. These problems are partly due to the effects of the recession on the west coast mining towns such as Queenstown, Zeehan, and Roseberry, and partly due to the run down of the construction work on the Pieman River Development. West coast workers have looked to the Gordon-below-Franklin dam for at least a temporary respite. For this reason, the decision not to build the dam must be accompanied by alternative schemes to generate jobs on the west coast. The most promising proposal is to further develop the west coast's tourist potential. This is already a major industry in the area with the historic mining towns, the Marion Harbour/Gordon River scenic cruises, Strahan and wilderness recreation being the major attractions. Tourism could be further developed with:

- reconstruction of the ABT railway line from Strahan, via the Queen and King Rivers and Marion Harbour;
- provision of access to the Montezuma Falls near Willowsford;
- development of the King River gorge as an accessible example of South West Tasmania's magnificent river chasms; and
- adaptation of the Ems Bay railway from Burnie to Roseberry for tourist use.

All these would provide short-term construction jobs but they would also provide stable permanent employment in the operation of the tourist industry.

The second way in which Tasmania's Hydro Electric Commission has sought to reduce the impact of the recession is by claiming that increased energy production will lead to increased employment in new and existing industries. The policy of trying to attract industries to Tasmania by offering abundant cheap electricity is called hydroindustrialisation.14

The policy dates from 1914 when the Tasmanian government bought Tasmania's first significant hydro scheme at the Great Lake from the Hydro Electric Power and Metallurgical Corporation, and established the Hydro Electric Department. The company had been constructing the scheme for a calcium carbide works it was building in south-eastern Tasmania. From its first year of operation, the Hydro Electric Department (later the Hydro Electric Commission) was trying to attract large power-consuming industries to Tasmania from interstate and overseas.15

Hydroindustrialisation had some early successes with contracts to supply bulk electricity to the Riddoch, a zinc works (now Electrolytic Zinc), the calcium carbide works at Smith's Falls (now defunct Electra Carbons Carbide works), the Mt Lyell copper mine, and the cement factory at Rosebery. Subsequently, Comalco established its Bell Bay aluminium smelter in 1955, and BHP its ferro-manganese alloy plant (called Temco) in 1962 also at Bell Bay. There are now sixteen industries with contracts for bulk electricity — these include woodchip, pulp and paper plants, as well as the mining, metal refining and smelting, and the chemical operations already mentioned. Despite these past successes, it is now clear that hydroindustrialisation has failed. The industries which benefit from it do not provide many of the amount of electricity that they consume, they do not provide any new jobs in return for increased in their electricity consumption, and they do not create many jobs indirectly. Hydro-industrialisation cannot supply the new energy-consuming industries to Tasmania, yet it remains a burden on Tasmania's smaller and more labour-intensive industries and on all of its job creation effort.16

At the heart of the failure of hydroindustrialisation is the type of industry which has benefitted from the policy. It is important to recognise that cheap electricity is available in Tasmania for those industries which are large and energy-intensive enough to justify the policy. This is illustrated by a contract for continuous bulk electricity. In Tasmania, these industries are of two types:

- 'footloose' electro-metallurgical industries which import most of their raw materials, export all their products, and are located in Tasmania primarily for its cheap electricity (notably Comalco, Temco and to a lesser extent Electrolytic Zinc); and
- industries engaged in initial and intermediate processing of Tasmania's forest and mineral resources. These industries share a number of characteristics which help to explain the failure of the hydroindustrialisation.

These characteristics are:

- high energy intensiveness;
- resource provoking rather than the manufacturer of finished goods; and
- ownership and control from outside the state.

In 1979, they consumed 67% of the electricity sold in Tasmania, yet provided only 6% of the state's jobs.17 In contrast, the remaining 94% of jobs are provided by a further 10% of Tasmania's electricity.18 The metal smelting and refining industries are the most energy intensive. Comalco alone uses 26% of Tasmania's electricity while providing only 7.8% of the state's jobs.19

If the huge investment in hydro-electric generation begins only a small section of the total workforce, it is arguable that an even smaller proportion of women workers. In 1978/79, the contract industrial consumers employed only 1% of female workers in the Tasmanian workforce.20 Women comprise only 5% of these industries' workforces compared with 17% in manufacturing generally and 34% in the labour force as a whole.21

Often the number of jobs created by hydroindustrialisation has not only failed to create, but has caused job losses elsewhere. Because the major industrial electricity users are engaged in resource exporting industries (which in Tasmania are especially energy demanding), the work they do is not controlled from outside the state, and their profits made in Tasmania do not provide any mean investment and jobs for Tasmanian industries. Comalco has been investing its profits in aluminium smelting in Gladstone (Queensland) rather than on expanding its Tasmanian smelter.22 Because almost all the major industrial power users are engaged in resource exporting industries which, on their own, provide very little value to the Tasmanian economy.23

Because the Recession is not so much a problem of the high energy intensiveness of these industries, that is, to replace workers with machines in stead of increasing work opportunities. In fact, the increase of 5% in energy intensiveness of Tasmania's manufacturing industry during the 1970s was far greater than the increase of 16% during the period. And these job losses occurred in 1979 when Comalco sought an increase in its power allowance for a production boost that would not have created any new jobs.24

Apart from their increasing energy intensiveness, several of the chief characteristics of the major industrial electricity users mitigate against their providing many more jobs.25 Because they are large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energy-intensive industries which are run by large and energ...
in further product processing, exceed the number of people directly employed in an industry. However, with Tasmania's major industrial electricity users these multiplier effects are minimised. The most extreme case are the two biggest electricity consumers in Tasmania, Comalco and Temco, which both import virtually all their raw materials (except electricity) and export all their products, with no further processing or fabrication.

While the existing industries cannot provide the jobs, the prospects of attracting major new energy-consuming industries to Tasmania looks bleak. The major new industry to establish in Tasmania was Tenco, in 1962. In its report on the Gordon-Belcher-Franklin scheme, the HEC made 'no allowance for any new major industry which may wish to become established in the future'. It only considered additions to the contract demands of established industries and found that these were 'much larger than can be supplied from hydro sources'. The HEC itself admitted that, in this situation, 'there must be some restriction of industrial expansion in the state'. In other words, far from building hydro schemes with the expectation of attracting new industry and jobs to Tasmania, the HEC is in fact limiting industrial development to that which can be accommodated into its dam-construction program. It is this fact which prompted the Evers Committee to ask whether the HEC has tended to fill in a de facto economic development agency.

Even if the HEC could accommodate major new industries, the current electricity pricing arrangements discriminate against new industries. The HEC sells contracts for bulk electricity from specific power schemes as they are commissioned. The price paid depends on the historical capital cost of the scheme (which declines in real terms) and the current operating cost. New industries are faced to pay the price of power from new schemes, which is generally higher than the cost of power from old schemes or than the average cost of power from the system as a whole.1,14

Tasmania faces the possibility that one of its 'footloose' metal smelters and refineries will leave the state. For example, as part of the interstate and inter-island aluminum industry, Comalco may close its Bell Bay smelter and concentrate its activities at Gladstone where it has a large new smelter. Near its aluminium smelter on the Derwent River, and uses Queensland's abundant coal-fired electricity.

Hydroindustrialisation's failure to generate jobs or attract new industry might be tolerable if it did not place a burden on the rest of the state economy. However, it does place such a burden via the price structure. The average price paid for bulk electricity in 1981 was 0.95 cents per kilowatt-hour; while the average price paid for 'retail' electricity was 2.64 cents per kilowatt-hour. (Both these average prices cover a considerable variety of tariffs paid by different categories of customer.) The price difference in Tasmania is severe times greater than it is elsewhere in Australia and New Zealand.9

The HEC claims that this price differential is due to the lower cost of distributing electricity to contract customers. However, several independent studies using data published by the HEC and their analysis of the HEC's costs to the different types of customer and shown that the price structure contains a subsidy of $25 million per year for the contract electricity customers of the HEC and their large users.1,16,18

Further, because of the historical pricing of contract electricity, the retail customers bear the cost of the more than doubling of the fuel cost from 1964 to 1980. As a result, the ratio between the prices of contract and retail electricity has increased from 3.43 in 1970 to 3.79 in 1981. This price difference is significant in that the subsidy was also increasing.15

Why has belief in the effectiveness of hydroindustrialisation continued so long despite the clear evidence of its failure? Instead of attracting new industry, has it not actually been pernicious to the Tasmanian economy? The answer lies in the role and power of the HEC. It is an independent state government-owned public corporation, which has responsibility for the generation, marketing, pricing and distribution of electricity and much of Tasmania's water supply. The HEC is the most powerful public authority in the state, having been allocated the HEC's budget and heads the Tasmanian economy is to have his policy on increasing energy-intensive industries to provide independent advice to the government on energy matters. However, the Energy Policy Unit was abolished after the HEC submitted a report on energy efficiency and to the Tasmanian government in December 1980 and replaced with an Energy Information Office, managed by the Department of Energy with a staff of one.13

In conclusion, the employment benefits of dam construction are small, short term and costly, especially when they are compared with the alternative ways of meeting Tasmania's energy needs. The concentration of economic development policy on increasing energy intensity, rather than providing encouragement of labour-intensive industry, progressive electricity pricing alternatives, and tourist development of Tasmania's west coast — would also require the Tasmanian government's efforts in that direction.

References

3. Hydro Electric Commission of Tasmania, statement to senate select committee on South West Tasmania, 1980, Hobart.
9. South West Tasmania Committee of NSW, submission to senate select committee on South West Tasmania, Hobart, 1981.
For its cultural significance. All the limestone caves containing Aboriginal artefacts found so far would be flooded. Among the discoveries was evidence of Aboriginal habitation 15,000 to 20,000 years ago, indicating the southernmost human presence at the time of the last ice age. The flooding of the sites would be clearly a tragedy, which many of the world's archaeologists are trying to avert. What is to be done if conventional methods fail to resolve the situation and destruction of the area is imminent? Under these circumstances the Tasmanian Wilderness Society will urge civil disobedience and peaceful direct action in the South West. Large amounts of time and money have been spent in preparation for such action. Since there are intense feelings on both sides of the conflict, the potential for violence is high. But the TWS strongly believes that violence is of no value in the long run in convincing the general public and the government of the need to pass effective legislation protecting the South West wilderness, not only from dams but also from forestry and mining incursions.

In the end the trade-off is between our last major temperate wilderness or 180 MW of power for which there are alternatives if the power really is needed. There is no compromise; a dam, no matter how small, or a road, no matter how narrow, destroys the wilderness.

As with so many issues, if all those who care act together, the battle can be won. The saving of the Franklin River and the South West wilderness can be the next big step along the road to a change in the attitude of governments towards the environment and the ability of people to effect that change.

Actions: When the rational and emotional arguments are on one side, it should only take public pressure to force the government to act. Letters, telegrams, faxes, and phone calls to politicians are all needed. Unless this is done, the politicians have no idea how strongly the community feels about an issue. A complaint is a failed answer. Ring your member of federal parliament, Ask to speak to the member personally. If you don't get through, make an appointment to see her or him. Send a hand-written letter to each federal house and senate member in your state, especially Liberal Party members. It doesn't have to be a long letter. Encourage other people to do the above. Send a telegram to Malcolm Fraser, c/o Parliament House, Canberra.

Contact: Tasmanian Wilderness Society
2608. Tel: (062) 49 8011.
310 Angas St, Adelaide, SA 5000.
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Tel: (09) 321 5942.
2608. Tel: (062) 49 8011.
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399 Pitt St, Sydney, NSW 2000.
Tel: (02) 267 7722.

How can the South West be saved?

Karen Alexander looks at the future direction of the struggle.

The wild Franklin River, on a southern island far from the main centres of Australia's population, has inspired thousands of people to spend time and money in fighting for its survival. Hundreds of Tasmanians still fight to have a fair say in the future direction of their state. Mainland Australians fight to have any say whatsoever in what is obviously a national issue, the fate of one of Australia's few remaining wildernesses.

The river presents a fascinating dichotomy. It has a timeless quality which is a product of the natural forces which have shaped the earth, yet it could be gone in a few years. It is enormously strong, totally dominating people and capable of killing them, yet it is vulnerable: our machines can destroy its beauty and its power.

Such gut-feelings rarely win battles. There are a number of reasons for suggesting that the federal government will intervene:

• The federal government now has clear advice from its Attorney-General's Department that it not only has the power to intervene on the dam issue in Tasmania, but also has an obligation to intervene. The Commonwealth could acquire the area as a national park under the Wildlife Conservation Act and the Land Acquisition Act. If necessary it could make all future grants to Tasmania conditional on not building the dam. Any decision not to intervene in Tasmania will be purely for political reasons, not lack of legal power. The federal government now needs the political will to preserve this part of Australia's heritage.

• In November 1981, with the agreement of the then Tasmanian premier, Doug Lowe, the federal government nominated the western Tasmanian national parks for inclusion on the World Heritage List. The area nominated has already been accepted by the executive body of the World Heritage Committee, but has yet to be formally ratified by the full committee which will meet on 13-17 December 1982 in Paris. Unless the federal government can give some guarantee that it will protect the area, the final acceptance of the South West onto the World Heritage List may not occur. Such rejection would be a strong embarrassment to the government.

• The area has also been nominated for World Heritage status. The area nominated has been declared a World Heritage Area by the World Heritage Committee of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on 28 November 1980. The area nominated includes a large part of the South West of Tasmania, including the Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park, as well as other areas such as the Gordon Highland and Huon Plains National Parks and the South West Central Highlands National Park. The nomination is supported by the Tasmanian Wilderness Society who have been working towards its inclusion for many years.

Karen Alexander works with the Tasmanian Wilderness Society in Melbourne.

TWS strongly believes that violence is of no value in the long run in convincing the general public and the government of the need to pass effective legislation protecting the South West wilderness, not only from dams but also from forestry and mining incursions.

In the end the trade-off is between our last major temperate wilderness or 180 MW of power for which there are alternatives if the power really is needed. There is no compromise; a dam, no matter how small, or a road, no matter how narrow, destroys the wilderness.

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16 Chain Reaction

Shell's Australia: mined, refined and undermined

The operations of Shell in Australia, through their diversity
and immense size, represent key sources of political
and economic power. The current effect of this company on
Australia's political economy, and the potential effect of
its planned investments, are clearly significant. The extent
of this influence raises the question of how individual nations
can successfully control, or at least regulate, the power
of corporations such as Shell to undermine a government's
economic and fiscal policies, or to ensure the introduction
of particular legislation.

Shell began its Australian operations in 1902, as a marketer
and distributor of refined petroleum products. In 1927
Shell bought the small Circle refinery in New South Wales
which it rebuilt during the 1950s. A refinery in Victoria was
established in 1954 at Geelong. Together these refineries give

By Jenny Hocking
Shell the largest share of Australian refining capacity, approximately 24%. Shell also is the largest seller of
petroleum and related products in Australia, with 22%

Like the other major oil companies operating in Australia,
Shell is involved in both the refining and marketing sectors,
their large number of retail sites and supplying many

Shell has traditionally operated in all countries as it has in
Chain Reaction 17
Forcing up oil profits

Shell's investment spending in Australia declined between 1972 and 1977, and then increased from 1976 onwards, a pattern followed by the mining industry as a whole. The reluctance of the industry to invest between 1972 and 1973 is generally linked to the oil-pricing policies of the then Labor government, which continued to pay at less than parity with Middle East crude as a result of its local crude oil finds. The oil companies in Australia had been arguing for an increase in the price of local crude oil ever since the massive October 1973 increases in the price of Middle Eastern crude, set by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Since September 1970 the price of a barrel of Australian crude oil had been set according to the average price of imported crude between 1967 and 1969. The Gorton government set this price (with the agreement of the major oil companies in Australia) for a five-year period. Until the OPEC increases, this local price was higher than the price of a barrel of imported crude. To ensure that Australian crude found a market despite its higher price, it was allocated to all oil companies importing crude oil into Australia, and "discouragement" were introduced to guarantee that all importers took up their allocation of local crude. The workings of the market have not been particularly important to the pricing and distribution of oil and petroleum products in Australia despite the claims of Shell's latest annual report that "Shell believes in markets, not price controls."

Despite the fact that the 1976 price had also included a margin for future investment, following the OPEC price increases it became overt, inadequate, as an inappropriate compensation for oilfields that had already proved their profitability. The "appropriate cost to the consumer", industry representatives now claimed, was the higher import price. "It is the objective of the company's management to charge for products without domestic crude." Any policy at a market supply-and-demand-determined price would be effectively dismissed by statements such as these.

Acceptance of the view that the price for Australian crude should be determined by the opportunity cost of that crude was strengthened by accompanying claims that Australia's supply of indigenous crude was rapidly being depleted, that Australia's consumption of petroleum products was growing, and that the likelihood of securing new explorations for oil was extremely low. Forecasts abound in the media at that time that Australian oil production by 1985 would be only one-third of its consumption in 1976 (not more than two-thirds). At that stage the Australian Institute of Petroleum, of the organisation, the Australian Institute of Petroleum, and of the predictions made prior to the announcement of parity pricing, only that of the future import bill has proved correct. The success ratio of exploitation drilling has quite remarkably changed, with recent assessments seeing an "extraordinary" success ratio of only one in every four offshore wells in 1985. Similarly, Australian consumption of petrol and related products in fact fell in 1985, and Australia remains two-thirds self-sufficient in crude oil, as it was in 1977. It has been to the benefit of the large oil companies with the production of doing found in larger quantities than originally estimated. Further, there have been no guarantees in oil contracts that current oil production will be reinvested in oil exploration. In fact, as Shell's oil mining exploration as a whole has more than doubled in recent years, Shell's share of total exploration by major oil companies has not increased but has decreased. The Shell oil profit of its past ten years is not a true profit. The Shell government is looking for growth at present, more attention is being given to developing Shell's interests in resources and other energy forms.

Transnationals at work

The global scale of the operations of TNCs gives them several unique characteristics:

- The TNC is generally one of very few firms operating within a particular sector of industry, and accounts for most of the activity in that sector.
- TNCs build a system of vertical integration whereby they acquire control over the means of production and production processes. This means that a large proportion of the company's operations takes place both within its own states or subsidiaries, and through this internal trade the TNC can set its own prices for the various elements it uses. These prices are often determined by the strategy of setting a TNC as able to shift profits within its subsidiaries. For subsidiaries operating in countries with high taxation rates, inflated prices charged for parts or materials provided by subsidiaries operating in low-tax countries will reduce the effective taxes on which high tax would otherwise have been paid.
- Although TNCs are concentrated within specific industries, they are usually involved in several related industries. This diversification of interests enables a TNC to subsidise important aspects of its business, such as exploration and development, on the basis of its profits within other, more profitable, sectors.
- The financial decisions of TNCs can move massive amounts of money between different countries, and can thus affect their balance of payments and economies. This allows TNCs to influence political decisions and force changes in national policies that may be to their advantage.
- TNCs can also use their influence to create or control market conditions, and can thus manipulate prices and influence production levels. This allows TNCs to control the supply of certain goods and services, and to limit or increase their own profits.

For a TNC, the costs of marketing and distribution are a relatively small proportion of total revenue. Supply and demand in the oil market is usually established by the major oil companies, which have the ability to influence the price of oil through their own production and marketing policies. This allows the major oil companies to control the price of oil and to manipulate the market to their advantage.

Cornering the energy market

The most obvious and extensive of Shell's interests in other energy forms is in natural gas, since this is often produced in association with oil. This commitment is in the North West Shelf project. The natural gas, which is associated with the production of a large oil consortium in which Shell and BHP have a 19% equity. The Rankin Trough fields of the North West Shelf hold Australia's largest known natural gas reserves. Production and profits in these natural gas interests will not be immediate but will be well rewarded.

Shell's other investments in natural gas interests include its 28.7% share in the WAPET consortium off Western Australia. This field currently supplies natural gas to Perth, but it is expected to run out by 1985. Shell has invested a total of $60 million in onshore and offshore exploration through the WAPET consortium. It has also invested in gas exploration on the Gulf of Carpentaria, the Offshore Basin in the Southern Basin in partnership with Western Mining Corporation, and in the Great Barrier Reef in partnership with Pacific. Shell is also exploring for natural gas off the eastern coast of Victoria in the Gippsland Basin, in the Bonyma Gasfield in Western Australia, and off Barrow Island in Western Australia.

Shell's increased interest in natural gas is given a new perspective by the comments of Shell's gas project coordinator, that "this natural gas business has a lot of scope. Gas tends to be more secure than oil because the production is intricately linked to the final customer. With oil, the host government can cut off supplies to one customer and divert the oil to another. In gas you get tap tanks and pipelines, and you can't divert a pipeline." Shell's major investment has been in coal exploration and production. The investment strategy of Shell is based on the belief that large scale coal production will be needed in the future, and that this will be most profitable for the large oil companies that are already involved in the coal industry. Shell's largest investment in coal is the Bellambatt Coal project, which Shell purchased in 1979. Shell has also invested in the coal industry through its interest in the Pacific Coal Company, which is a joint venture between Shell and the Australian government. Shell's investment in coal is part of the company's strategy to diversify its interests and to reduce its dependence on oil. Shell believes that coal will play an important role in future energy production, and that by investing in coal it can position itself to take advantage of this growth in demand.
any opportunity that may occur that results from people getting nervous.

The purchase by Shell in 1979 of a 50% share in SW Hart, the manufacturers of Solarhart solar energy hot water systems, is a further extension of Shell's interest in the energy industry. Before being bought into by Shell, Solarhart was a fully Australian-owned company, with a large share owned by employees. The movement of oil companies such as Shell into other energy forms further restricts the market for energy generally. The oil companies have proved themselves to be particularly interested in exploration for and refining of bauxite. Through acquiring 100% of Billiton and 50% of Alumax Bauxite Corporation which holds leases on the Aurukun leases in the Cape York Peninsula to the south of the existing Weipa mine, running through the centre of the Aurukun mining region, Shell is exploring in the wild and mining of bauxite. Shell's investment in the exploration and mining of bauxite at Aurukun highlights the incompatibility of interests which can be expected to occur as the global economic sense comes to dominate the corporation's investment decisions. Shell's part in Aurukun came about through Billiton's shareholding in the joint venture Aurukun Associates, for which Shell handles management and public relations. This consortium holds leases in the Cape York Peninsula that cover the north of the existing Weipa mine, running through the centre of the Aurukun mining region.

The provisions and conditions for mining at Aurukun are set out by the Aurukun Aboriginal Agreement Act (AA.A.A.), which was, in Senator Neville Bonner's words, "rushed through the 1975 Parliament". The Act sets up the Aurukun Aboriginal community, the elders, the shire council and their legal representatives all completely unprepared for the legislation. They had been told that a mining lease would be granted an effective 63-year lease. After the third year of mining operations they must 'pay to the director on behalf of Aborigines 3% of annual net mining profits'.

Shell dominates the international seed industry, controlling 23 seed companies in Europe and North America. Over the last ten years the seed industry has been dramatically transformed from a number of small enterprises into a large chemical company. The concept of PBR is a form of patent control over plants, enabling seed companies to patent seeds and cuttings of newly developed plant strains and to charge fees for the use of their seeds. As Shell's interest in introducing PBR relates to the poor economic control of the seed industry has become dominated by the large chemical and/or oil companies, high-yield plant varieties have been developed and patented which are highly dependent on the use of chemicals which is often felt towards the activities of TNCs because of the absence of clear delineation between ownership and control. There is a deliberate emphasis by Shell in presenting its operations and management structures as participatory, as the actions of a team, which serves to mask any distinct division of ownership and control. Given the grounding of Western legal systems in a theoretical separation between ownership and control, this is not new. But the case of Shell's operations and management structures over control of natural resources, that the failure of these systems to confront the political and economic power within the confines of their parliamentary systems.

Further reading:
- Geoff Jough, Foreign Ownership & Control of the Australian Mining Industry, Australian National University, Canberra, 1977.

Shell's operations should be considered in the context of the general foreign control within certain sectors of the Australian economy. In the sectors in which Shell largely operates in Australia- mining, oil refining and chemicals - foreign control is particularly high. The latest official figures available on foreign control in the mining industry are for 1978 (the Fraser government no longer collects this information) and show that 56% of the industry was controlled by foreign corporations. Foreign control of the oil-refining sector is 91% and of the chemical sector, 79%.

Would national enterprises be preferable to TNCs? The activities of Shell in the Great Barrier Reef, Tasmanian wilderness areas and Aurukun emphasise the political and social consequences of investments by capitalist enterprises. The search for profits which guides the decisions of transnational and national enterprises alike should make us wary of claims that local companies would be less indifferent to the repercussions of their operations. To the extent that local companies lack the networks through which Shell can channel capital between countries, the destabilising potential of these companies is not as great as that of TNCs. It is not immediately apparent to whom, if to any particular individuals, responsibility for a transnational's activities can be attributed. This heightens the sense of powerlessness which is often felt towards the activities of TNCs because of the absence of clear delineation between ownership and control.

Moving in on seeds

Shell's exploratory investments in South West Tasmania similarly indicate the incompatibility of profit-based investment decisions with considerations of a non-economic nature. In 1980 Shell successfully applied for a permit to explore an area of 614 sq km north of Adshead Island in South West Tasmania. In February 1981 the Tasmanian Conservation Trust challenged this application in a mining warms court hearing, on the grounds that most of the area lay within the South West Conservation Area. The mining warden ruled that public interest groups do not have an economic interest in the area to be affected and are therefore not granted the right to argue the actual objection.

Shell in the wild...

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...and on the Reef

Another of Shell's investments which is of particular environmental concern is their holding of an oil and gas exploration lease in partnership with Pacifico in the Great Barrier Reef. Exploration leases in the Reef region were suspended from June 1979 until the federal government has completed an investigation into the effects of oil pollution on coral and marine life. The fragile ecosystem of the whole Reef is threatened by the destruction of any one area. Oil presents a massive danger to the Reef even without drilling. For the passage of oil tankers, about 350 each year, through the narrow shipping lane expose the Reef to the risk of oil spills. Earlier this year, 1982, the prime minister, Mr Fraser, could not state unequivocally that there would be no drilling on the Reef.

Outside control out of control

Shell's operations should be considered in the context of the general foreign control within certain sectors of the Australian economy. In the sectors in which Shell largely operates in Australia- mining, oil refining and chemicals - foreign control is particularly high. The latest official figures available on foreign control in the mining industry are for 1978 (the Fraser government no longer collects this information) and show that 56% of the industry was controlled by foreign corporations. Foreign control of the oil-refining sector is 91% and of the chemical sector, 79%.

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Further reading:
- Geoff Jough, Foreign Ownership & Control of the Australian Mining Industry, Australian National University, Canberra, 1977.
Predictions of an Australian resource boom have been shattered by mass lay-offs, plant closures and development cancellations around the country. David Ross reports on the effects of the recession in Newcastle and the community’s response.

The shift of funds from the major service areas to huge capital-intensive projects that will require few staff will have a long-term impact on employment. (NSW Government: Capital Investment)

The service sectors, notably education and health, employ large numbers of people. Until two years ago they were among the major employment growth areas, but now staff at hospitals is being sharply reduced and school projects dropped. Education, health and housing in New South Wales face a 30% slash in capital expenditure for each of the next few years if the state government continues with its massive electricity and industrial support program.

Figure 1, with the implied widespread loss of jobs in the traditional competitive and manufacturing areas, were spelling in a still-suppressed government report of 1981, which was produced by senior government economists and of the then NSW Government: Capital Investment.

As the Hunter Region is the focus for much of the state’s major export and power producer, and Australia’s second largest steel producer (after Wollongong). Also, a wide range of manufacturing occurs mainly in the lower Hunter area (Newcastle). Until the late 1970s, the 500,000 people of the region enjoyed an economy based around agricultural manufacturing and primary resource (mainly coal) export.

The main problem at that time was that the vast majority of this investment was in Newcastle and in the traditionally accepted areas of women’s employment.

NSW state premier, Neville Wran, then unleashed in 1978 the version of the Fraser-Anthony energy export boom scenario. Wran’s program was to create 40,000 new jobs in the region at a price of ‘some’ downide capital investment and cultural pursuits and ‘aspects’ of the manufacturing sector. It goes something like this:

- Newcastle to be the world’s largest coal-exporting port, up from 11 million tonnes in 1979 to 65 million tonnes in 1985–2000. (Coal export is near 50 million tonnes in 1982).
- Doubling of NSW’s power generation (85% of NSW’s power is already produced in the Hunter).
- Rise of primary aluminium smelting from 90,000 tonnes to 590,000 tonnes, all for export.
- With most of the ‘resource boom’ in Australia, the main spin-off is not jobs but the removal of public and private investment from theLabour-intensive manufacturing manufacturing, accelerating structural stresses on the environment.

However, all for export. The spending of over $300 million of state taxes by 1985 to build industries such as aluminium for ‘the boom’ has some definite beneficiaries: major multinational energy companies, the NSW Electricity Commission (SEC), land speculators and the handful of workers directly involved.

Given the very capital-intensive nature of the power industry ($1.5 million of public investment to create each new permanent job) and the related aluminium industry ($1 million per new permanent job) it is almost impossible to design a job-creating scheme which will provide for direct employment for dollars invested. As economist Dr Howard Dick writes in his 1981 publication Power: the Bitter aluminium Smelters: “The main effect of power price increases is to reduce direct employment for dollars invested.” As economist Dr Howard Dick writes in his 1981 publication Power: the Bitter aluminium Smelters: “The main effect of power price increases is to reduce direct employment for dollars invested.”

It is to encourage an excessive use of electricity.

Aside from the ‘bigger is always better’ philosophy also is seen significantly in widening the political base of the union movement with the effectively control the NSW Labor Party. This dominating factor in the NSW ALP has been a long-term integration within the NSW Electricity Commission of both administrative and union roles, therefore a strong vested interest in the expansion of basic power plants. As Dr Dick explains: “...the point is that most of the discussion of ‘job creation’ is in effect a political trick that can remain undetected only as long as the unworkers and who pays them remain hidden from public gaze. ...jobs can be created in any industry from aluminium smelters to making crystal chandeliers, provided there is a large enough subsidy to keep the catch that someone else has to be taxed to finance the subsidy. The resultant taxes may lead to reduced employment in other industries (my emphasis).

This is precisely what is occurring in the manufacturing area in general, and in the steel industry in particular. Broken Hill Proprietary Ltd (BHP) and the directly dependent downstream industries employ about 15% of Newcastle’s total workforce. However, retail and other industries would have perhaps another 10% of Newcastle’s workforce dependent on the spending power of BHP’s workers. In Wollongong, the figures are somewhat higher.

More than 10 years ago BHP set in train investment policies which have prepared the ground for the virtual coagulation of major steel making in Newcastle by 1985. This company’s growing investments in oil and coal, and its attempts to break into the aluminium in the Hunter (and now in Western Australia) underline clearly its chase for profit maximisation at all costs. Such a policy will mean the direct loss of 3000 steel jobs in Wollongong and Newcastle and another 3000–5000 indirect jobs losses in both cities by early 1985 if BHP is allowed to proceed with its ‘restructuring’.

Responses have varied from seeking assistance from workers directly and indirectly affected to apathy by the majority of those in work, to fear that they may lose their jobs in some way be put in jeopardy.

The environmental movement in NSW generally has had little to say about these social circumstances. While this is understandable, I believe that the situation needs more community pressure on the state and federal government to further develop their credibility with the broad sections of the community.

The Forum’s role in the present situation is to raise awareness and stimulate community action around the major environmental and social issues. It is campaigning for balanced and practical investment policies that will lead towards a more self-sufficient economy and environmentally compatible future for the region.

The Forum wants to make people aware that premier Neville Wran, in concert with prime minister Malcolm Fraser, has virtually bankrupted NSW, making us more dependent on an export economy and therefore more vulnerable to foreign economic and political manipulation.

A good example of this trend is the forced sale of the Hunter’s and Australia’s biggest power station, Eraring, which is no longer competitive, to private sources. A similar fate awaits the Bayswater station which is also still under construction. Two of these stations will supply half the state’s power by 1986.

Another example of public officials is the massive cutsback in state services and therefore in state expenditure, which have increased in direct and indirect cuts in power charges and other direct and indirect costs which see just beginning to bite.
The Community Forum, together with a number of other organisations, supports the following proposals for the steel industry as a serious attempt to combat the slide of our region's economy.

- A moratorium on plant closures and redundancies including a planning and advisory council of government, union and industry representatives to advise on investment, the introduction of new technology, job health and industrial relations; and enactment of job security proposals; and particularly in schemes that around the following job creation required infrastructure and investment and industry representatives and its affiliates have begun to campaign involved in the industry by providing the steel industry as a serious attempt to that these works can proceed. This present position and its future. 'That the NSW government should take steps to encourage, with significant economic incentives, a solar marketing scheme similar to those operating in a number of other countries, to examine the entry of the state into the field of manufacture and sale of the products. And to complement its plans to create a 'steel' into a 'smoking, radiated' the USA also realized nuclear war plans against any and every country.

Further to these recommendations, the Hunter Region Community Forum and its affiliates have begun to campaign around the following job creation proposals:

- Support for an inquiry into the steel industry crisis to investigate causes, the present position and its future.
- Support for a broadly based and representative regional committee to convene public meetings, seminars, workshops and industry conferences.
- Support for steel industry training as a means of retraining and job security for steel workers.
- Support for a 'steel education' programme to provide information to the public on steel production and the local steel industry.
- Support for a 'steel information' service to provide information to the public on steel production and the local steel industry.
- Support for a 'steel research' programme to provide information to the public on steel production and the local steel industry.
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The USA has displayed a continued will to power in the post-war period which has found expression in a globally based nuclear weapons system and the export of terror and economic oppression.

The concept of theatre nuclear war has emerged as one of the ways in which the use of nuclear weapons might be limited, in most of the potential theatres, escalation to strategic (intercontinental) nuclear war would be an overwhelming risk.

Glossary

Theatre of tactical nuclear war

The concept of theatre nuclear war has emerged as one of the ways in which the use of nuclear weapons might be contemplated, in most of the potential theatres, escalation to strategic (intercontinental) nuclear war would be an overwhelming risk or 'local' conflicts.

Counterculture: Nuclear first-strike attack which eliminates effective retaliation.

ICBM: Intercontinental ballistic missile.

MIRV: Multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle, a multiple warhead missile capable of striking at several targets.

MTC: Multiple Theater Nuclear War (MTNW)

Miniball: Small nuclear warhead for use in battlefield operations.

NME: Non-Military Entity

NSC: National Security Council

START: Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty

SALT: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks

START: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks

Strategic nuclear weapons: Very long range weapons.

Theatre nuclear weapons: Intermediate-range weapons.

Tactical nuclear weapons: Short-range weapons intended for battlefield use.

Wernher von Braun: Military alliance of Western Europe and North American countries.

Gentlemens Agreement: An agreement that the USA would not attempt to protect the Persian Gulf and that the UK would not attempt to protect the Indian Ocean.

President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) was a plan to develop a missile-defense system to protect the USA from nuclear attack.

The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) were negotiations between the USA and the USSR to limit the growth of their nuclear arsenals.

The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) was a bilateral agreement between the USA and the USSR to reduce their nuclear arsenals.

The Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) was a proposal by President Ronald Reagan to develop a system to defend against nuclear missiles.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is an international treaty aimed at preventing the spread of nuclear weapons.

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By Wieslaw Lichacz

Toxic liquid wastes have been produced in military and agro-industrial complexes over the past century. The rate of production and the consequent dangers to environmental and public health have reached worldwide crisis levels. Recent disasters involving intractable wastes produced by such industries have occurred in Seveso in Italy, at Love Canal near Niagara Falls, USA, and in Hungary. Closer to home, at the Willawong dump near Brisbane, stored toxic wastes have touched the Brisbane River.

A citizen's revolt is rapidly becoming evident, with increasing awareness and concern about the effects of chemicals such as dioxin, agent orange, pesticides and heavy metals. Sydney has witnessed intense local residents' resistance to the siting of a hazardous liquid waste treatment plant at Castlecrag and a high temperature incinerator in Fairfield, Wieslaw Lichacz works with Friends of the Earth (Sydney). Thanks to New Wonders and Herbert Bouckamp of the Total Environment Centre for their assistance.

Both working-class and semi-rural suburbs west of Sydney. Avalon, near Goolongong in Victoria, was the site of another incinerator proposal which met active resident opposition.

Well before any legislation was enacted to control the handling of hazardous wastes in Australia, the manufacture of agricultural chemicals, pesticides, plastics, paint, petroleum and paper, and the metalliferous industries produced toxic wastes which were stored or disposed of around urban industrial areas. Some of these wastes included polychlorinated biphenols (PCBs), chlorinated hydrocarbons such as pesticides and their breakdown products, organic wastes such as solvents and oils, cyanides, and physiochemical wastes including acids, alkalis, heavy metal solutions, inert wastes such as cement and lates, and biological wastes from grease traps and tanneries.

In December 1969 most local councils in Sydney ceased accepting liquid wastes in their landfill tips as a measure to prevent environmental pollution. Many industries, faced with expensive storage solutions, inert wastes such as cement and lates, and biological wastes from grease traps and tanneries.

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that leakage is occurring. After recent periods of heavy rain, Friends of the Earth USA has received some samples of discharges from the dump show evidence of surface leakage.

On 20 December 1976, landowners campaigned witnessed a horrifying explosion at the dump in which a man unloading some solid waste into one of the waste cells was killed. Shortly after, the witnesses were on a ‘safety tour’ of the dump, and the huge explosion lifted the back of their car. Local residents have reported hearing a series of explosions at the dump and have witnessed a ‘black flood’, like burnt paper, coming from the dump area.

The landfill operation was designed as an establishment of a liquid waste treatment plant. Ten hectares of land are consumed annually at Castlereagh — land which can never be used again. Stockpiles of toxic organic materials which are not accepted for landfill continue to grow.

Since 1975, residents have been concerned with finding a solution. Early in 1982 an environmental impact statement (EIS) was released in which the impacts of a hazardous waste incinerator were described. The report was authored by the MWDA, the engineer consultants, and consultants from the Federal government.

Serious questions have been raised about the effectiveness of the pricing of the government’s sale to the commercial sector of the waste incinerator. In the early 1970s, the report contained no data on the environmental impact of the incinerator. A provision in the casting which allows for the bypassing of the stack gas scrubbers in the event of an emergency, which would result in the release of toxic gases into the air. Emergencies could occur due to the processing of hazardous wastes.

The option of a drastic reduction in hazardous waste production cannot be evaluated. The MWDA has compiled a comprehensive survey of the quantities and types of hazardous materials generated in 1972, and found that 95 million litres of hazardous waste were produced annually. This was reduced to 68 million litres by 1981, less than ten years later. Some of the reasons given for this dramatic reduction included increased recycling of wastes to extract usable fractions and in-plant treatment at site facilities.

However, the MWDA still do not have a strong policy stance in their charter to encourage reduced waste production. A significant service is provided involving waste exchange between industries.

The public outcry forced the MWDA and the environment minister Eric Beauford to show the development application to the public. From May 1982, the residents’ group is now preparing a strategy in case of a packing of stored waste in the near future, and are calling strongly for the siting of the plant away from any residential area.

Resident safety in the handling of hazardous materials was ignored in the Wetherill Park EIS, and inadequate information was provided on all aspects of air pollution from the incinerator. A major part of the Fairfield residents’ case was doubts about the operating safety of an incinerator. Any toxic air pollutants from the incinerator would settle on highly populated areas. The Wetherill Park proposal, the MWDA has been defensive in the siting an incinerator; the authority clearly had an intent to place a plant away from all residential areas.

It has been repeatedly stated that an incinerator could not lie on any residential area will receive strong public opposition. It is now attempting to brush up its tarnished corporate image after the hostage reception to its incinerator and waste disposal proposals. At one stage a letter was released from the MWDA, which gave the impression that FOE Sydney members believed that NSW had “one of the most progressive waste disposal authorities in the world.” It was found they were misleading, a letter could have had the effect of instigating the active environment campaigns in Sydney’s suburban western suburbs.

FOE Sydney has not adopted a policy on the incineration of toxic waste. Some FOE members formed their own group, the Ecosystem Group, in response to FOE’s refusal to adopt a policy. They published a report, A Solution Nobody Wants which in its state.

Just as the flush toilet enabled water usage to become a separate part of the family home, so does a well designed treatment facility transform waste disposal into an appropriate urban activity.

The incinerator is an incinerator project that expresses confidence in the MWDA which is not shared by other environmental groups. The Wetherill Park EIS was referred to by the Ecosystem Group as “hysteric and maintained, FOE Sydney prefers to keep its options open at the moment and to avoid criticism from the MWDA.”
The nuclear industry is in trouble in the USA. The electricity supply industry has had its fingers badly burned—particularly since the March 1979 accident at Three Mile Island. Wall Street's disenchantment is not confined to nuclear power, but extends to the utilities themselves, which are wondering whether the radium they exhausted in the 1960s and 1970s can ever be exhausted. Energy is not a problem, but the cost of energy is, and the utilities are wondering if the energy they are producing is worth the money they are spending on it.

Wall Street has reacted to utility rate cancellations with cutthroat efficiency. The Public Service Company of New Hampshire, builders of the Seabrook plants, had their bond rating, already classed as "dismal", dropped still further. In spite of the pro-nuclear Reagan rhetoric, the rate of plant cancellations in the USA has not slackened. Since December 1980, seventeen plants have been cancelled. A further seven plants have been deferred, or have met difficulties.

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They get their visas if a just, no-discrimination campaigns. About protons against the Vietnam war. In the face of the Vietnam war. They are treating the root cause of the problem.

While they lounge in the shiny suits. Of the international airports, Sydney Film-makers' Cooperative.

This is in order to further a state of enforced passivity and compliance in the workplace. Although there is no doubt that most young women have always suffered from sexual harassment at work. All women experience the workplace. Although there is no doubt that most young women have always suffered from sexual harassment at work. All women experience.

They are now rather than politically motivated or institutional sexism. This is not to suggest that a boom in academic literacy is being accommodated.

When women who are not so articulate or well-researched material from a body with the backing of the entire trade-union movement. The style is at times perhaps too academic for the audience to whom it is directed, but the thrust of the guidelines – that workers should be in control of their working environment – is an excellent one.

The work of the ACTU-VTHC Occupational Health and Safety Unit is an important initiative by the trade-union movement, as it is the only independent institution in Australia which can take up the needs of the working class. The guidelines acknowledge that women are not the only group who frequently must feel overawed by the deluge of new chemicals appearing every year in industry. Workers now have authoritative, well-researched material from a body with the backing of the entire trade-union movement. The style is at times perhaps too academic for the audience to whom it is directed, but the thrust of the guidelines – that workers should be in control of their working environment – is an excellent one.

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From Trusteeship To ... Micronesia And Its Future

A joint publication of the Western Pacific Support Committee and Pacific Concerns Resource Centre, Honolulu, 1982, 68 pages, SUSA5.95 (soft cover).

For most people, nuclear weapons mean the ultimate holocaust. For the people of Micronesia nuclear weapons are part of their life. The islands of Micronesia joined the nuclear age in 1945 when the United States military bases and installations throughout the islands.

This book, which also contains beautifully coloured pictures of the Antarctic and its wildlife, is very well produced and well worth the price. To fight the battle for the Antarctic you need this book.

Bob McMillan

From Trusteeship To ... Micronesia and Its Future

The first part of the book is an introduction and a political status chronology which is in the same style as another publication of the Micronesian Support Committee, Marshall Islands, A Chronology, 1944-1981. The chronology begins with the granting of Micronesia to the USA in 1947 as the world's only 'strategic' trust territory. It then jumps to 1969 and follows the changes in USA policy on Micronesia, brought about by external pressure due to the appalling social and economic conditions on the islands. Even an investigative team sent by president Kenney in 1962 noted that 'per capita' Micronesian cash incomes were almost three times as high before the war as they are now. The chronology describes the steps in the negotiations for the Compact to June 1982, and devotes several pages to the Maranans which has opted for Commonwealth status with the USA. The negotiations for the Compacts have been convoluted and confusing but are by no means over. In fact the booklet, published in August 1982, is already out of date. Operation Homecoming, the occupation by over 1000 members of the Kwajalein Atoll Corporation of their home islands which commenced in June, has delayed the voting, scheduled for 17 August, on the Compact for Micronesia status with the USA. Authorities are concerned that the Marshall islanders may reject the Compact, a risk that they are not prepared to take.

The second part of the booklet looks at the Compact of Free Association, a booklet which the editors hope 'will stimulate discussion among the people who will be voting on the Compact of Free Association soon'.

The editors hope this booklet will save the reader time reading and a nuclear-free Pacific this booklet is a very useful and welcome contribution.

Christina Melaluka


The anti-discrimination laws have brought about the common law principle that 'two men may not stand between a man and his liberty'. But the concept of democracy and organisation to abolish war, the concept of freedom to live life worth living.

Ray Denning's introduction to Straight Left reflects Prichard's political writing. This collection is neither propaganda, but the distinction was made for the position of Editor/s of Chain Reaction, the national magazine of Friends of the Earth Australia. (Editors May there have been three people working as Editors.)

Chain Reaction covers a wide range of issues emphasising the politics of the environment, energy and resources.

The Editor currently work with collectives of volunteers in Melbourne and Sydney, and with the collective, determining content, organisation, managing the finances, distribution, and promotion of the magazine.

Applications/proposals are invited for the position of Editor/s of Chain Reaction. The magazine is published quarterly, goes to members of Friends of the Earth in Australia, other subscribers (including schools, unions, community groups, libraries and individuals) and is on sale at community centres and various retail outlets. We are planning for the magazine to be published six times a year commencing in 1983.

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19th century — which merely serve to isolate and punish those who do not readily assimilate into the mainstream prison community.

The Diary, written between September 1978 and March 1980, is a nightmare — a chronicle of vindictiveness and petty punishment inflicted by prison officers. Power is the name of the game, and Ray’s major weapon is to keep a record of every punitive technique he is subjected to, and the dates and places. The record is meticulous and obsessive. He is repeatedly charged through exercise, destroys his cell, and makes the last scheduled delivery of cocaine (his code name was “snowman”).

Lee, meanwhile, was developing his drug trafficking expertise. His career was up and down. He was caught a few times but managed to obtain mild sentences. While he was free, he made large sums of money, especially by his ability to get across the USA/Mexico border undetected.

Lee was the carrier. The transfers commenced in 1975 and continued to 1980. If the CIA had wanted to get rid of Boyce and Lee, the last scheduled delivery of USA espionage material would have been of marginal importance. The CIA monitored the telephone call between the USA Embassy and Lee, and ensured that the full details of Boyce’s transfers to the USSR were not revealed — partly to avoidifying the Australian government further.

Lee and Boyce had different agendas for their operations. Lee, who was on the run, was acquisitive. Lee received life imprisonment on two occasions for 30 years, and was eventually acquitted under Australian law. Meanwhile in October 1978, President Carter gave a description of the USA spy satellites. At last, the USA was officially admitting about their operations. This admission was prompted by a failure in the high technology of spy satellites. The human factor, the CIA, which can monitor a telephone call between US officials in Moscow and read the headlines of documents from spy satellite photographs, took two years to find out about the spy in their own midst and, even then that was because his carrier was found littering in Mexico City.

Lee’s arrest suggests that the CIA had been satisfied with Lee leaving the USA, rather than going to public trial. The CIA monitored the telephone call between the USA Embassy and Lee, the carrier who was on the run, and was eventually acquitted under Australian law. Meanwhile in October 1978, President Carter gave a description of the USA spy satellites. At last, the USA was officially admitting about their operations. This admission was prompted by a failure in the high technology of spy satellites. The human factor, the CIA, which can monitor a telephone call between US officials in Moscow and read the headlines of documents from spy satellite photographs, took two years to find out about the spy in their own midst and, even then that was because his carrier was found littering in Mexico City.

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that is, not tested on animals at all. This is that humans do not have the right to cause the suffering of another species in order to satisfy the wants of their own species. This kind of suffering is seen especially in AL’s main areas of concern: factory farming and laboratory animals.

For example, eggs are produced from chickens which spend their entire lives in tiny wire-floored cages measuring 30 cm by 45 cm. Three or four birds are cramped together in each cage, with their beaks mutilated to stop feather picking and cannibalism. In Queensland, in 1980, approximately 1700000 hens were kept in such a tiny cage. Yet there are economically viable alternatives which allow the birds to follow their natural behavioural pattern, and which do not cause the stress factors so prevalent in caged birds.

Broiler chickens live in deep-litter houses, crowded into sheds where dim lights may be kept on 24 hours a day to encourage the birds to eat so that they will be ‘ready’ at 7-8 weeks of age. They are then transported to a slaughter house, where they are hung by their feet on conveyor belts for up to 6 minutes before they are stunned, have their throats cut, and are dropped into scalding tanks. Many birds miss the stunner or have their throats cut incompletely. The recently published Amnedmont Report, from the UK, says that stunning is often ineffectual, and that some birds may miss both the stunner and throat cutting, and so are plunged fully conscious into tanks of scalding water. Animal liberation evidence strongly suggests that many poultry are treated like machines for converting grain protein to meat protein.

In England, shoppers boycotted veal because of a similar system. As a result, one of the major veal retailers converted to a straw system that has proved to be economically viable, as well as providing a system more suited to the calve’s behavioural pattern. AL(Qld) seeks similar support from the public to encourage the introduction of an alternative to the current factory farm conditions for pigs.

Dr Peter Hensworth of the Animal Research Institute of Victoria admits there has been insufficient regard paid to the social needs of the pig. (National Farmer 19 March 1981). AL(Qld) intends to ensure such disregard does not continue.

It is estimated that over 300 million animals are incarcerated in laboratories throughout the world each year. These animals are burned, blinded, poisoned, mutilated, stressed, starved, electrocuted, they die to test cosmetics, toiletries, household products, insecticides, weapons, alcohol and drugs, as well as being used for teaching aids and in research for studies and medicine.

Our immediate aim is to end the abolition of animal testing for cosmetic production. AL(Qld) is investigating the Australian market to ascertain which cosmetics can be classified as cruelty-free — that is, not tested on animals at any stage during production or not containing ingredients derived cruelly from animals. We will supply a list of these products upon request. AL(Qld) seeks legislation of cosmetics to show which are cruelty-free.

Our group also works for animals to suffer during transport, including those exported live for food, and we are working with politicians to amend the Animal Protection Act. Subcommittees work on the cruelty to animals in the fur trade, zoo and circuses, and to our wildlife.

To achieve our aims to alleviate (short term) and eventually stop (long term) the exploitation of animals for commercial gain, we seek:

• members to add strength to our lobbying;

• to educate the public about animal exploitation;

• to encourage the public to boycott goods produced through animal suffering, write letters to government and authorities which can implement the changes we seek, sign petitions on specific issues and join us in demonstrations and marches.

For further details about our work and membership, please write or telephone the above address.
Lost & Found

Is this the typewriter you could use for Chain Reaction?

Is this the pen you've always longed to draw with?

Is this your hand making phone calls for Chain Reaction?

Are these the scissors you'd like to edit stories with?

Chain Reaction

In Melbourne or Sydney you can join in the work on Chain Reaction. With a few hours a week lots can be done. Research, writing, photography, finding graphics, and of course office work. Prior experience is not necessary, you will get plenty with us. It is an excellent opportunity to use and learn skills. Phone (02) 211 3953 or (03) 63 6995.