

Chain Reaction

Friends of the Earth Australia

Number 37 April-May 1984

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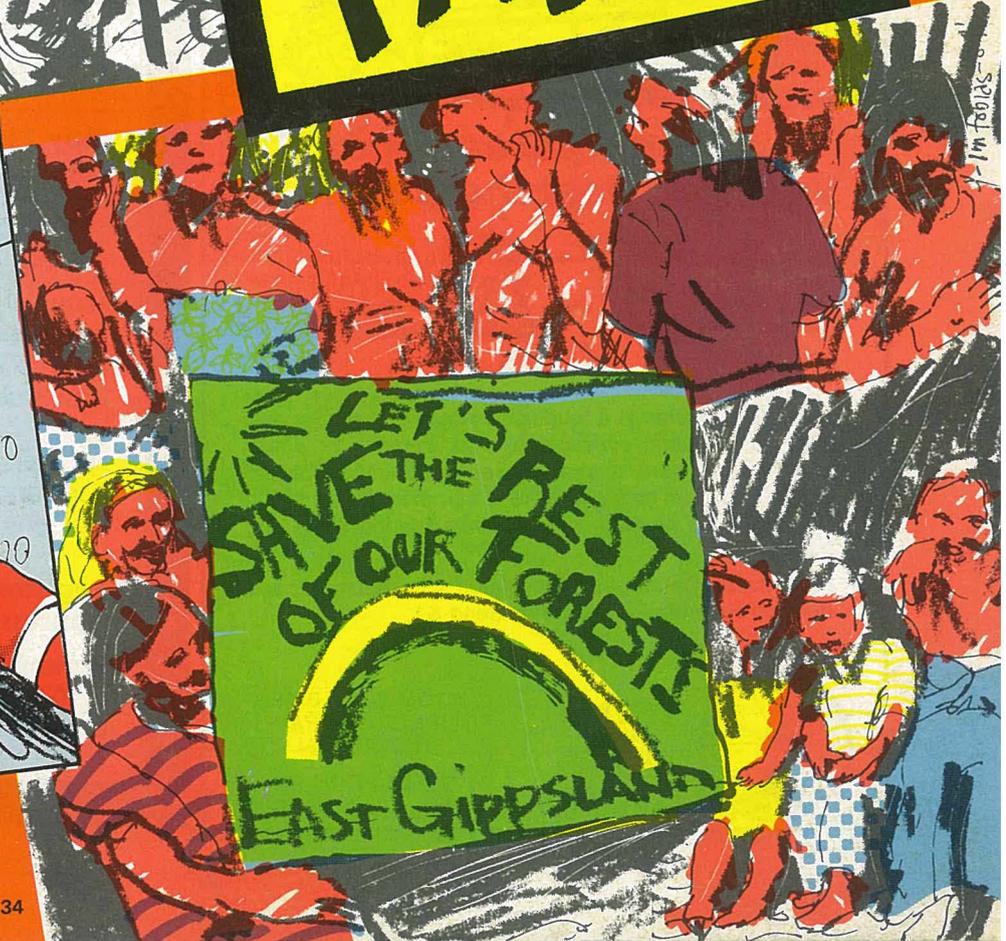
HOW TO SAVE THE WORLD. PART I.



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Registration: \$40
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Contact: Endangered Species Group,
ph 02-27 2523 or c/- Total Environment
Centre, 18 Argyle St, Sydney, 2000.

Chain Reaction

Established in 1975

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Editorial collective
Tim Darling, Peter Ellieffe, Eileen Goodfield, Jonathan Goodfield, Peter Gravier, Trish Luker, Fran Martin, Susan Mueller, Rosemary Nichols, Merella Rankin, Brendan Rea, Keith Redgen, Bess Secomb, Linnell Secomb, Richard Shelton, Jill Taylor, Wendy Varney

Production
Jeff Atkinson, Krista Bell, Chris Day, Penny Figgis, Ruth Ford, Mary Goodfield, Mike Hill, Ron Kousal, Geoff Law, Peter Lowe, Jackie Mansourian, Bob Muntz, Maeve Vella

Advertising
Trish Luker. Tel: (03) 63 5995 for rates and bookings

Distribution
Richard Shelton

Subscriptions
Tim Darling

Accountant
Eileen Goodfield

Reviews
Trish Luker, Keith Redgen

Earth News
Susan Mueller

Coordinators
Jonathan Goodfield, Trish Luker, Susan Mueller, Richard Shelton

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

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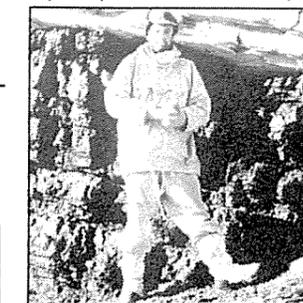


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All correspondence and enquiries
Chain Reaction, Room 14,
Floor 4, 37 Swanston St.,
Melbourne, Vic. 3000. Tel:
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TWO VIDEOS FROM THE SYDNEY FILMMAKERS CO-OP

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A 20 MINUTE VIDEO DOCUMENTARY ABOUT THE REMOVAL OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN FROM THEIR FAMILIES.

"Whitewashed" looks at how this removal shatters the individual child's identity and leads to a situation of cultural genocide.

Rental Price: \$20

Both available for rental and purchase from:
THE SYDNEY FILMMAKERS
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P.O. BOX 217, KINGS CROSS, NSW 2011
PHONE: (02) 33 0721

SETTLE DOWN COUNTRY

Over the past fifteen years, Aboriginal people throughout Central and Northern Australia have been moving back to their traditional country in small family groups. Described by white Australia as the outstations or homelands movement, Central Australian blacks refer to these places as their "country camps" or simply "settle down country."

Using archival footage, this documentary focuses on the Pintupi people who, in the 1950s, were removed from their desert land, 700 kilometres west of Alice Springs, to settlements such as Papunya in the Northern Territory. It was expected they would assimilate with Western culture.

Rental: \$40

The Forests of East Gippsland

"The Forests of East Gippsland" was produced by the Native Forests Action Council in conjunction with the Australian Conservation Foundation. The book is 32 pages (230 x 290 mm) and contains 65 colour plates including a recent satellite photo of East Gippsland.

The photos in the book depict four major plant associations to be found in areas proposed by N.F.A.C. and A.C.F. for inclusion in National Parks. Fifteen photographers have contributed to this work. There is a useful location map at the front of the book showing reference points and the areas proposed for inclusion in the National Park system.

ORDER FORM

Please send me _____ copies of

The Forests of East Gippsland @ \$8.95 per copy

Other items (specify) _____

I enclose cheque/money order/bankcard no. for \$ _____

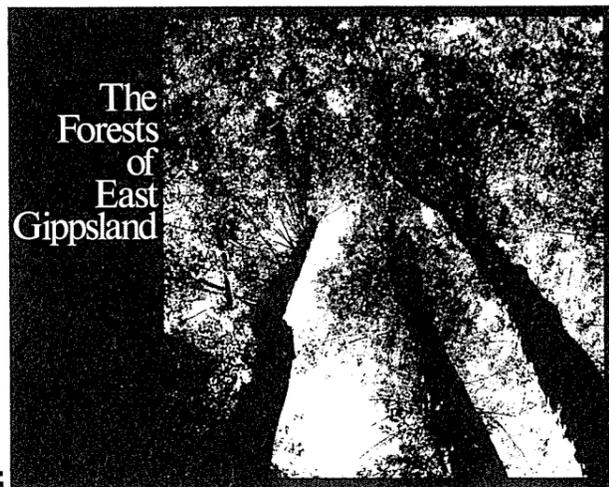
Name _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Send to Native Forests Action Council,
285 Little Lonsdale St.,
Melbourne, 3000.

I understand my money will be
refunded if I am not satisfied.



The
Forests
of
East
Gippsland

"This is a superb photo essay on the forests of East Gippsland. The brief text outlines some of the problems of conserving our last stands of mature mountain forest. A splendid effort by some dedicated people!"

—Karen Alexander—Wilderness Society

Funds derived from the sale of "The Forests of East Gippsland" will go to further the campaign to have these forests conserved in National Parks.

The Native Forests Action Council was established in 1976 to fight the proposal to establish a large scale woodchip industry in East Gippsland. Our basic concern is the conservation of native forests anywhere, and our current campaign is to see the establishment of adequate forest reserves in East Gippsland.

Too simple

So, men are the root of the world's problems. They've always been in power and under their domination they have brought the world to the edge of disaster. They have impoverished themselves by destroying the feminine spirit of every man. Fortunately, women have a nurturing, caring and reproductive role and this feminine spirit makes them closer to nature and 'concerned with human survival itself'. What do I learn from this simplistic view of society?

I learn that:

- Men are the enemy, and because every man is deficient having had this feminine spirit destroyed, every individual man is the enemy.
- Men in environmental movements are shams because without their feminine spirit they are unable to really care, and their early training for domination and power makes them concerned only to 'get on'.
- Society never changes because all through history men have been in power.

- Women are the saviours because the ability to really care and nurture is related to women's reproductive role.
- None of these things can ever change because society doesn't change.

What are the personal implications of this view?

- As a woman I must inevitably distrust men as individuals because they are shams geared to getting on.
 - In fact, I must write men off because lacking a reproductive role and given their early training they can never be really close to nature, never really care.
 - But given an apparent lack of evidence of change in the patterns of male domination I must feel pessimistic about changing our present society, so I tend to resort to utopian solutions — utopian because my projected society is not clearly related to the existing one and it is not at all clear how I get from one to the other.
- What are the political implications of this view?
- *Disastrous!*
 - The eco-politics movement is split on gender lines.

- Suspicion, distrust and alienation within the movement grows.
 - Pessimism about the possibilities of social change increases.
 - Cynicism about our ability to effect change escalates.
 - All this together with the search for utopias leads to the dissipation of energy . . . of course there can be no change. Of course social movements are ineffectual. Of course we should escape into the pleasure machine, the vegies, the spirit, our egos, our dreams.
- Is all this far fetched? Is eco-feminism really as simplistic as it seemed in the letters and article in *Chain Reaction 36*?

Talking to feminists it would seem that there are theoretically sophisticated forms of eco-feminism — forms which don't just react to men as individuals in an undifferentiated and ahistorical way. But if my experiences at Pine Gap are anything to go on, the simple version of eco-feminism illustrated by *Chain Reaction 36* has widespread support. This is dangerous both for feminism and

LETTERS

the peace movement.

The eco-feminism illustrated in *Chain Reaction 36* is reactionary. It upholds themes which feminists have fought for decades. It damages eco-political movements by increasing fragmentation, and can only misinform our political action.

Can we afford all this?

Terri Seddon
Newtown, NSW

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

The Stumblebum Syndrome

by Laurie Aarons

An important new book which

- Dissects ASIO's case against David Combe and Hope's whitewash of ASIO and ASIS
- Suggests why Hawke and the NISC swallowed ASIO's case against Combe, tracing its link with policy reversals on uranium and other key issues
- Traces the Security Establishment's history and its anti-union, anti-Labor bias
- Exposes the ASIO/ASIS threat to democracy and civil liberties.

Special Offer to *Chain Reaction* readers

An autographed copy of the book will be posted to you for \$5 (normal price posted is \$5.70). Send cheque/money order to:

Red Pen Publications, 4 Dixon St, Sydney 2000.

Name

Address

..... Postcode



The Wilderness Society is seeking 3 people with a demonstrated commitment for the environment and in particular the preservation of wilderness. These people must be able to work with a wide range of people, including skilled, unskilled, paid and voluntary, and also have an understanding of community involvement in environmental issues. All applicants are required to work in Hobart. Considerable travelling may be involved.

DIRECTOR

Applicants must have leadership skills, experience with media, in lobbying and campaign planning.

- Duties:
1. To provide overall leadership and direction.
 2. To help develop the Society's campaigns.
 3. To be the Society's main media spokesperson.
 4. To represent the Society at major meetings with community decision makers.
 5. To work closely with the Assistant Director ensuring the effective administration of the Society.

Salary: \$15,600 pa for 2 year contract, renewable.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

The applicant must have demonstrated personnel and administrative skills. Campaign, lobbying and media skills desirable.

- Duties:
1. To be responsible for the effective administration of the Society, including liaison between branches, personnel management, co-ordinating working groups, trouble shooting.
 2. To act as Secretary of the Society.

Salary: \$10,000 pa for 1 year contract, renewable.

BUSINESS MANAGER

The successful applicant will handle the business administration of the Society at a national level.

- Duties:
1. Advising national meetings and working groups of the financial practicalities of campaign proposals eg budgeting, fundraising in campaigns, effective use of funds, and supervising the financial administration of projects.
 2. To be responsible for the financial administration of the Society including liaising with Treasurer and finance officers.
 3. To fundraise including developing proposals for long term investments, handling donation drives and working closely with marketing groups ensuring adequate budgets, good marketing.

Salary: \$10,000 pa for 1 year contract, renewable.

Send written applications to the Co-ordinators, Wilderness Society, 130 Davey Street, Hobart, 7000, including the names and phone numbers of three referees, by May 1st, 1984. For further information telephone (002) 349366.

ALTERNATIVE DEFENCE STRATEGIES FOR AUSTRALIA

A National Conference at The University of Queensland

6-8 JULY 1984

The principal guest speaker is GENE SHARP, Director of the Program on Nonviolent Sanctions, Centre for International Affairs, Harvard University. His masterwork is a book titled 'The Politics of Nonviolent Action' and his most recent book is 'Making Europe Unconquerable: The Potential for Civilian-based Deterrence and Defence'.

Other speakers include PETER KING, Department of Government, University of Sydney, ANDREW MACK, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, RALPH SUMMY, Division of External Studies, University of Queensland, BRIAN MARTIN, Department of Mathematics, ANU, RACHEL SHARP, School of Education, Macquarie University.

This conference will provide an important forum for consideration of the nonviolent options in defence planning for Australia.



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AND CONTINUING EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND



Please send more details about the national conference, **ALTERNATIVE DEFENCE STRATEGIES FOR AUSTRALIA** to

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____

Send to Mr Peter Grayson
Continuing Education Unit
University of Queensland
St Lucia Qld 4067
Telephone (07) 377 4040

Risky Business

Leeds Animation Workshop (UK) 1981
Running time: 15 mins col/opt
Rental: \$15

RISKY BUSINESS is an amusing, lively and informative animated film which deals with health and safety at work. The film follows the perils and persistence of Carol, who becomes the union safety representative at her factory plant. Neither glib nor dry in its treatment of the problems in ensuring a safe working environment, the film raises important questions. How useful is protective clothing? Should we adapt the people to the factory or the factory to the people? How can we resolve the conflict between Safety and Profit?

Pretend You'll Survive

Leeds Animation Collective (UK) 1980
Running time: 8 mins col/opt
Rental: \$15

A vivid, thought-provoking animated film that looks at the catastrophic implications of the nuclear weapons industry. PRETEND YOU'LL SURVIVE tells the story of one woman and her nuclear nightmares. The film exposes the absurdity of "civil defence" in the face of nuclear warfare. The original music is a lively parody of patriotic songs of the forties. At first the heroine is lulled by glossy images of consumerist delights, then she is placated by illusions of survival after a nuclear explosion. Finally her fear and dread are directed into positive political action. She realizes we must "Protest and Survive."

Both films are available for sale or rental from:

Sydney Filmmakers Co-operative

(P.O. Box 217, Kings Cross, NSW 2011. (02) 330721

EARTH NEWS

Cultural boycotts

The Campaign Against Racial Exploitation (CARE) held its 1984 national conference in Melbourne on the weekend of the 10 - 11 March. The conference called for an intensification of action in support of the cultural, sporting and economic boycott of South Africa.

CARE national convenor, Jim Gale, reported that the cultural boycott had been effectively launched in Australia by the picketing of Elton John during his recent visit. In 1983 Elton performed at a number of concerts in Bophuthatswana, South Africa, against the cause of the anti-apartheid movement and the United Nations declaration of a cultural boycott.

Jim Gale commented: This kind of action is already underway in Europe and North America and has the support of many leading entertainers. It is a movement that will grow, and it has the effect of making many people think for the first time about apartheid.

The meeting was addressed by Eddie Funde, Chief Representative to Australasia and the Pacific for the African National Congress (ANC) - an organisation promoting racial equality throughout Africa. He called for an immediate cessation of new Australian investment in South Africa and an end to the importation of goods from South Africa which Australia itself produces.

It is ridiculous for Australia to be importing iron and steel, knitted yarn, fish, fruit concentrate and even coal from South Africa. Why are these goods being sought by some Australian importers? Because they are cheap due to the super-exploitation of black South African workers. So they suffer and at this end Australian workers lose their jobs. The answer is to exclude these imports, put pressure on the apartheid system,



Frozen moment

In Melbourne recently a group of people from Project Iceberg boarded the USS Schofield during a 'goodwill visit' and unfurled a banner over the railing. The group, which concentrates on direct action, began in Perth, where visits from nuclear-powered and armed ships have become a regular occurrence. This is the first action in Melbourne.

and ultimately benefit the working people in both countries.

Funde reminded the meeting that 1984 has been declared by the African National Congress 'The year of women of South Africa.'

It is the 30th anniversary of the inception of the Federation of South African Women. This multi-racial group of Indian, African and white women was established to campaign against the 'pass law' which requires all women to carry identification cards.

Within South Africa women's organisations will be intensifying their struggle against apartheid in response to the call which has gone out from the ANC. Women in Australia are urged to lend their active support to their sisters, many of whom suffer triple oppression in South Africa - as women, as workers, and as blacks.

The CARE meeting passed a number of resolutions on

Aboriginal, Southern African and general race issues in Australia. They pointed, in particular, to an upsurge in propaganda by racist groups and pledged the work of CARE and its affiliates to combat this.

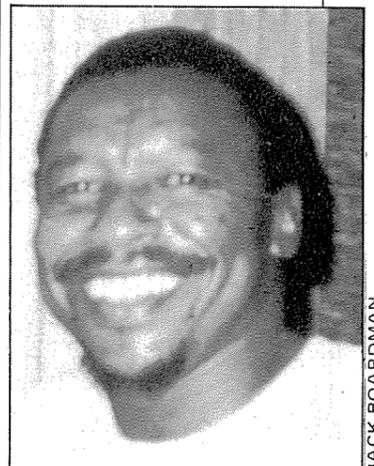
The key Aboriginal issue discussed at the conference was the pressure being placed on the South Australian government to weaken the Maralinga Land Rights Bill. Jim Gale said:

There are now fears that pressure from mining interests may result in the Maralinga Bill being reshaped into a form that creates a dangerous precedent for all Aboriginal claims. We know that proposals unacceptable to Aboriginals such as mining exploration without compensation, the immediate drawing up of a register of sacred, and therefore secret, sites and the vesting of the final decision on mining with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs are being talked about. We support the Bill in the form

that it was when it was presented to and agreed by the Aboriginal community involved.

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

Eddie Funde.



JACK BOARDMAN

EARTH NEWS



DEBORAH KELLY

Civil servant jailed

Sarah Tisdall, a junior civil servant in the British Foreign Office was sentenced to six months' imprisonment under the *Official Secrets Act* in early April this year (1984) for leaking two documents

from the department to the daily *Guardian* newspaper. The documents dealt with the expected arrival of Cruise missiles from the USA and the Defence Secretary, Michael Heseltine's political strategy for informing the House of Commons of their arrival. Having published one of the documents, the daily *Guardian* was later forced by the High Court to hand it back, and its return enabled police to identify Tisdall. The second doc-

ument was destroyed. On the prosecution's own admission, the disclosure of the documents represented no threat to national security. Despite this, the imprisonment has sparked off a major public debate about the nature of government under Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. The sentence, against which Tisdall is appealing, was swiftly condemned as savage, unjust and disproportionate. Others who have appeared in court charged under the Act have

escaped prison sentences for publishing material far more sensitive. The leader of the Labour Party, Neil Kinnock, described the prosecution as malevolent and said that the decision to charge her, but not the *Guardian*, showed the mixture of malice and weakness that was characteristic of bullies. It was clearly intended to warn everyone that there was 'a new convention in our country, a convention of authoritarianism', he said. Source: *Guardian Weekly*, 1 April, 1984.

Partizans

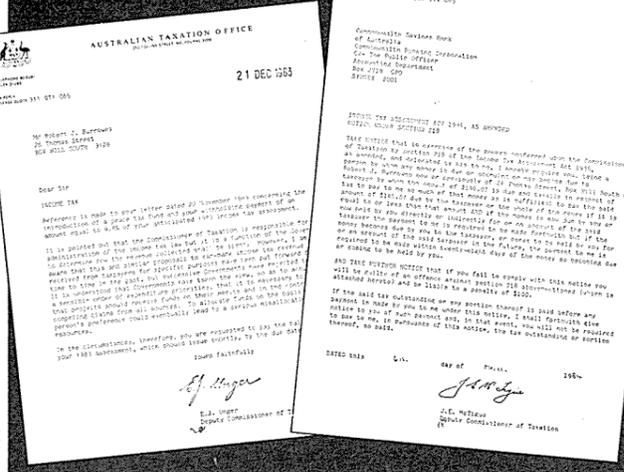
After food production, mining comes second as the most financially significant activity on Earth. There are few groups concerned with the consequences of mining at large, rather than the effects of one or two specific mines. The Centre for an Alternative Mining Policy in Wisconsin, USA, is the longest standing. Then there's the Aboriginal Mining Information Centre (AMIC) in Melbourne of course, and the excellent Raw Materials Group in Sweden. But only Partizans in London has ever attempted to coordinate transnational action on mining issues. (If we exclude, that is, the few tries at halting the export of Australian yellowcake in the seventies and its import into Britain and the USA.) It does so primarily by focussing on the world's most diversified mining corporation, Rio Tinto-Zinc (RTZ). In the past eighteen months, however, Partizans has itself diversified, to take on British

Petroleum, and that company's involvement in Roxby Downs uranium mine. Given money, it is prepared to spread its wings further. Partizans was the brainchild of people working in the Aboriginal support group, Colonialism and Indigenous Minorities Research and Action, (CIMRA), in 1978 who were asked by Mick Miller, Joyce Hall and Jacob Wolmby of the North Queensland Land Council to 'do something' about the parent of CRA Ltd. At that time CRA held a large minority proportion of the huge Weipa bauxite mine in Cape York province. (Now CRA has the lion's share.) 'Doing something about RTZ' now means coordinating reports on the activities of RTZ's 700-odd world subsidiaries and channelling information back to communities affected by its activities. It also means assisting local and regional anti-nuclear groups working on disinvestment campaigns. (RTZ produce more uranium than any other corporation in the world). The Greater Lon-

don Council (GLC) are about to disinvest their 670 000 share in RTZ after three years solid campaigning. Partizans also works with students on anti-recruitment drives - which have already been successful in London and Cambridge in keeping the company out of the groves of Academe. Partizans most spectacular event was probably the International Tribunal of 1981, where a jury representing shareholders in the corporation sat to hear representatives of Aborigines, Namibians, Inuit, Guaymi (Panama), whose people have been undermined, or threatened by one of the RTZ tentacles. That year and succeeding years saw significant representations of 'dissident' shareholders at company annual general meetings. Nearly 80 turned up in 1983, and 30 were unceremoniously bundled out of the 1982 meeting after demanding that chairperson Tuke keep the meeting going. The meeting had been halted when Shorty O'Neill of the

National Federation of Aboriginal Land Councils and Jimmy Biendurri of the Kimberley Land Council rose to put awkward questions about CRA's desecration of the Barramundi Dreaming at Lake Argyle. There's now a Greenham Common women's group focussing on RTZ who hold a vigil militantly outside the company's headquarters in London every week. Two of the group are about to take the company to court for assault at the 1982 annual general meeting. It's a great deal for a group of no guaranteed income, two half-time unpaid workers and a bi-monthly news-sheet (*Parting Company*) to send around the world. Especially when you're broke! *Parting Company* is sent to supporters for two pound a year (add two pound for air-mail). All other donations are very welcome. Contact: Partizans, 218 Liverpool Road, London N1 1LE, England; Aboriginal Mining Information Centre, PO Box 273, Healesville, Vic 3777. Tel: (059) 62 3368.

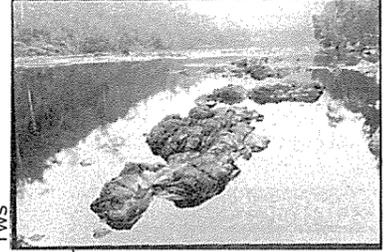
War tax refusal



The Taxation Office has emptied the bank account of Robert Burrows. On 22 November 1983, he refused to pay 9.8% of his income tax assessment for 1982-1983. In a letter

to the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation and all federal members of parliament, he explained his action as a protest against Australia's military expenditure and its support for the nuclear arms

The big apple park



TWS

of the Central Plateau. Declaration of the park would involve the doubling of the present World Heritage National parks area. The concept is magnificent: 1.7 million hectares of wild Tasmania, ranking with Yellowstone in the USA as one of the great national parks of the world. Unfortunately, some of the area is under threat: the southern and eastern forests face woodchipping, dams and uncoordinated tourist developments. To beat these dangers, the Wilderness Society is promoting the tourist potential of the area in its pristine state. Its potential is unsurpassed in Australia. The society is employing full-time activists to prepare a management plan and compatible tourist proposals for presently accessible areas. The society will, of course, continue to oppose further intrusions into wilderness. The plan has been rejected out-of-hand by the Tasmanian government, but work continues to promote the park concept in Tasmania and on the mainland. Contact: Western Tasmania National Park Campaign, The Wilderness Society, 130 Davey St, Hobart, Tas 7000. Copies of the proposal are available for \$5.

race. 'This support is evident through the government's promotion of uranium mining and acceptance of foreign military bases on Australian soil', he said.

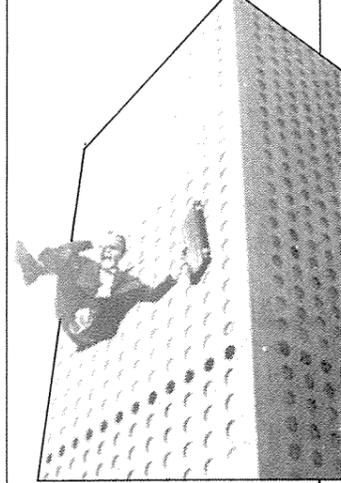
In 1982 - 1983, 9.8% of the Australian government's budget was allocated to military expenditure. Mr Burrows withheld this proportion of his tax assessment (\$146.07) and instead donated five equal shares of the money to organisations dedicated to ending the nuclear arms race and to alleviating some of the problems which the world's massive military spending helps to cause - Third World poverty, environmental destruction and widespread social injustice.

In his letter, Burrows requested consideration of the introduction of a Peace Tax Fund so that people who had a conscientious objection to paying for war could direct their money to a peace and development fund. He has had strong support for this idea, which is being promoted in some overseas countries as well, from several members of parliament.

In response to his war tax refusal, Burrows received a letter from the acting Deputy Commissioner of Taxation, James McTigue, telling him that his bank had been ordered to pay \$146.07 from Burrows' accounts to the tax office. A copy of section 218 of the Income Tax Assessment Act, which the acting Deputy Commissioner said gave him the power to take such action, was attached.

Burrows immediately went to his bank but was told by the acting manager of the Box Hill branch of the Commonwealth Bank, Kel Twyford, that his cheque and savings accounts had been cleared that morning by order of the acting Deputy Commissioner. Burrows had however anticipated such action and had withdrawn most of his money from the accounts; the tax office only received \$36.19 of the \$146.07 it was owed. Contact: Nonviolent social change activists interested in tax refusal as a direct action are invited to contact Robert Burrows, 26 Thomas St, Box Hill South, Vic 3128.

DON'T JUMP!



We know government and big business are secretive but don't let working in there get you down. Pass information on to us so *Chain Reaction* can let the public know.

SUBSCRIBERS

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

CONTACT: Nonviolent social change activists interested in tax refusal as a direct action are invited to contact Robert Burrows, 26 Thomas St, Box Hill South, Vic 3128.

EARTH NEWS

Not garbage



J GILLBANK

Recycling is a rapidly expanding field, as more and more people realise that recyclable materials are not garbage but commodities. Governments, businesses, community groups and consumers are now becoming aware of the benefits of recycling to the economy and to employment, as well as to the environment. The question today is not why to recycle, but how and where to recycle.

The Recycling Information Centre is now in operation at Friends of the Earth (Collingwood) and has been set up to provide access to the latest information on all forms of recycling — in industry, on the streets and in the home. It is funded by a six-month establishment grant from the Victorian government's Employment Initiatives Program. Workers at the centre are collecting information on recycling methods and systems from around the world, as well as maintaining a network of contacts with existing recycling services in Melbourne and rural Victoria.

Contact: A catalogue of books and magazines on recycling is available from The Recycling Information Centre, 366 Smith St, Collingwood, Vic. 3066.

Cruise into Fremantle

This year (1984) visiting warships and submarines will bring Cruise missiles into Fremantle harbour. (WA)

In the past, visiting warships and submarines have carried nuclear weapons, but they are intended to be used primarily against other naval craft. With Cruise missiles this will radically change. Cruise are an offensive land attack weapon and they will give many classes of surface warships and submarines a strategic missile capability.

The significance of this should not be underestimated. At a time when the Australian federal government is quibbling over dry docking of nuclear warships, the role

being played by them is being upgraded in an unprecedented manner.

The presence of Cruise missiles on visiting warships and submarines further undermines the Hawke government's credibility in its support of nuclear disarmament and the declaration of the Indian and South-west Pacific Oceans as Zones of Peace. It also indicates the inability of successive Australian governments to pursue independent foreign policy and defence initiatives. Australia is being webbed more deeply into USA strategic military planning.

Source: *People for Nuclear Disarmament (Fremantle) Newsletter*, March 1984.

Give back Gimbat

There is still a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the future of Kakadu National Park. When the proposal for Kakadu Stage 2 went through federal cabinet earlier this year it contained proposals for a large tourist park.

The idea of a tourist park in such a sensitive area has caused some consternation as it was also suggested that tourist impact could be minimised by spreading tourism throughout the park. The ecological and cultural significance of the area was certainly not considered — a widespread tourist park would do much more damage to the region than concentrated development in less sensitive areas. The proposal which passed through federal cabinet cannot be seen as an acceptable statement of use for the park.

Another area of concern is the establishment of an advisory committee to look at management of Kakadu National Park. The advisory committee is Darwin-based and has no Aboriginal representation.

The good news is that on 13 March, 1984, the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (ANPWS) issued a notice of intention for the revocation of the Gimbat and Goodparla pastoral leases. This is the first step in the

incorporation of Gimbat and Goodparla into the national park. The ANPWS are inviting public representation to ensure the incorporation of Gimbat and Goodparla into the national park.

Action: for further information, contact Sue Mueller c/- *Chain Reaction*.

Opposition ban

The United Kingdom Ministry of Defence is investigating ways of dealing with civil servants and members of the armed forces known to disagree personally with government policy.

The issue was discussed in February at a meeting of senior ministry staff chaired by Sir Clive Whitmore, former principal private secretary to the Prime Minister.

Senior officials want to identify staff who are not right- or left-wing extremists but who are opposed to the policies of the present administration. Under the new proposals, any civil servant who is a member of the opposition parties — or even suspected of being one — could be removed from a job which is regarded as sensitive. Since defence policy is the subject of widespread controversy, the restriction could go well beyond membership of, or sympathy with, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

Source: *Guardian Weekly*, 26 February and 11 March, 1984.

Chain Reaction

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

Activist Contacts

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

If your group wants to be part of the 1984-85 Activist Contacts, send us information on your group including contact address and telephone and telex numbers. Send these details as soon as possible, by 7 May 1984 at the latest, to: Activist Contacts, *Chain Reaction*, Room 14, Floor 4, 37 Swanston St, Melbourne, Vic. 3000.

Chain Reaction

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

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FRIENDS OF THE EARTH



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 tomorrow. We need your support now to continue our work. Join us.

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Telephone

Membership fees: NSW \$20 (\$13 concession); Vic \$24 (\$18); WA \$15 (\$7.50) or whatever you can afford; Qld \$15 (\$10); SA, NT, Tas, ACT \$10 or whatever you can afford. Chain Reaction is sent free to all members of Friends of the Earth and some groups also send members newsletters and provide discounts at their bookshops. Enquire from your local FOE group. Make cheques payable to Friends of the Earth and post to the group nearest you - see list above. Donations are very welcome.

- ▶ Friends of the Earth groups
- ADELAIDE** 120 Wakefield St, Adelaide, SA 5000
- BLUE MOUNTAINS** 9 Harvey St, Katoomba, NSW 2780. (047) 82 2701
- BONANG** Tingalla, via Bonang, Vic 3888
- BRISBANE** PO Box 667, South Brisbane Qld 4101 (07) 44 1616 AH
- CANBERRA** PO Box 1875, Canberra City, ACT 2602; 116 Lewin St, Lyneham ACT 2602 (062) 47 8868
- COLLINGWOOD** 366 Smith St, Collingwood, Vic 3066 (03) 419 8700
- DARWIN** PO Box 2120, Darwin, NT 5794 (089) 81 6222
- ELTHAM** PO Box 295, Eltham, Vic 3095 (03) 435 9160
- LA TROBE UNIVERSITY** c/- The SRC, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Vic 3083 (03) 479 2977
- MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY** c/- SRC, Macquarie University, North Ryde, NSW 2113
- NEWTOWN** PO Box 169, Newtown, NSW 2042 (02) 517 2139
- NORTHERN YORKE PENINSULA** c/- Valinor, 734 Moonta Mines, Moonta, SA 5558 (088) 25 2813
- OAKLEIGH** 69 Waratah St, South Oakleigh, Vic 3166
- PENINSULA** PO Box 319, Seaford, Vic 3198
- PERTH** 790 Hay St, Perth, WA 6000 (09) 321 5942
- PORT PIRIE** PO Box 7, Port Pirie, SA 5540 (086) 34 5269
- RYDE** 18 Kokoda St, North Ryde, NSW 2113 (02) 88 2429
- SYDNEY** Floor 2, 787 George St, Sydney, NSW 2000 (02) 211 3953
- UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND** c/- SRC, University of New England, Armidale, NSW 2350
- UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY** PO Box 364 Wentworth Building, University of Sydney, NSW 2006
- UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA** Guild of Undergraduates, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, WA 6009
- WHYALLA** 77 Meares St, Whyalla, SA 5600 (086) 45 2457
- CHAIN REACTION** Room 14, Floor 4, 37 Swanston St, Melbourne, Vic 3000 (03) 63 5995
- NATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER** Nick Thieberger, c/- 366 Smith St, Collingwood, Vic 3066 (03) 419 8077

Indian fictions

Interview with Salman Rushdie



INDIAN & FOREIGN REVIEW

INDIAN & FOREIGN REVIEW

Salman Rushdie was born in Bombay in 1947, the year of Indian independence. At the age of 14 he moved to Britain and has since published a number of books. His Booker prize-winning novel *Midnight's Children* provides a fictional account of the struggle for Indian independence and a critique of the subsequent rule of Indira Gandhi, focussing on the sterilisation programs carried out during 'the Emergency' in the early seventies.

In March this year (1984) he visited Australia as a speaker at Writers Week during the Adelaide Arts Festival. *Chain Reaction's* Susan Mueller spoke to him in Melbourne.

I was quite fascinated by the characterisation of Indira Gandhi in your book, finding it unusually critical. Would it be right to say that you see her as stifling a lot of the potential of Indian people? Yes, certainly in the period which the

book deals with. There's no doubt that 'the Emergency', as she called it, was a period of totalitarianism, of state terror, in which appalling things were done to people. At the moment there's an enormous revisionist impulse at work in India to falsify what happened during those years. Mrs Gandhi now claims that there were no forced sterilisations during the Emergency, which is a straightforward lie because there were hundreds. I think that when politicians start making these kind of fictions it becomes incumbent on fiction writers to start telling the truth. A reversion takes place where the people who normally make up stories are obliged to tell the truth, while the people who are supposed to tell the truth make up stories.

I think the problem with Mrs Gandhi is deeper than just the Emergency because what's been happening in India gradually since independence is the creation of a monarchy disguised as a democracy. Indira is much more an absolute ruler than her father ever was. She has created a kind of miasma around herself which I think is clearly very unhealthy for a country which claims to be democratic. It is obvious that she is now trying to establish

succession for the next generation. This is like the Kennedy dynasty only much more unscrupulous and much more powerful.

So the sterilisation of *Midnight's Children* was real as well as symbolic? Yes, you see, what I tried to do, not just in the book but in most of what I do, is to find images which make more intense things that really happen. It seems to me that if you do it like that, using very heightened metaphor, it is effective because it gets through. Saul Bellow once said that 'human beings do not grasp what is not fiercely expressed' and that, I suppose, is what I'm doing - finding a more fierce expression of what we all know or suspect to be true. If these images did not have that kind of root in reality then they wouldn't be interesting, they'd just be whimsical and sort of self-indulgent.

I also wanted to ask you about Mahatma Gandhi, who is greatly romanticised by the peace movement and other movements in Australia. I find this strange because I have read some quite critical things about Gandhi's use of nonviolence where it's described as a method aimed at maintaining the Indian elite.

There's two things to say about Gandhi which actually contradict each other. He's a very, very complex figure. There's no doubt that what he did do was to make the independence movement a mass movement in a way that it was not before he came on the scene. It is therefore important to say that the independence of India was made possible by the mass base that he established. However, there is no doubt that Gandhi, if you look at him in conventional political terms, is a figure of the centre right and was, for instance, financed all his life by the richest people in India.

At one stage Gandhi was called in to mediate in a textile strike. He was called in not by the workers but by the bosses and his reaction to the workers' strike was to go on hunger strike himself, threatening not to come off till they went back. Such was the respect in which he was held that they did. Now, it is quite possible to see this as a betrayal of the trust that the people had in him. Gandhi's opposition to trade unionism in India is well known - he opposed it always and fiercely. So he's a very odd fish.

What he's not, in any conventional sense, is a saint. I think the problem starts in India, because in India we have always had a tendency to deify recently late, great men - sometimes before they're even dead. Gandhi is an interesting man, a very important historical figure. There are many things for which one should be grateful to him and there are many things for which one should criticise him fiercely - just like any other political figure. It would be nice if he could be discussed just as a human being - the problem is that it's almost impossible, in India, at least.

I find the situation rather incongruous. So much of the peace movement is concerned with challenging social structures and yet these people too get caught up in a romanticised notion of Gandhian nonviolence.

The problem with nonviolence as a philosophy is that it didn't even work in India. It wasn't actually the thing that brought about the independence of India. Nehru's views were quite different to Gandhi's in this respect. He wasn't quite as insistent on the practice of nonviolence, although he used the rhetoric. Certainly the independence of India was achieved with some violence. Nonviolence was also effective in India, but it was a specific tactic used against a specific enemy at a specific moment and the idea that one can generalise from it is very very dangerous. When Richard Attenborough permitted the film *Gandhi* to be used to open the Philippines film festival the newspapers stated that the guerillas in the hills should learn Gandhi's message and come down and lay down their arms and proceed nonviolently. That's just an example of a situation

where, if one attempts to extrapolate the message of nonviolence indiscriminately, it can end up somewhat unfortunate.

Yes, I'm not sure that nonviolence is going to be the answer to the Nicaraguans or the people of El Salvador.

There are many cases in which it is just completely irrelevant. The problem is, that if one belongs to the peace movement, one is supposed to espouse the idea of peace. The problem with Gandhi and nonviolence is that it was effective in India because it had a meaning there - it grew out of a number of concepts integral to Indian philosophy and religion. What you have to do is find ideas which grow out of your own soil and not to borrow them.

Is there a peace movement in India?

It's rather worrying in a way. In India it's all too far away. They have other things to worry about, more immediate things, like starvation. The big issues in India at the moment are the growth of religious extremism and regionalism, which is raising fears of the Balkanisation of the country.

The bomb, although Indira is sort of a member of the nuclear club now, is not an issue in spite of attempts by some people to make it one. There is an attitude which is very common in many countries of the Third World which is that the peace movement in some way serves the interest of the people already in the nuclear club. Possession of nuclear weapons becomes a national pride. This is of course a terrible distortion, but it exists in the same way that many Eastern Europeans see the peace movement as an ally of totalitarianism. That is probably the major problem in the peace movement. So far we have not really succeeded in forming a united front across the Iron Curtain. So there is this problem that the peace movement is seen in Eastern Europe and the Third World in a somewhat different way.

Many people would argue that the biggest threat of nuclear war comes from the Third World.

I'm not sure that the biggest threat does come from that actually - I think the biggest threat clearly comes from the war game itself. It is clear that NATO is committed to first use of weapons - they even admit it. So the most dangerous nuclear power in the world at the moment is the Western alliance, not the Russians, not the Israelis, not the Iranians, not Gaddafi, but NATO. So no, I don't think the problem is in the Third World, the problem is in the so called 'First World'.

There's still an enormous amount of myth-making surrounding the nuclear industry.

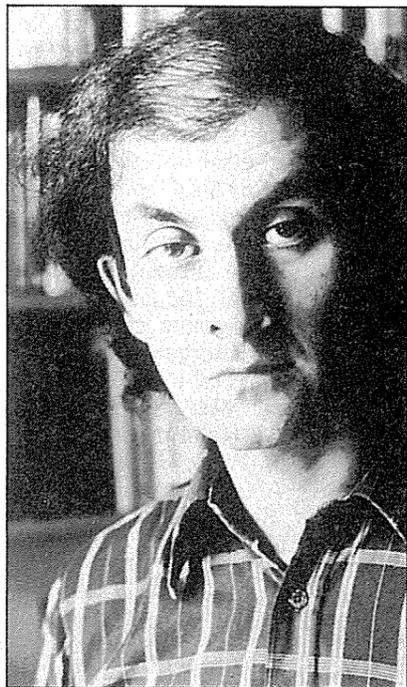
We live in a moment, especially in the West, when the right wing is very largely in control - England, America, Germany and others. When the right is

in power it uses this kind of language, so that's not particularly surprising. I agree there's a lot of mystification around nuclear weapons.

I remember seeing AJP Taylor, the historian, talking about nuclear weapons and he made a very simple point. He said that if you look at the history of weapons, all weapons starting from the sling-shot, the more weapons that exist the more certain it is that they will be used. It applies to sling-shots, cannons and it also applies to nuclear weapons. The idea that by somehow increasing the number you achieve some kind of balance of terror, which keeps the world safe, is a complete falsity. It's a kind of statistical certainty. If the numbers go on increasing, the possibility of use goes on increasing.

But the pro-nuclear lobby still has an enormous amount of resources to put up against the peace movement.

I agree, but I think things are changing. For instance, there's no doubt that in England in the last three to four years there's been an enormous shift in attitude against nuclear weapons. I think that it is important to exclude despair from one's point of view because despair serves the interests of your enemy. I think one of the problems of our age is that we have fallen into the trap of believing that entropy rules and that things always get worse. If you look at the history of the human race you see that what has happened is that things have not got unbelievably worse. Dentistry for instance has improved! The idea that we are helpless in the face of great forces seems to me to be necessary to resist.



Salman Rushdie.

HOW TO SAVE THE WORLD. PART I.

No we're not serious, but... we live in a time where the idea of saving the world is not an exaggerated concept. In the industrialised countries of the northern hemisphere ecological devastation is an issue of massive importance. Acid rain continues to poison waterways and forests; the growing nuclear arsenals threaten to destroy all life on the planet. A world economy which relies on blind development has led the world to the brink of ecological oblivion.

This ecological crisis has sparked a large number of campaigns over the last few years, both here and overseas. Our movement towards environmental devastation has motivated people to launch campaigns aimed at: preserving wilderness; stopping uranium mining and the nuclear terror; and encouraging sustainable resource use.

The seemingly unstoppable nature of the crisis has increased the urgency for effective, well-organised strategies to prevent it.

In the following pages are a series of four articles dealing with different aspects of campaigning.

- 'Know your friends, know your enemies', by Susan Mueller, argues the case for an overall strategy, for environmental activists, aimed at social change.
- 'Effective campaigning', by Leigh Holloway, follows through with practical advice on how to organise a campaign.
- Chris Harris's article, 'Managing the Media', is a more specific look at one aspect of campaign work.
- The article by Howard Ryan, 'Consensus - let's vote on it', challenges conventional thinking on consensus decision making.

This series of articles is by no means the last word on the issue of campaigning. We hope, however, that it will raise some questions about campaign practices in the past and promote discussion around these issues.

Know your friends,

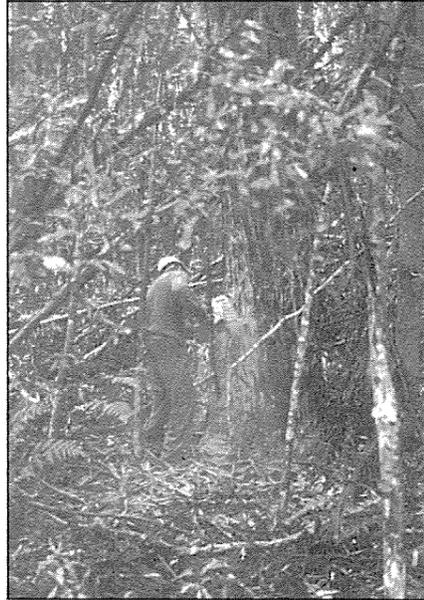
Recent discussions among members of the *Chain Reaction* collective have focussed on the socio-economic system of advanced Western society as a major cause of environmental destruction. It is important to start any discussion of environmentalism from an understanding of the society in which we live. The complexities of such an analysis are many, but without it our actions risk being indiscriminate and unsuccessful.

In this article Susan Mueller addresses some of the major problems associated with recent environmental actions and why it is important that environmentalists develop a strategy consistent with the causes of environmental destruction.

The issue of campaign effectiveness has emerged many times recently in discussions I have had with environmental activists. Many discussions began with criticism of the Nomadic Action Group and their involvement in actions in South-West Tasmania, at Roxby Downs, East Gippsland and in Canberra. Discontent revolved around the manner in which the Nomadic Action Group has taken up particular environmental issues for a short period of time, risking damage to the long-term campaigns of local groups. The Nomadic Action Group, often going under the banner of a local group, has gained substantial media coverage in each of these actions but their behaviour has been portrayed as anti-worker and elitist. Concern has also been expressed about their lack of consultation with local groups, the imposition on resources of these groups and their poor liaison and planning.

It is important that this discussion takes place as it reflects general underlying concern with the direction of the environment movement. It highlights within the movement, a lack of strategy for social change, isolation from other social movements and a lack of understanding about the processes which bring about environmental destruction.

Susan Mueller is a member of the Chain Reaction collective in Melbourne.



Logging in East Gippsland: a recent example of conflict between environmentalists and workers.

Environmental destruction occurs because the capitalist system demands that development and production continue for the maximisation of private wealth. In our capitalist society the profit motive means that resource development has occurred at an ever increasing rate. This obviously has very serious ramifications for the environment. Structural changes in many industries (forestry, mining and agriculture) has created unemployment and many more workers are in danger of losing their jobs.

As a result of this situation, environmentalists need to address this and other issues in their analysis. This has occurred in some areas of the environment movement. For example, the anti-uranium movement continues to discuss the problems of uranium mining with the trade unions. Many trade unionists belong to anti-uranium groups. There have also been attempts by environmentalists to build a working relationship with the timber unions. This is important because the reasons for unemployment in the timber industry and the causes of forest destruction are often directly related — more technology,

greater centralisation of saw mills, monopolisation of the industry by a few large companies, and the capital-intensive nature of industry.

However, building a working relationship between the timber unions and environmentalists is an extremely difficult task. It has certainly been complicated by the blockade of the Forest People (also known as the Nomadic Action Group) at Errinundra in eastern Victoria early this year. Conservationists felt that the action taken by the Forest People had irretrievably damaged any hope of talking to timber workers about the future of their jobs or arriving at a common strategy to protect employment and the viability of the local economies dependent on the timber industry.

The capitalist economic order and environmental presentation are incompatible. To apply ad hoc and indiscriminate action to a process as well entrenched as capitalism denies the logic of this incompatibility. It also denies the existence of other social problems which are indelibly linked with environment destruction. Unemployment and social inequality are examples of

ROB BLAKERS

know your enemies



CHRIS HARRIS

issues which should be included in any environmental strategy for social change.

If we operate on the analysis that environmental destruction is not isolated and is in fact inherent in any system based on the capitalist mode of production, then as environmentalists we should be looking at goals and objectives which are compatible with bringing about an end to capitalism.

Activists from Friends of the Earth (Canberra) in a paper called *A Strategy Against Nuclear Power* describe strategy as:

... linking the analysis of an issue with goals and objectives. Having chosen a strategy, it is implemented through appropriate actions. An action is a 'once-off' event such as a rally, march, blockade or lobbying a particular politician. A method, such as lobbying in general, refers to all actions of a certain type. Actions are coordinated together into a campaign. The campaign gives direction to a series of events.

The paper then goes on to point out that:

... the goal of stopping uranium mining must be closely linked to the goal of basic structural change in the state, capitalism, patriarchy and the division of labour ... The broader objectives for an anti-nuclear move-

ment must include mass participation in decision making rather than elite control, decentralising the distribution of political power into smaller, local groups, and bring about self-reliance based on environmentally sound technologies.

These objectives can be expanded to include the aim of social control of capital: ensuring that capital is directed into areas of social benefit through:

- the socially responsible use of technology;
- a policy of full employment stressing such principles as industrial democracy and worker cooperation;
- decentralisation and self management at the local community level;
- the provision of public services based on an understanding of local community and regional needs;
- the preservation of natural resources through recycling, the promotion of long-life goods with emphasis on repair and maintenance;
- safety and pollution controls which emphasise quality of life, preservation of the environment and safety of the work environment;
- a transport policy giving ready access

to amenities and fuel efficient forms of mobility (eg mass transit systems, bikes and pedestrians).

●an energy program based on efficient use of resources and decentralisation of energy production — through insulation, community heating programs, solar and wind power.

Social change however, does not occur simply because we have an understanding of the capitalist system and have identified a list of goals and objectives to work towards. The important thing is to put these things into a framework for participatory action. By action I don't mean the implementation of an ad hoc blockade which will have little overall benefit. Action in this context means becoming actively involved in the labour movement: consultation with community organisations; support of worker actions and publication of material. It means actively supporting actions which are aimed at bringing about a change to the capitalist order even if that activity cannot be immediately identified as related to preservation of the environment.

Environmentalists cannot afford to isolate themselves from other social movements any longer. Too often the aims of environmentalists and the aims of workers are portrayed by the media, governments and industry as conflicting. If it is understood that this is one method by which the capitalist class diverts conflict from itself then perhaps counter-productive actions such as the one at Errinundra in East Gippsland will no longer occur.

Action: The Total Environment Centre (TEC) will hold a one week intensive training course for environmentalists from 2 July to 6 July, 1984. The course will be held at the Namaaroo Conference Centre, Lane Cove, Sydney. It is designed to build up the skills of full-time and part-time workers from environment centres and offices around Australia.

Guest speakers will include Senator Colin Mason, Australian Democrats; Murray Wilcox QC; Frank Walker QC, MP; Robert Raymond, author and documentary filmmaker; Dr Bob Brown MP; P Prineaf, solicitor and environmental consultant; and Jim Somerville, treasurer of the National Conservation Council.

Through lectures and workshops the course will teach you how to lobby, how to penetrate red tape, campaign, raise funds, and use and improve environmental legislation.

People interested in attending the course or wanting further information can contact Terrye Vaughn at the Total Environment Centre, 18 Argyle Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000. Phone (02) 27 4714.

EFFECTIVE

Campaigning

AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATIONISTS succeeded in their efforts to protect the Franklin River wilderness.

What is the way to win? How can we become empowered? You may want to start action on an issue or join an existing campaign. Either way, it is important to understand the processes: how to develop a strategy, how groups can function well, what tactics to employ, and how to develop and maintain a vigorous style.

Leigh Holloway makes some suggestions for fun, well-organised and effective campaigning.

The author: Leigh Holloway has worked full-time on environmental campaigns in Australia for the past twelve years, most recently as fundraiser with The Wilderness Society.

STRATEGY

VITAL TO EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGNING is the development of a strategy, one which brings together various tactics and all possible energy, to achieve your goal.

1 GOALS

FIRST THERE NEEDS TO BE AGREEMENT on goals. Usually this is the easiest

16 Chain Reaction

NO MAGIC

ATTRACTIVE THOUGH THE IDEA may be, there is no magical formula, no fail-safe tested recipe for community action to succeed. Here is an approach to consider rather than a set of steps to follow.

This approach is based on my experiences with numerous Australian environmental organisations and other community groups. Of course, it is open to questioning. As soon as this article gets you thinking over the issues it raises it has already served a useful purpose.

A campaign, in the context of this article, is an organised effort by a person or group to achieve a goal of benefit to the community. That may be to protect a park, stop a freeway, clean up a river, argue for renewable safe energy, or to achieve some other change to government or corporate policy.

Everyone who might become involved in a campaign can be more effective through understanding the whole

process of community action. Learning by trial and error is far too slow and wasteful of opportunities for the many problems our society faces. More deliberate efforts to refine our campaign skills and develop our confidence are grossly overdue.

This article is about the campaigns of community pressure groups, primarily oriented to those working on environmental issues. Much of the content remains relevant to other campaigns though. However, it does not seek to be a guide to such diverse efforts as those of trade unions or groups which aim to overcome oppression such as sex or race discrimination. Those require much specific analysis and particular techniques which other writers are better placed to put forward.

Very often community groups and individuals choose to take on what is termed a 'single issue'. This report seeks to aid those people. It is not an overall strategy to change the world or deal with every conceivable situation. Nor is it an academic work.

The intent is to supply a general introduction to effective campaigning.

stage, but not always, and it cannot be taken for granted. Goals may change as events unfold. Demands may need to be modified and extended.

For a group to operate well there must be confident endorsement of the goals from supporters, be they actual members or not. Without that backing activities will fizzle: with support ventures can flourish.

Everyone needs to feel that the

goals have been adopted through a fair consultative process, and that can require hours and even months of tortuous discussion. You will need to bear with these agonies to create a campaign which is effective.

2 PROCESS

OURS IS SUPPOSEDLY A DEMOCRATIC society. To a degree, it is, but it will work better when more people understand social and political processes. Ask questions – and insist upon answers – to find out what is going on and how an issue is to be handled.

3 QUESTIONS

YOU WILL FIND IT FRUITFUL TO challenge every aspect of the campaign. Question everything. Trite as it may seem, in a difficult battle it is only by doing this that you can maximise the prospect of success.

4 RIGHTS

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO EXPRESS opinions and to campaign for change. Our society should be organised to cherish and nurture that freedom. It isn't. You will need to defend your right to express views and to seek change.

Power is distributed very unequally in Australia. For example, some people own massive media empires, others dominate large companies or become powerful through professional associations or unions. These people have excellent resources to help them investigate an issue and to publicise their case.

The last decade has seen a boom in resource centres (environment centres) for the community, rightly, even if inadequately, funded by government. Do make use of these resources. The environment centres are a starting point for democracy to function.

5 PRIORITIES

IT IS USEFUL FOR A GROUP TO list all the things which might be attempted and to assess the available people and other resources for implementation. Inevitably this leads to setting priorities, a useful and sensible step in effective campaigning. There is no sense in being in a muddle.

Where a group consults its active participants on the choice of priorities and some consensus is reached, there is every reason to expect united and vigorous pursuit of the top priority actions. The cohesion is worth the discomfort of facing the need to drop or defer some work, so that the most important work is assured of completion.

6 PLANS

RESOLUTION OF SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, economic and political conflicts almost always takes far longer than any of the parties expects. Be prepared to look way ahead. Where does your group want to be in a year or two?

Major conflicts tend to run for several years, despite early announcements that, 'this issue must be settled by the end of next month or else mass unemployment will result'. It is very frequently the first sign that a campaign is going well that delays are introduced for inquiries and investigations. For example, the nuclear industry is being crippled by just such delays and this is leading to a withdrawal of financial backing.

A large-scale public event, like a mass rally, exhibition or conference, can be expected to take several months to organise well. Allowing too little time tends to lead to disappointing results which may reflect a lack of widespread notice of the activity rather than a low level of support. That amounts to selling your cause short.

7 SCENARIOS

ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING and difficult stages of a campaign is the development of scenarios by which your goal can be achieved. These visions of success often involve many different twists and turns of events. All scenarios are speculative, and therefore never final nor 'correct'.

It is not a simple matter of putting forward one likely set of events. You need to take into account various possibilities for action by the parties to a dispute. A group can end up with several scenarios which aid campaign planning. Their development should involve wide participation and demands much discussion. It is frustrating, exhausting, mystifying, exciting, depressing, enlightening and ultimately stimulating.

Without a convincing vision of success supporters lack a sense of hope – the most vital campaign ingredient following motivation.

8 BUDGETS

A BUDGET IS A STATEMENT OF expected income and proposed expenditure for a given period in the future. It is a planning aid. It should be open to modification, if need be often. It should help you to relate to economic realities.

Few small community groups plan their finances to a budget. Even some larger groups are negligent about such planning. At the other extreme some groups let the budget dominate the organisation and it becomes a hobble.

9 TIMETABLES

TO AID IN THE DEVELOPMENT of scenarios, plans and priorities, it is helpful to write up a timetable on a big noticeboard, not just on some scrap of paper. Put everything on it. Let everyone involved see it.

Detail when decisions are expected, inquiries are to be held and activities planned. Divide it into sections for events that your group plans, those of your allies, and those of the government or other protagonist. Keep such a timetable prominently displayed and use it at meetings.

A timetable helps you see where you stand and helps decision making on projects. Unrealistic expectations tend to become evident.

10 POWER

LIKE IT OR NOT, POWER IS WHAT politics is all about. While it is true that spreading inaccurate information can destroy the credibility of a group, be very wary of placing all your faith just in being 'right'. That is not enough. You need to build demonstrable power.

Politicians and companies do not care whether you are right or wrong. Indeed they know that most people seem to find self-righteousness offensive. But they, and the media, are not much interested in that consideration either. They want to see whether you have support, because support is power, and it is to power that they respond.

Yet powerlessness is a tremendously common feeling in our 'democratic' community. You must inspire people that your goals can be achieved to convince them to take action, and for that you will need both facts and boundless enthusiasm.

It is important that we all take action to assist and support those who are working on issues of concern to us. That will build vital confidence and hope. Faith in the competence and worth of people and their actions gives sorely needed encouragement.

11 FACE-SAVING

THERE IS LITTLE ADVANTAGE IN painting your opponent into a corner. Governments do change policies. So do companies. They tend not to admit mistakes, however, and it can often be wise to provide face-saving opportunities. Sometimes the most intransigent opponents can suddenly become amazingly nimble. It can be worthy of encouragement. The reality is that community groups more often achieve success through a somersault by government than through the demise of that authority.

12 ZAP!

THE ELECTRIC ENERGY OF A high-powered campaign cannot be maintained endlessly. Expect the tempo to rise and fall. Just be ready to recuperate rather than collapse during the occasional lulls, and make sure you are working towards another high. Phew!

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QUESTION EVERYTHING

EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGNING requires much questioning. Challenge everything. 'No' is a word you have to learn not to hear. Effective campaigning is the art of miracles — otherwise the campaign would not have been necessary. Be undaunted. Persistent people get things achieved.

Start by reviewing your position, and review it often.

●What is the proposal you are fighting? What is the current position of the proponents, and government? What is the timing?

●Who comprises your group? What are your demands? What has been done? How are you and your actions perceived? Who are your supporters? What have you planned?

●How can things change? Possible compromises, manoeuvres, delays and moratoria?

●What further information can be obtained?

●Who makes the decisions on this issue? When? How?

●Who advises the decision-makers? What is their advice? Why?

●Who could influence the decision-makers? How can your group influence the influential?

●Where does support come for the proposal? Can it be eroded, or bolstered?

●Who is affected by the proposal? Can you find more supporters there?

THE GROUP

IT TAKES THE COMBINED EFFORTS of many people to bring about lasting changes. To make the most of diverse skills, interests and time commitments, action groups are formed.

The test of any group is in its effectiveness, rather than its number of members or its detailed procedures. Groups which are seen to be active and effective will gain support, while others wilt.

1 YOU

A GROUP DOES NOT EXIST WITHOUT its membership. Every member is important — and no-one is more important than you.

Make sure that your work adds to the effectiveness of the group. Find out the best way you can help. That is easiest if you can make a reliable, even if irregular, contribution to the group.

Do all you can to encourage others to join in the work too. There is no use expecting that someone else should do all the recruiting. All of us can help our organisations grow to become more effective.

Resist the pressures to make a spectacular but only short-lived contribution to a group. 'Burn out' of volunteers is common and a waste of those whose competence and energy is so greatly needed. Make sure you organise your voluntary work so that it is sustainable. You are too important to get worn out, and it is so easy to suffer from exhaustion. As one who so often has the job of organising others, I hesitate but must suggest you learn to say, 'No. I can do no more, today.'

2 VOLUNTEERS

GROUPS NEED TO BE ACTIVE IN encouraging volunteer involvement. See it as a deliberate process — working out

who may be able to help, encouraging them to do so, and giving support to allow individuals to gain skills.

A huge amount of learning is intrinsic to any campaign group. Few people have the skills at the outset. As the work progresses everyone ought to be learning and using new skills. Training programmes should be run for volunteers to learn more advanced skills — in areas like dealing with the media, research, lobbying, office administration, publicity and fundraising.

It is important to structure activities so that volunteers are familiar with the purpose and results of their work. With this understanding people are likely to remain active.

People do not only join a group, however, to have an effect on some issue. They are looking for a friendly environment, encouragement and assistance to learn and develop skills, enjoyable social interaction and satisfaction through achievements. It is important that the group provides this.

3 STAFF

THE ESCALATION OF A CAMPAIGN may make it necessary to engage staff — administrative staff to keep the group operating efficiently, consultants in some specialist area, or a professional campaign organiser.

Expectations of such staff are, almost without exception, unreasonably high and the conditions of employment grossly unfair. People are asked to work for very low salaries, in chaotic conditions, for extremely long hours, and without the usual rights of employees such as workers compensation insurance or holiday pay. Some miserable attitudes remain common.

Only employ staff when the whole group is sure that is necessary. Do not employ staff unless you are prepared

to be fair and ready to treat people as you would expect to be treated in more conventional employment. Attempts to worsen conditions after employees have begun work are exceptionally offensive.

Our groups should welcome the growing number of skilled and experienced activists and provide fair opportunities for their skills to be utilised to our mutual advantage. The next few years will see decisive changes in the employment of staff by community groups, as unionisation becomes more common and as more people learn that short-sighted exploitation and 'burning-out' help no-one.

4 PROFESSIONALS

OURS IS A PROFESSIONALISED and complex world. To grab back some control over our destiny is no small feat.

Invite help from relevant professionals and their organisations. Educational institutions are often in a good position to undertake relevant research. Journalists, public servants and some business people frequently have relevant information.

I especially recommend seeking professional help in communications work — advertising and market research.

5 STRUCTURE

THERE ARE A RANGE OF STRUCTURES for groups — from the formal association, perhaps even incorporated for legal protection, to the completely informal group which is little more than a name for a loose group of people who choose to work together. What is important is that everyone in a group understands its structure — or lack thereof — and is free to participate and help it grow.

Structures emerge and evolve for groups. They should be open for review and change. Those people who resist all change are as unhelpful as those who become obsessed with procedural points.

It seems the more time a group spends on internal structural matters, like constitutions and procedures, the less the group does in terms of 'real' issues. You can have any structure imaginable and it will fail if it is not in the hands of energetic people whose minds are focussed on being effective.

6 COALITIONS

CONSIDER BUILDING COALITIONS of interested organisations for specific useful joint actions. A classic example of a useful coalition was the National South-West Coalition, which brought the Tasmanian Wilderness Society and the Australian Conservation Foundation together with many other conservation groups for a very impressive and success-

ful campaign centred on the 1983 federal elections.

Coalitions which exist almost purely for their own sake are common. They tend to meet for little real purpose and drag things down.

7 CUT-OUTS A PUSH-OVER

TOO OFTEN A GROUP BECOMES dominated by one or two people. Their energies, however well intentioned, can weaken the group if other people are squeezed out of an effective role. Make sure the group remains diverse and growing.

Unfair expectations and demands can be placed on a 'leader' and you should be wary of this. There is the potential of strangling a group if all contacts must be funnelled through one person. While some people can certainly inspire, and so be seen as leaders, they can achieve little without the support work of many people.

Politicians will be especially quick to see when you do not really have community support. And the media won't be far behind them. The public will see it first. Cardboard cut-out groups are a real pushover. It suits the opponents of a campaign to characterise it as just the work of one or two key figures. They don't like even the possibility of mass support.

There are ways to avoid an excessive focus on a few people, and it can be difficult resolving this problem. I make some suggestions later in this article.

8 PARTICIPATION

EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT AND capable of making complementary, rather than identical, contributions to

the success of a campaign. Welcome others and encourage people to become confident to participate.

Start thinking your part in the campaign is more important than that of others and you're kidding yourself. The total effort is what has an effect, and it consists of different actions by different people at different times. Then you have a campaign rather than just a grizzle.

9 DIVERSITY

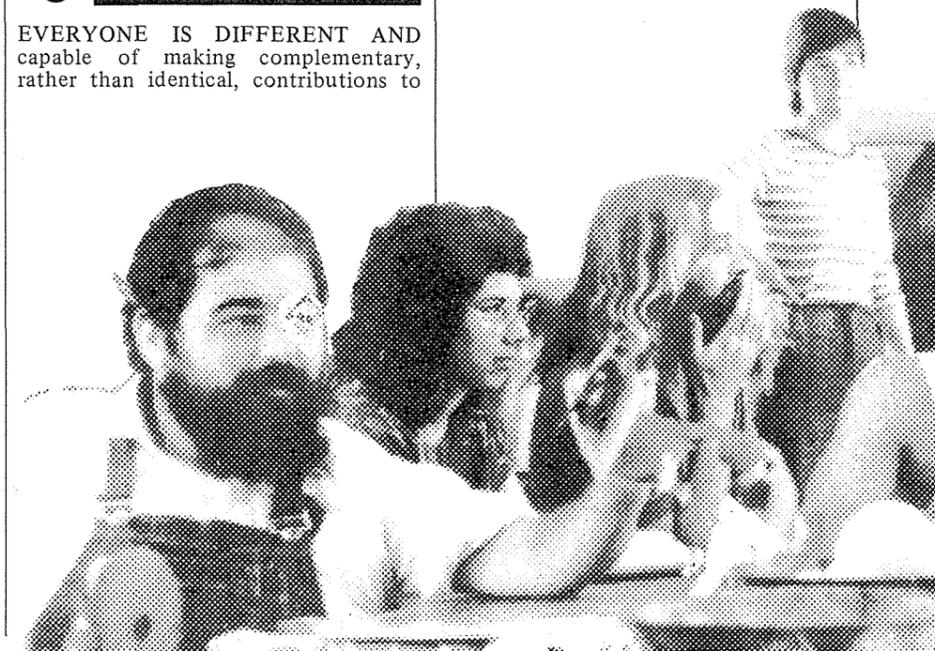
ACCEPT, FROM THE OUTSET, THAT different people will have different styles of operation. Certainly seek to amalgamate diverse activities into a consistent and coherent campaign plan. Energy spent on squashing initiatives is largely wasted.

It is not unusual for some groups to spend more time on stopping things happening than on making things move. Such organisations are doomed to become irrelevant.

10 SUPPORT

PEOPLE WHO JOIN GROUPS ARE usually rather tentative about their involvement. They need to find friends there and feel support for their work. We all should be conscious of these needs and be deliberate in giving support.

New people should be made especially welcome, and not just on their first day in a group. Make sure you are involving everyone and helping each other in the campaign. Otherwise the matter is resolved very simply — people leave.



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1 PRESSURE

THE PROCESS OF MOUNTING pressure on your opponents to achieve your goals demands deliberate planning. You need to identify likely supporters for your cause, likely opponents and those 'in the middle' and work with them all.

Among the organisations and authorities that might be worth approaching, perhaps starting with an offer of a speaker and information, are local government, businesses, service clubs, schools, local celebrities, community groups, churches, sports clubs, political party branches, unions, academics and professional associations.

No matter what position an organisation is likely to take, it is worthwhile to open up a dialogue. Support is not always predictable and, for varying reasons, you may find friends in unexpected places.

2 INFORMATION

GET ALL THE INFORMATION ON your issue.

Freedom of information (FOI) legislation, nationally and in some states, opens much of the way to information you may require. Government departments have FOI officers to help you obtain whatever is relevant. Be pushy.

'Leaks' help a great deal. It is very important that you protect, absolutely, any inside sources who leak information to you. Your discretion will ensure that other information can be safely and effectively leaked.

3 UNIONS

VERY OFTEN THERE IS USEFUL common ground between the demands of environmentalists and the labour movement. This link is explored and developed too little.

Sydney's Green Bans, which protected so many important areas, are the shining example of trade unions and community groups working together. More can be achieved, through encouraging your supporters to become active within their own unions and by giving priority to continuing dialogue with unions.

Unions will, understandably, resist attempts at outside control or influ-

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ence. But where you can make common interests clear, union officials and the rank-and-file membership are likely to be sympathetic.

Unions have much less power than is popularly imagined and intimidated by the press. Almost all unions lack sufficient staff, facilities and financial resources for their work. Their democratic structures necessitate generous allowances of time to get decisions and action.

4 COMMUNICATION

EACH TIME YOU COMMUNICATE — be it in writing, a talk or interview — you need to tell what is happening and why, and make clear what you want and why. Always make sure the most important point is prominent — many a leaflet leaves the date of an event obscure. Good design need not be expensive. It costs as much to print a confusing mess as clear statement. Much effective communication is done cheaply.

The design and writing should make the message accessible. Render it confusing and you lose the reader's attention and interest. This is every bit as important as getting the facts right.

Groups communicating well present their message simply, invitingly, in a positive way, overcoming apprehensions, convincingly refuting false information, presenting alternatives and explaining the economies of what they advocate.

5 BUREAUCRACY

THE TELEVISION PROGRAM, 'YES Minister' provides an education in how the bureaucracy operates. It makes clear the extensive powers and influence of government departmental officers.

You need to build a dialogue with relevant government departments to find out what is happening, and to learn which officials may be most helpful. Discussion with departmental officers will frequently provide information and clear up misunderstandings. Your clear

resolve to keep pressing an issue will have an impact on the bureaucracy, especially if the issue 'goes public.'

The public service is immense. Literally millions of Australians are employed, in one way or another, by a government agency. There are bound to be 'good' people among them. Encourage those people and don't be intimidated by those who obstruct your way.

Finally, remember that many middle-level officials (and some at a low level) may not always be carrying out directives from above. Be prepared to challenge rulings and take matters 'higher up'. You may find more sympathy for your cause at a high level.

6 MEDIA

IN MOST CAMPAIGNS THE MASS media — television, radio and the press — is an essential link to building support. Failure in this area can imperil the whole campaign. Success in the media can massively boost your prospects.

A good 'talking head' for your group is essential. Whoever speaks for you should do so confidently and know exactly what must be said. Remember that the audiences can consist of millions, or at least tens of thousands, of people. This is no time for being flustered, confused or arrogant.

Be very available to the media. Provide telephone numbers at the end of press statements so that reporters can contact you. Issue well-written releases, which make new points.

'Managing the Media' by Chris Harris in this edition of *Chain Reaction* makes numerous helpful points on working with the mass media.

7 RESEARCH

THE USE OF MARKET RESEARCH is no longer confined to big companies about to launch a new product or trying to find new sales. With the Franklin campaign market research joined the armoury of public interest groups (see boxed report).

Market research can help to identify, by fairly objective means, those who are on the verge of supporting you. It can tell you how your issue, messages, campaign and organisation are seen by specific groups (be they opponents,

supporters or those 'in the middle'). Vital information.

For a big campaign it is well worth spending a few thousand dollars on professional market research to refine use of many more thousands spent subsequently on the campaign. It helps ensure that all the effort is effective and not wasted or even counter-productive. Campaigning is too important to be left to guesswork.

For a small campaign the costs of professional research are likely to be prohibitive. You may be able to get help from the psychology departments of tertiary education institutions. In general it is difficult work to attempt without professional guidance.

8 ADVERTISING

PEOPLE TEND TO HAVE UNREALISTIC expectations of advertising or little faith in it. Reality tends to oscillate somewhere between these extremes.

Your advertising has to be well produced and have a specific aim. There are a few points which can be made in any one advertisement — generally only one point! Calculate what is the most crucial information to communicate and let that dominate.

I am almost afraid to say that long-copy advertisements can work, because community groups have tended to drown their advertisements in a sea of complicated and boring text. Look at other advertising and examine which really stand out. What are the advertisements which you remember? The simple repetitive ones for Coca-Cola. The simple bold statements. Those are the advertisements to learn from. Hard hitting, convincing and repeated time and again.

Elsewhere I have suggested you seek professional help for your campaign. In no area is it so useful as advertising. That is one of the secrets behind the impact of The Wilderness Society's campaign for the Franklin.

We are in a world of television, computer-produced newspapers and flashy advertising. Advertising is expensive, so don't waste your precious and scarce funds. Professional assistance can often be found, making it possible for your message to be well-produced cheaply. Go looking.

Excellent materials — leaflets, posters, press or television announcements, books or films — get noticed. Many graphic designers, copywriters and other communicators are willing to help a good cause, and what better way than with their skills.

9 LOBBYING

FOR A COMMUNITY GROUP CAMPAIGN lobbying is perfectly sensible as a tactic. Unexpected gains can sometimes come from direct discussions with your

HOW MARKET RESEARCH HELPED SAVE THE WILDERNESS

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THE Wilderness Society (TWS) commissioned market research to ensure that strategy and tactics could be honed for maximum effectiveness.

Quantitative opinion poll surveys were undertaken in Tasmania and on the Australian mainland to keep a watch on the general level of community support or antagonism. These involved door-to-door surveys of thousands of people who were asked a simple question or two on the Franklin River issue. The results of such polling were sometimes released to the mass media.

Qualitative research was also undertaken. Carefully selected groups of about ten people, representative of different sections of the population, were brought together for one hour discussions on the issue, monitored by a market research company team and TWS observers. These sessions showed, in Tasmania, the reasons for some hostility to the conservation cause, and on the mainland they profiled the depth of sympathy and understanding in marginal electorates. For example, sessions showed that while people were not so moved by the argument that 'the Franklin is very beautiful' the same citizens were conscious of the World Heritage status of this wilderness and keen to see such places fully protected. The World Heritage theme became stronger in TWS advertising as a result.

The credibility of particular celebrities was examined. People saw Harry Butler as having 'sold out' by working for the Tasmanian government. Naturalist David Bellamy was trusted as knowing 'what he is on about', and subsequent to this research he became a prominent activist in the campaign, getting arrested on his fortieth birthday at the blockade. Research in advance of the blockade showed that public reaction, on the mainland, would be very sympathetic to the action.

Similar research also helped TWS develop direct mail materials to go to supporters, and the response to the mail-outs was excellent. Small but significant changes were made to the materials after a 'dummy' copy was shown to test groups in Melbourne and country Victoria.

To a group utterly determined to succeed it was basic strategy to have an accurate understanding of public attitudes and not rely on guesswork and prejudices.

local member of parliament or the relevant Minister. If there have been misunderstandings or other communication failures lobbying can help overcome those problems.

You soon reach a point, on many issues, where the politician will move no further in your direction. From that point, lobbying principally provides the opportunity to gain more information, further demonstrate support, make clear that the campaign is continuing, present further information, and negotiate.

Do not be intimidated by any politician. They love to try to use their impressiveness as a weapon. While remaining polite in discussions with them, be quite prepared to also be very firm about what you require. Identify which politicians are most responsive and work with them to build further support. Remember too that the political party bureaucracy has an influence. Discussions with party officials are of value. Work within party branches has some effect as well.

Talk with other people who have done lobbying work. The game of politics is complex and yet often simple. It is just a question of unravelling what is going on. Through a conscious effort it is possible for virtually anyone to understand the interactions and the strategic points at which you can have the most impact.

10 LEGAL ACTION

THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE FEW for effective action by a community group on a public issue through the Australian legal system. I simply suggest that it is wise to examine the possibilities for legal action and consider the prospects both with some imagination and with an appreciation of the highly conservative nature of our courts.

Many campaigns are, however, finally won on the basis of a court case, the Franklin being the most celebrated such victory. Town planning issues are, of course, commonly centred on legal action and tribunals.

Remember that legal aid may be available for your group in some circumstances. Otherwise special public fundraising appeals can be mounted for legal action (as was done in Western Australia to take a court action in USA courts to protect the jarrah forests. Some lawyers may even act, within limits, without making a charge.

DIRECT ACTION

IN EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES, nonviolent direct action can become necessary. It is wise to keep this important tactic for absolute last resort situations. Such resistance can show your sincerity and numbers, as it did with the Franklin blockade, and not endanger widespread community support (so long as the action truly re-

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mains nonviolent and it is well projected to the mass media).

The worry is that so many things can go wrong. So many situations can get out of hand and there is the prospect of your critics being the beneficiaries.

Actions such as a blockade should only be attempted when elaborate preparations, of which the most important is extensive and intensive training of participants, are complete. Over a year of training and around a quarter of a million dollars went into the Franklin blockade.

People need to thoroughly learn the skills of working together, in compatible, manageable-sized groups. It takes a great deal of time to develop the finesse necessary in extreme situations of stress for clear-thinking rather than chaos to prevail.

Governments, police and companies have learnt as much as the blockaders from the Franklin experience. You can be certain that they will be better prepared to cope with future actions, and this increases the need for original and imaginative planning.

Our weaponry for community action is not always impressive when compared with those it becomes necessary to oppose. I know it concerns many activists that hastily planned nonviolent actions can tend to be unsuccessful and thus weaken confidence in such tactics. We need to be careful to use our skills well, and realise our limits.

Most of all, people must be conscious of the context of the action and ensure that it relates to wider campaign activities. A direct action, of itself, is rarely likely to have an effect beyond drawing attention to an issue.

12 FINANCES

SUPPORTERS OF YOUR CAMPAIGN have vested trust in you when they give funds. It is important to manage funds with care. Records of all income and expenditure should be kept and, wherever possible, reviewed by an auditor.

Theft or misappropriation is extremely rare in community groups in my experience. But it can happen and systems need to be developed to minimise the opportunities for such exploitation.

All groups often feel restrained in their activities because of insufficient money. Some tend to over-react and limit their actions to those they can already fund. Others see that our society operates on credit and that it is necessary to spend money to make money. When a group has support from the community and it is widely seen to be taking effective action there is every reason to expect success in fundraising. The capacity exists for taking some risks.

It is helpful to prepare projections of likely income and expenditure to see



what cashflow problems may arise. Then you need to work out ways around the problems – by raising loans, deferring some ventures, or whatever.

It is very important that you maintain good relationships with suppliers (such as printers, newspapers, etc.) as you will require their continuing service. Make sure you keep a reputation for reasonably prompt settlement of accounts.

13 FUNDRAISING

IF I SAY 'RAISING MONEY IS easy', you probably won't believe me. So, I'll argue that 'raising money is easy – if you have a good cause and

explain it well'. Honest. It is that easy.

When you ask supporters for money all you are doing is giving these people the opportunity to advance their cause. Your fundraising is a measure of your support. Far from being embarrassed by fundraising, the work should be an integral part of any campaign.

The key to fundraising is in giving a good case for the money and how it will be used. Positive messages can be presented explaining the needs and people will be generous. Explain why you need money now.

The Wilderness Society (TWS) has been especially adept at fundraising for their Franklin campaign, which at its peak was costing around a million dollars a year nationally. TWS pre-

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pared a catalogue to mail to tens of thousands of supporters, offering high quality items suitable for Christmas gift-giving. The response was overwhelming. People wanted to support the campaign and were given a comfortable way to do it.

Direct appeal letters for funds also met with tremendous response for The Wilderness Society and Australian Conservation Foundation. Simple things like providing a coupon and reply envelope boost response rates dramatically because they make it easy.

What must be clear – to every supporter – is that their part in the campaign is crucial, and that includes their financial role. Make good use of your regular communications – all your newsletters should report finance needs and tell how funds are being utilised. Don't presume that everyone knows these needs.

A precious resource of a community group is the accumulated name and address lists of supporters. These should be treated as valuable and always maintained.

When people give to a cause they feel good about being generous. It is necessary for campaign groups to make their gratitude clear and prompt. Thank donors and waste no time in doing so.

If you sell products make sure they are of good quality and provide good service – such as prompt delivery. Those first transactions are just laying foundations – repeat business is what keeps you going. Be especially conscious that those who have donated or made a purchase are your prime prospects for future support and business. Too often these valuable allies are taken for granted.

When it comes to things like renewal of membership fees or subscriptions, or even requests for donations, address each supporter personally and do not rely on obscure notes in the group newsletter – a ticked box or some such confusion. Draw attention by letter to the request for continuing financial support.

Fundraising is a topic on which there are many useful books. Start with the free **Direct Mail Advertising in Australia** kit from Australia Post's marketing department.

14 TRAINING

ALL OF US CAN CONTINUE TO learn how to improve our efforts in campaigning. It is one of the saddest failings of our movements that little deliberate effort is put into training in activism skills. Professionals will usually be flattered to be invited to help with training and give their time freely. Be sure you make good use of it.

We spend so much time criticising governments and others for not looking ahead and for incompetence. We need to take care that we heed our own advice.

STYLE

1 HAVE FUN

BE PREPARED TO WORK VERY hard, for a long time, to win. That is, almost always, vital. Showing more tenacity than your opponents—bolstered as they are by money and resources—is quite a feat. But it is the only way. You can't count on luck.

So the work should be structured to be fun. People must enjoy the campaign. Please do not repeat the same ideas, even good ones, until they become a bore. That is a common mistake of campaigns. Be imaginative and attempt new things.

At the same time, don't make the assumption that good ideas will not work twice. A well-proven basic strategy is essential. Just be sensitive to when an idea's time has passed.

2 DO A GOOD JOB

A MAJOR REASON WHY THE Franklin River campaign succeeded was because the conservation movement puts its message thoroughly, clearly, persistently, convincingly and beautifully.

Always your message needs to be stated simply and clearly, even if elaboration is needed later. Work out what to emphasise and use illustrations which reinforce, not confuse, the message.

Anyone can lose a campaign, but it is such a waste of time, energy and resources. Even when we do everything 'right' there can be defeat. But succeed we sometimes do. Every action must be carefully directed towards elevating the prospect of victory.

Your communications need to be especially well presented. Some people only 'see' you by seeing the material you issue. For example, well-typed documents will be taken more seriously than scrappy items, as they make clear that you mean business, you know what you are doing. Be wary of false economies and those who argue that there is merit in doing things poorly.

3 BE CONVINCING

ALWAYS BE CONSCIOUS THAT your message needs to make prominent

that information which will convince people to support your cause, not dispense morality or tell them what they 'ought' to know.

●Maintain your integrity. Do not compromise your position of principle, as you can lose the respect of both supporters and opponents. But be ready to adapt to changing circumstances. Being inflexible rarely helps. If we are to participate in our political and economic system at all we should do it well. It is no good retaining some notion of purity (and, dare I say, sanctimony) and losing chances to advance the cause.

●Be impeccable about the facts, always. There is too high a chance of being caught out and then losing credibility.

●Make your message fresh, immediate. Give reasons why action needs to be taken now.

●When putting a message across think of the longterm issues too. It is important to recognise that the environment is threatened, in part, because of the present social and economic system and its values. We need to argue for far reaching changes.

●Fanatics bore people. They appear unable to think about anything but their pet issue. Don't be one—there's an abundance already. A choice mix of confidence with humility, serious yet with capacity for humour, is more likely to prove attractive rather than alienating.

●Reject the use of fear as a way to build support. It does not work, longterm.

4 SEE OPPORTUNITIES

WATCH OUT FOR EVERY OPPORTUNITY to push your case. In any community there are always events coming up – exhibitions, fetes, carnivals, conferences, meetings and elections. Events need not be those where parliamentarians will be present to be suitable for a community campaign action.

Assess carefully which opportunities are best suited to your campaign. If you are at the commencement of a campaign it would be unwise to attempt an action which requires mass support and gives tangible evidence of the level

of interest. Better to stage an information stand or present a display to develop interest. When you have reached a situation of mass support—and that can take years of slogging away—and you are confident that support can be evidenced, go for mass actions.

5 HOPE

HOPE IS NOT SOME NEBULOUS luxury. Hope of success is more vital than any strategy or tactical point. It is crucial to ensure that those who will support the campaign become and remain hopeful—and only the scent of victory can give sufficient hope.

Earlier in this article an argument is presented for the development of scenarios. I must reiterate the importance of such work to building hope. As important are general attitudes to volunteer workers and campaign planning. There must be a determination to encourage everyone to participate energetically and the means provided for that activity.

6 ENCOURAGE

MANY UNSUCCESSFUL GROUPS have a notable, indeed astounding, capacity to spend energy and time on stopping people (within their group) from doing things. Successful groups have, as their hallmark, the distinction of encouragement of different activities by various groups of supporters.

Now I am not suggesting people run around in contradictory directions. But there are many ways to approach each problem and the greatest strength very frequently comes from diverse approaches to problems.

The enthusiasm of supporters is precious and delicate. Heavy-handed directives are destructive to a campaign. We have to show trust and confidence in one another and learn to work together, recognising differences and allowing for them. Better the pain of that process than a demise of active support.

Expect conflict within your group. Regard it as both healthy and productive. It is inevitable. It demands patience and cooperation. With goodwill, even quite severe internal conflicts can exist without halting an effective campaign. What remains paramount is to keep the situation in perspective and remember who you are really up against.

Don't let your real goals get forgotten, not even temporarily. And to achieve your goals you need all your friends, even those with whom things are sometimes difficult.

Even such a hugely rewarding association as that between The Wilderness Society and the Australian Conservation Foundation has not been without its thorny moments. But real cooperation has been possible, through each group recognising the other's valuable

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'IT ALL SOUNDS RATHER OVER-whelming. There are so many things to be done in a campaign', commented a friend who read the text for this article.

We are all more likely to be overwhelmed when we are disorganised in our thinking and planning. Then we are weak.

It is by asking questions, calculating winnable scenarios, agreeing upon priorities, budgeting, timetabling and by building a persistent voluntary effort that a campaign can become easier not more difficult. A campaign which carefully encourages participation by the largest possible group of people, and organises their energies and talents well, gives hope and — eventually — success.



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contribution and each getting on with their work.

That said, let me qualify this encouragement of diversity.

For community action to have an impact, it needs strong support. It is amazing how readily such trite advice can be forgotten as individuals or small groups proceed with their pet project.

When you are interested in being effective, you need to involve other people. There needs to be sensitivity to local communities and the legitimate interests of others, for example, those who may feel their jobs are at stake. It is hard to think of anything so likely to set back longterm progress for a campaign than rushed, ill-considered intrusion into a community. The difficult search for common ground is worthy of effort.

We cannot expect to achieve every change which may be desirable instantly. While longterm goals are necessary, to reach them a step-by-step approach is essential. Given our always limited resources, it makes sense to have all the supporters of a cause get together and discuss plans and then pursue agreed priorities. It is possible to build a campaign of diverse but not conflicting actions.

7 DREAM

FANTASISE. THINK ABOUT WHAT you want to do. Dream. Think of all the things you want. Make a list.

Work out ways to overcome any problems rather than breed barriers in your mind. Every great achievement stems from people who are proud to fantasise and then move on to inspire others.

Being optimistic is a realistic part of being effective.

COMMENTS PLEASE!

THE CHAIN REACTION COLLECTIVE and I would warmly welcome comments from readers, to assist future revision of this material. Please write to me at Chain Reaction, Room 14, Floor 4, 37 Swanston St, Melbourne, Vic 3000. Unless you give a contrary instruction all letters will be considered for publication in Chain Reaction.

Leigh Holloway

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Karen Alexander, Jennifer Burns, Jonathan Goodfield, Chris Harris, Bruce Parnell and Linda Parlane for helpful contributions to this article.
L.H.

Managing the media

When should community groups use the mass media, and when shouldn't they? Chris Harris gives some suggestions on how to use the media, and how not to let it use you.

The mass media is the quickest and easiest method of communicating with 'middle Australia', but not necessarily the most effective. No matter how many sympathetic journalists work within it, it is primarily a money-making enterprise which is hierarchical and conservative. Given that using the mass media is time consuming and potentially frustrating, it is important to consider whether the mass media is the correct method for communicating your message, rather than simply assuming that any publicity is good publicity.

It is pointless trying to use the mass media to tackle conservation issues against their interests. For instance the Fairfax companies and Herald and Weekly Times control most of the shares in Australian Newsprint Mills (ANM), and this firm controls substantial cheap power and timber interests in South-west Tasmania. These companies would be unlikely to favourably cover any conservation campaign threatening the interests of ANM. Similarly, some issues are seen as threatening the business community generally. Uranium mining is such an example whereas the Franklin issue was not and therefore received favourable coverage. Finally, some issues are inherently more newsworthy than others, and this should always be considered. It is pointless spending hours trying to get mass media publicity if the issue is not or cannot be made newsworthy.

Controversy and sensation sell newspapers and so the media will focus on the sensational aspect of any issue, simplifying and trivialising what are frequently complex issues. Sometimes it may be best to publicise it through other mediums such as paid advertising, direct mail, newsletters and public meetings. Make certain that all the time and resources are not wasted on obtaining inappropriate mass media publicity.

Chris Harris is a project officer with the Australian Conservation Foundation, working on East Gippsland Forestry issues.



CHRIS HARRIS

If the campaign includes difficult lobbying and liaison work in sensitive areas, extensive media coverage can sometimes be counter-productive, especially if it is controversial and divisive. In such cases it may be necessary to adopt a strategy which avoids mass media coverage.

Using the media

Know how the media works, whom to contact, who writes what and when, and deadlines for each media organisation. *Media Handbook*, an Australian Frontier book by Iola Matthews, is a handy guide for learning to work with the mass media. The following are some general rules for dealing with the mass media:

- Always treat journalists as professionals, and even if they are friends, don't expect them to compromise their impartiality. Never suggest how to write stories or ask for favours. You should get to know their interests and biases.
- Ensure whether what you are saying is on or off the record. Never say anything to a reporter that you don't want reported, unless you have specifically said that it is 'off the record'.
- Make certain that you provide all the necessary background information to reporters in a simple and concise form. Remember they may be dealing with several issues, not just yours.
- Never feel obliged to make a comment or answer any particular question if

Media at the TWS blockade.

you're not ready to do so.

- Try and make certain that someone is always available for interview or can be contacted. If you provide contact numbers on the bottom of a media release make certain that the people named will be available.

- Never create a false expectation that a meeting is going to produce a major statement if it's not. Never call a media conference unless you're certain that you are going to have a very worthwhile announcement to make.

- Never allow all your good stories to issue at once. Release news at the best moment. If you have a story that can be promoted as an 'exclusive' or a 'leak', do so — the media are far more likely to give such stories good coverage.

- Be careful with criticism and praise. If you really have been misrepresented or unfairly treated, don't hesitate to complain but always make certain that you have your facts right. Conversely, don't hesitate to praise a 'good' story as being balanced and fair. Remember that misreporting is not necessarily bias — it may be a mistake.

Who's who

- The chief-of-staff organises coverage of news stories and therefore decides -de facto — what goes in the newspaper.

- Editors on a large paper control sections of it (eg arts, sports) and in addition to



Media interviewing at a book launch.

this there will be many specialist editors. Make certain that you know who they are and who to go to about an issue.

•Sub-editors write the headings on each story, as well as editing and correcting them.

Media releases

A media release should include the following: at the top, the date and the name of the organisation, an embargo if required, and a time and place of release; at the bottom, names and contact numbers.

A media release is most likely to be printed in its entirety if it can simply be transposed without editing, to the newspaper. It should therefore be short, concise and written in newspaper style. Paragraphs should be 30 or 40 words at most. The most important point should always come first in the paragraph. Each paragraph should deal with one point only. Releases should wherever possible, run to one side of an A4 page only and a spokesperson should always be named and quoted, preferably both directly and indirectly.

There are several ways of sending out your releases:

•The simplest way is on a telex via a broadcast call. If you do enough a year to justify it, releases can be sent through the Australian Associated Press (AAP) 'PR Wire' service, though this method is

more costly. Telex is not necessarily the most effective way as a great number of releases are received by the media over the system each day. At peak times (3-4pm) it is often difficult to make telex connections. Telex facilities are available at the Melbourne and Sydney environment centres, the offices of some large conservation organisations and at public telex offices.

•By mail, addressed to the chief of staff. It needs to be sent out well in advance and embargoed until the appropriate time.

•Hand delivery is useful in small cities, where media outlets are close or only selected outlets are needed. It is generally a highly effective method.

•The parliamentary press galleries in each parliament house generally have boxes for each media company. For national press coverage it is worth trying to find someone who will distribute your releases through Parliament House in Canberra.

Media conferences

A media conference should be planned at least one day in advance, wherever possible. A telex should be sent out to the chief of staff or news editor giving the place (including the location within the building), the date and the time of the conference, the reasons for it being held, the persons giving it, the organisations involved, and a contact name and telephone number for inquiries.

On the morning of the media conference, the chiefs of staff or news editors of all the major outlets should be phoned to confirm that they have received notification.

•Whoever is giving the conference should be neatly dressed and know exactly what they intend to say. S/he should be prepared to answer questions and give numerous interviews afterwards.

•There should be a prepared statement available plus any additional appropriate information.

•Relevant maps, posters and other information should be displayed on the walls.

•The conference should start within five minutes of the advertised time and should not run for more than 20-25 minutes before questions.

•Make certain that there is adequate seating and ample power points for lighting and recording equipment.

Radio interviews

Before you start, check whether an interview is to be live or recorded. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. The live interview is the best type providing you know your facts and are confident, because what you say cannot be edited, nor can the interviewer manipulate or stop what you are saying.

The main advantage with pre-recorded interviews is that you can always stop and re-do a badly answered question or interview. Their disadvantage is that what you say can be distorted by subsequent editing. Try to link your points together and answer quickly so that it is not so easy to edit out important points or create a distorted interview. If you are debating an issue with someone else, always try to anticipate her/his answers so that no matter what happens in the editing process your opponent is not able to make a really telling last point.

Never agree to an interview unless you are sure that you know your facts. If you're not certain you can handle it, don't.

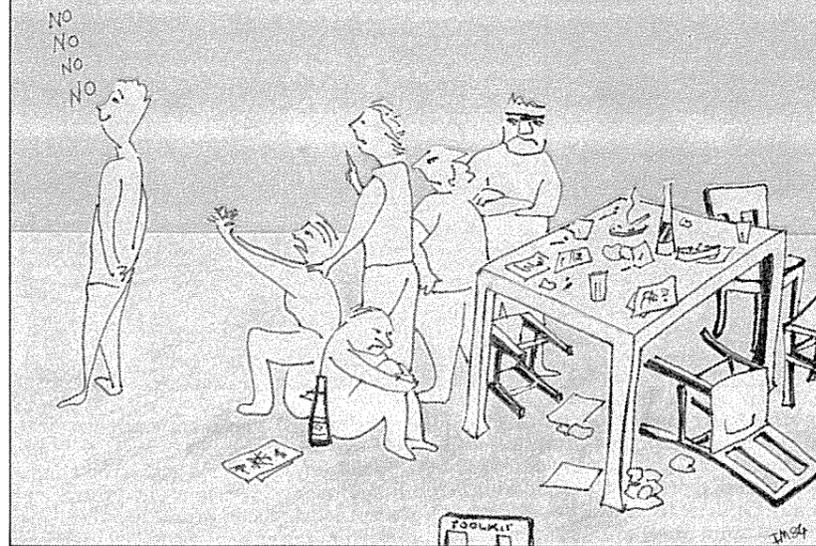
Try to control the interview so that it deals with the issues that you want dealt with. Never make the mistake of allowing a reporter to manipulate you or the news. An interview should be an opportunity for you to get your message across, not for the reporter to create what s/he thinks is the best story. Always find out what the interviewer intends to ask about. And never comment on other people's statements without knowing exactly what was said.

TV interviews

Most of the main things to remember are very similar to those for radio interviews, except that:

•Appearance is more important
 •Nervous mannerisms should be avoided
 •Always look at the interviewer, not the camera. Try not to look too serious - smiling makes the watcher more able to relate to you as a person rather than an anonymous and characterless 'expert'.

Consensus -let's vote on it



ROLAND MANDERSON

Consensus decision making is being increasingly used by groups within the Australian anti-nuclear, environment and disarmament movements in recent years. In this article, Howard Ryan looks at some of the problems encountered by anti-nuclear groups in the USA which have used the consensus process.

Consensus is a method for group decision making widely used in the anti-nuclear, feminist, and environmental movements, and in cooperatives and alternative communities. It tends to be most popular in counterculture-oriented sections of these movements and has been particularly used in the direct action wing of the anti-nuclear movement. Consensus is 'a direct outgrowth of non violence, which affirms respect for the individual within a group, and creates a spirit of trust and cooperation,' says the Abalone Alliance *Direct Action Handbook*. Of the various expressions of nonviolence, consensus where used is probably the most crucial in terms of affecting the day-to-day activity of the movement.

Under consensus, a group does not

vote but discusses and mends proposals until everyone agrees to them. Practically speaking, it's unanimous voting. For most decisions consensus is not hard to reach, at least not in small groups; but it gets tough when the issues are controversial, regardless of group size. The cutting edge of consensus is that each group member has the power to *block*, or veto, a decision. The group must then look for alternatives the blocker can accept, or else persuade that person not to block. Often objectors are encouraged to *stand aside*, or abstain rather than block, the latter considered a somewhat extreme course. But the ultimate power of blocking, even when not actually exercised, has heavy influence on the whole consensus process.

Groups that make decisions by consensus, which applies to all the political groups I've worked with for the last five years, tend to regard the process with a sort of spiritual reverence - I mean it is *worshipped*. The suggestion that a vote be tried, even only a straw vote, can draw reactions of hostility and moral indignation in consensus-using groups. I can also empathise with this because I was once a lover of consensus myself.

With consensus, your right to block decisions seems to give assurance that the group will not take this voice away from you, that you will continue to be respected and listened to, that you will not become another non-person in another bureaucracy. In a society where working class and lower middle class people have virtually no voice in the activities and institutions around them, where we are little more than cogs in the great bureaucratic wheel, it is a precious feeling to be part of a community group where your opinion really matters. This is the special appeal of consensus.

Advocates of consensus often admit the method can be cumbersome. 'Consensus takes time and patience,' advises a recent consensus manual. But they rarely address the real consequences this has on a movement's progress. While we can try to be patient, to cooperate and work together caringly, it's not always possible to resolve people's differences, and certainly not within the space of a single meeting. In actual daily practice vital decisions do not get made; this tears at the solidity of an organisation. Although people may feel deep concern about the nuclear threat, if we are unable to decide things and generate concrete activities, people will tend to leave the movement and turn their attentions elsewhere. Also, the difficulty of getting everyone to agree to needed changes in policy or strategy makes consensus a conservatising factor in the movement. The standard rule is when a group can't reach consensus, the last decision made on the subject stays in force. This not only encourages political rigidity but lends inordinate power to those who want things kept as they are.

Even when decisions do get made, they are often of poor quality. In the effort to find a decision the entire group can accept, good proposals tend to get watered down. Doreen Zelman in *The Network*, 1 May 1981, writes of the watering-down effect of consensus with regard to New York's anti-nuclear movement:

Consensus . . . means accepting the lowest common denominator of agreement. This is not necessarily - nor usually - the correct

or best position, and is often not fully satisfactory to anyone. It is more democratic to have a majority strongly support one proposal than to have all merely feel they can 'live with' another proposal.

A further problem with consensus is the long, drudging meetings. In the Livermore Action Group, meetings of four to six hours have become the norm. Besides burning people out, this limits who can participate in the movement. The majority of Americans have forty-hour jobs and families; they can't afford to spend as much time at meetings as consensus demands. This tends also to maximize the power of movement activists who are single and have part-time or flexible jobs, since they are the ones with time for all the extended meetings. Consensus can be a very elitist process.

Consensus people misrepresent voting

Some consensus proponents will concede a number of these problems. But they nonetheless hold that, compared to the alternatives such as majority vote, consensus provides the most humane and democratic model; it is most consistent with our longterm visions. Voting is widely regarded as a competitive, coercive process by users of consensus. According to the *Diablo Canyon Blockade Handbook*:

Voting is a win or lose model, in which people are more often concerned with the numbers it takes to 'win' than with the issue itself. Voting does not take into account individual feelings or needs.

Building United Judgment: A Handbook For Consensus Decision Making concurs:

Timid individuals or people who find it difficult to put new ideas into words can be ignored [in voting groups]. The minority can easily be dispensed with by outvoting them. So although in theory everyone may participate in majority rule, in reality this method ensures less democracy than it seems to promise.

While majority voting in mainstream institutions and hierarchies is no doubt often competitive, divisive, and insensitive, the same is not true for a vast number of progressive and community groups with common goals and cooperative commitments. In fact, a recurring theme in my interviews, which directly contradicts the claims of consensus people, was the real struggle made in voting groups to avoid division and narrow majorities and to try to achieve as much unanimity as possible.

The overriding quality of voting which tends to be less true for consensus is flexibility. If the decision is an important one and there is a felt need for unanimity or a large majority, then the group can take the time to discuss and work through the issues, and find the right synthesis. But for smaller questions where unanimity is not essential, you can take a vote and go with it. Or, if the decision is important



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but there are time constraints — or the group has grappled with a question for hours and there is clearly an impasse — then the group can decide whether it's more crucial to have more discussion or to vote and move on. With consensus, although people often stand aside when total agreement can't be found, the standard rule is that no decision is made until everyone agrees to it. This allows for little leeway and can frequently immobilise groups and movements.

I have known not a few anti-nuke activists who consider the use of majority vote to be literally immoral, an act of violence. The above would perhaps not answer all their concerns. But I am hoping to at least encourage healthy scepticism toward the usual rigid assumptions made by consensus advocates about voting.

That special feeling

Those involved in ongoing anti-nuclear work as part of a local neighbourhood chapter or affinity group often derive a special feeling of collectivity and belongingness. It doesn't happen always, but if the chemistry is right in a group there is a certain powerful and exciting energy. This energy has been mystified in the movement. It's been put up on an altar and labeled the 'spirit of non violence' or the 'spirit of consensus'. It is neither of these. That good feeling known to many in the movement is simply the thrill of working, perhaps for the first time, in a participatory, cooperative project to make changes

in the world. The same spirit has been known to people in social struggles throughout history. They have almost always made decisions by vote; and their tactics have often been violent. It is the activity of resisting together, of being part of a larger project, that is exciting to us. This distinction is important because many movement people come to believe that only through using consensus, and abiding by certain nonviolent codes, may we enjoy this feeling of 'being a part'. When meetings become grinding marathons which don't produce much activity on the outside, as many movement veterans know, that special exciting energy gets lost.

The myth of non-coercion

Proponents of consensus claim their method is not coercive like voting and that it's more democratic. D. Elton Trueblood writes that the Quaker method of decision (which is where consensus originates) involved 'the use of love and persuasion as against force and violence. The overpowering of a minority by calling for a vote is a kind of force' which breeds resentment. Similarly, *The Wall Street Action Training Handbook* says:

Consensus allows us to recognise our areas of agreement and to act together without coercing one another. *Under consensus, the group takes no action that is not consented to by all group members.*

These are false claims. In truth, voting and consensus can both involve forms of coercion, ie forcing one party

to accept the decision of another. The difference is that with voting the will of the majority holds sway, while under consensus an individual or minority wields the power through exercise of the block or veto. Consensus proponents have ignored how preventing people from doing as they wish can be no less coercive than forcing them to do as they do not wish. Also, there are often only limited options available so that, when a person blocks, if the larger group wants to do anything at all it is forced to go the way of the blocker. It's worth noting that the block need not actually take place for this coercion to happen. People working together over time get to know where others in the organisation stand and who is prepared to hold resolutely against certain types of decisions. In consensus groups, people frequently make concessions or agree to things they are not really comfortable with but realise the decision would otherwise be blocked and the group immobilised (or they realise that to block themselves would not help). There is a whole undercurrent of power plays and manipulation using consensus. Similar things do go on with voting but there isn't that strong drive to cover up disagreement with a superficial unity. Nor does voting give individuals or small minorities the right to force their will on the larger group. Far from alleviating abuses of power or encouraging equality, consensus allows individuals to abuse power to no end.

Discussion and participation

Advocates have held that consensus allows every individual a voice in the process. By establishing the goal of total unity and seeking to satisfy all objections before taking action, consensus works to discourage disagreement and raising of controversial issues. Particularly when there's a busy agenda or it's been a long night, it often seems prudent to keep quiet



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and let things pass rather than raise an objection which might take another hour to resolve. Also, the fact that the entire group will have to be won to your position, and sometimes the knowledge that certain individuals are guaranteed to block it, often make putting forward a minority view not worthwhile. As for blocking, that is a very risky act, especially at larger organisational meetings and conferences. The spotlight is suddenly on you and you had better be prepared for heavy grilling. Consensus etiquette forbids the pressuring of blockers, but it happens all the time; and you can't really blame people for getting upset when one person keeps the whole group from moving forward.

In consensus meetings, there's often an underlying tension. Everyone's afraid someone is going to object or block, and we're going to have to struggle longer on the question. Voting, because it doesn't require complete unity, makes it easier for people to disagree. Another distinction is that when you object to a proposal in consensus, you're generally expected to speak

up and explain yourself. If you don't, it is assumed that you are for the proposal. In voting you can take a stand simply by raising your hand. This means that those who are shy or new to the movement can participate in the process without having to explain or defend their position before the group. For a lot of people the latter is scary to do, especially at big political meetings. Consensus allows the braver or more experienced activists to get their feelings heard, but we're never sure where the quiet people are at (and there is not always time to go one by one around the circle). Using straw votes to find out where everyone stands would of course alleviate this problem and could be used within a consensus framework.

The general advantage of voting is it recognises that our conflicts and differences are not always resolvable — especially not within any one particular meeting — and it lets us make decisions and carry on the work of the movement while internal conflicts continue. Voting ultimately allows more issues and concerns to be raised, while consensus, not intentionally but actually, suppresses conflict and discourages open debate.

The small group solution?

Consensus is most clearly problematic in large meetings. Even when modified so that it takes x number of persons or an affinity group to block, it still involves an unfair coercion of the majority by a minority. Consensus is much less of a problem in small groups of, say, less than ten who work together regularly and are of reasonably like mind. In fact, small task-oriented groups often don't need a formal process at all, consensus or voting. Some might propose the consensus problem can be solved if our movement simply had lots of autonomous small groups doing independent projects. This is in fact what anti-nuclear groups often end up doing anyway, since running a larger organisation seems so hopeless under current practices.



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But this is no solution. Without a broader organisation to unify local groups, to map out a common strategy and pull together our collective strength, to coalesce with other groups and movements, to plug in volunteers, provide resources, skill-sharing and so on, we cannot seriously challenge our very powerful and well-organised opposition. Also, if an organisation is solid and well-functioning, it can provide a sense of larger community, purpose and direction for local small groups. These are so essential. I have often seen, where these are lacking, that small groups become isolated, dispirited, and, failing to generate activity, break apart.

Consensus can usually work OK within the small local groups, apart from the larger organisation. Even if the group officially voted, there would probably be consensus most of the time. Still, if the group wants to decide on controversial or strongly political questions, and there are significant philosophical differences among the members, consensus poses real problems even in the small groups.

Where consensus comes from

The anti-nuclear movement owes consensus to two main sources: the tradition of the Quakers, or Society of Friends, and the feminist movement. The American Friends Service Committee and Movement for a New Society, a nonviolent training network based in Philadelphia, both grew from the Quakers and both have broadly influenced the ideas and practices in the anti-nuke movement. It should be stressed that consensus is used in Quaker groups under very different conditions than in the anti-nuclear movement. Quaker business meetings have a religious character, says Northern California Friends clerk Margaret Mossman. 'There is much greater effort to find what is best for the group as a whole in terms of our identity with God'. By all accounts, consensus has served the Quakers fairly well over three centuries of practice. But an action-oriented, mass political movement struggling daily over political differences and conflicts, with people coming and going all the time, has different requirements than an enclosed, cohesive religious community.

Group process in the anti-nuke movement also draws heavily from the feminist movement. In fact, anti-nuke and peace activists commonly equate consensus with 'feminist process'. Such equations are misleading. The many feminist groups who use voting rather than consensus are hardly being 'less feminist' because of it. To the contrary, insofar as feminism asserts the need for equality and eliminating power abuse, consensus is not particularly feminist.

The consensus process popular in feminist groups is but one piece of the broader model of 'participatory demo-



cracy' adopted by the younger branch of the women's movement that emerged in the late 1960s. The model emphasised personal involvement, community, undoing the distinction between leaders and followers. Jo Freeman in *Chrysalis* (spring 1977) argues that, while there have been attempts to attribute this mode of participation as 'peculiarly "new feminist," it is in reality neither new nor especially feminist.' Freeman points out that feminists had borrowed the group style primarily from the New Left (not known for its feminism) and it has been a recurring theme in American social movement.

Feminists did, however, apply the New Left's challenge to old-style left authoritarianism in a more thorough and encompassing way. Male domination in groups, and the politics of the kitchen and bedroom, came under scrutiny; there was more self-consciousness about process and the subtler ways people use power; personal emotion and the details of daily life were recognised for their political content and value. The new feminism, and its gay liberation counterpart, brought probably the biggest advances in political thought since Marx and Engels critiqued capitalism; and the left is still trying to sort it all out.

A tendency in anti-nuclear groups is to emulate whatever is done in the feminist movement and assume we are practising 'feminist process'. But many types of groups and organisational styles come under the umbrella of the feminist movement. And there is an on-going critique and struggle among feminists on issues of leadership, power, and what constitutes feminist process. Consensus, leaderlessness, and other group methods used by feminists should not be peddled. The feminist movement has produced many valuable ideas and insights that should be explored and borrowed from. But if we do so uncritically, we won't have the benefit of learning from their mistakes.

The need for trust

Consensus in various ways reflects a middle class bias. It speaks to the socially learned middle class fear of

conflict and desire for social harmony (even if it is false harmony). It is suited to more privileged groups who can afford to spend hours and hours just 'being with the process' and who have less attachment to actually making decisions and effecting social change. It reflects the middle class value of individualism, of putting one's personal interest and needs above those of the group.

Within the anti-nuclear movement, consensus makes it difficult to involve working people and those with families, to function in general as a movement, and to discuss and decide on crucial questions of politics and strategy. Voting would not be a panacea in these areas - every group on the left has its problems whether they vote or not. But voting is at least a prerequisite to being able to address our problems and get organised in any effective manner.

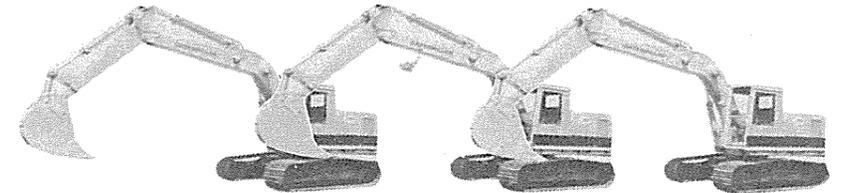
I see several obstacles to adopting a voting model in the organisations that presently use consensus. Among them are class biases, moralistic beliefs about the inherent good of consensus and evil of voting, and the near impossibility of reaching consensus on doing away with consensus (a built-in catch-22 clause in consensus). But perhaps more crucial than any of these is that people just haven't learned to trust each other. While consensus advocates often speak of the importance of group trust, the consensus method actually has mistrust at its foundation. It assumes if people aren't given the power to block that others in the group aren't going to listen to them, that their needs will be ignored. There is much in our society and our life experiences to validate such fears. But I believe there is enough humanity and caring within the ranks of the anti-nuclear movement to deserve trust. When conflict arises between individual needs and group needs, which will tend to happen, then it is the group, not the individual, which should have final say as to how the conflict will be handled, what compromises are made, where the balance will be struck. We need to start trusting our groups, which means ourselves, to make these decisions in a sensitive and cooperative way.

References and addresses for groups mentioned in this article are available from *Chain Reaction*.

Howard Ryan has been heavily involved in the anti-nuclear movement in California since 1977. He is less active now, though he still maintains links with the Livermore Action Group. This article is an edited version of a pamphlet published by the Overthrow Cluster of the Livermore Action Group, which in turn is extracted from a yet-to-be-published book by Howard Ryan, Nonviolence and Class Bias: From Mahatma Gandhi to the anti-nuclear movement. Copies of the pamphlet, Blocking Progress: Consensus decision making in the anti-nuclear movement, are available from Chain Reaction for \$2.00 (includes postage).

ROLAND MANDERSON

Undermining national parks



By Janet Rice

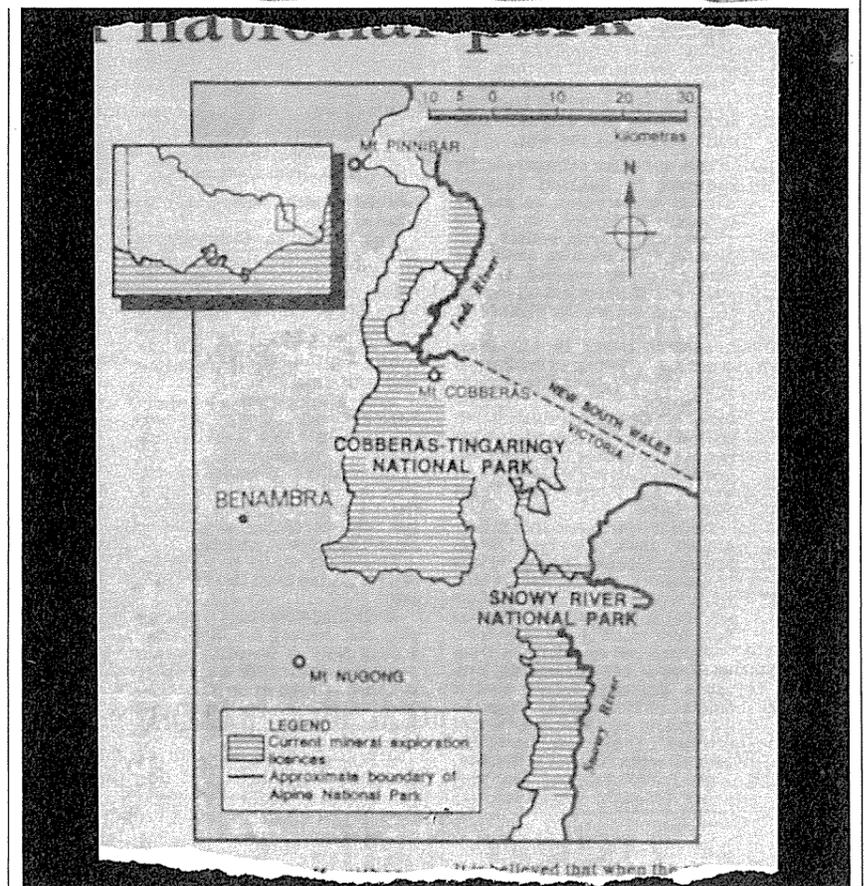
In December 1983 the Victorian state government announced its decision to proclaim the proposed Cobberas-Tingaringy National Park near Benambra in north eastern Victoria, a park which had been recommended by the Land Conservation Council in 1979. The delay in gazetted the park was due purely to what Evan Walker, the Minister for Conservation until July 1983, described as 'the very difficult mining exploration situation'.

Most of the Cobberas-Tingaringy National Park will be proclaimed during 1983. However, the areas of high mineral potential will be excluded. A consortium made up of Mining Corporation and British Petroleum will be given until 1987 to determine the sites where they consider mining to be economically feasible. Then: 'Areas not required or not approved for mining or access facilities will be proclaimed as part of the Cobberas-Tingaringy National Park in 1988'.

The conflict between mining activities and nature conservation in the area began in 1972, seven years before the park was proposed, when a Western Mining Corporation - British Petroleum (WMC - BP) joint venture began exploration for base metals. This conflict is fundamental. Far north-east Victoria is one of the few areas of the state with high mineral potential. In addition, being remote, relatively unspoilt, and with large tracts of land of high conservation significance, it is a natural for national parks.

It was only after much pressure that a proposal in early 1983 for a marble quarry in the proposed Cobberas-Tingaringy park was quashed. With a Labor party policy of total opposition to mining in national parks, perhaps it was total naivety that led activists to

Janet Rice is a project officer with the Conservation Council of Victoria and the conservation convener of the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club.



believe that the quarry proposal should have been immediately rejected.

With the December announcement came the release of 'strict new guidelines', which 'specify that neither exploration or mining be permitted in proclaimed national parks'. Unfortunately, one does not have to look far to see that a decision of this supposedly pro-conservation party has been swayed by the economic gains available by exploiting natural resources in areas

conservationists once thought sacred.

One would have to be particularly gullible to believe that the government intends to go out of its way in 1988 to disapprove of any mining proposals in Cobberas-Tingaringy. They state now, in the guidelines for mining and exploration in proposed national parks that they 'will attach considerable importance to potential direct and indirect employment generation', that they 'would give preferential consideration

to the approval of mining in cases where the mineral is import-replacing and/or of strategic significance'. Conservation is not given a look in. If the government was serious about protecting these areas of national park status, protecting 'significant features' where 'no mining activity of any type will be permitted' they would tell WMC-BP right now exactly where any activity would be completely out of the question. One would hope this would be the whole proclaimed park.

If the government sees this as not possible due to the WMC-BP's prior claims to the area, then three more years of intensive exploration is not likely to turn the tables. Unless public pressure somehow becomes a dramatic force in this issue, the areas of Cobberas-Tingaringy with economically viable mineral resources will be mined.

New guidelines

The certain exploitation of this one national park is, alas, not the only worrying aspect of the government's announcement of last December. For so called 'strict new guidelines', surprisingly little protection from mineral exploitation is afforded to both proclaimed and proposed National Parks. Directly related to this, the amount of emphasis being placed on employment through exploitation, and the potential economic worth of schemes, is alarming in areas which are reserved for their conservation value.

As conservationists in Victoria are too painfully aware, exploitative activities in national parks are almost common place. Logging, grazing, and mining activities take place in no less than ten national parks including Bogong, Otways and Snowy River parks as well as the proposed Cobberas-Tingaringy park. Yet all the guidelines say about mineral exploitation in proclaimed parks is that the government's policy is opposed to it. The Labor policy reads:

In those areas designated as being of prime conservation value there should be no mining, forestry, grazing or other commercial activities allowed. Any such activities in present national parks should be phased out.

However, with respect to mining activity, only in one park, the Brisbane Ranges, where slate quarries are present, has phasing out of mining been recommended. Government policy is not stopping activity in the Bogong National Park, the Snowy River National Park, or on Wilson's Promontory. The Snowy River case is particularly important for three exploration licences cover virtually all of the park. If a potentially valuable deposit is found, one can so easily see the government using almost the same arguments here as it has in the Cobberas-Tingaringy situation to allow mining to go ahead. Perhaps, however, because the park is already proclaimed, slightly more emphasis will be placed on the 'all environmental effects will be minimised', and the 'complete rehabilitation of the

area will be undertaken' type arguments.

Allowing exploration to continue in the Snowy River National Park is indeed giving tacit approval to allowing mining if any viable deposit is found, just as is happening with Cobberas-Tingaringy. It is ludicrous to think that the mining companies involved are exploring merely for practice, or in the hope they will find something which, miraculously, they will be able to extract without any environmental damage at all.

Exploration damage

The problem of mining activity in proclaimed national parks has been placed in the same basket as grazing and forestry - that is, 'well look, we don't like it, and we know you don't too, but it will continue'. What then do the new guidelines on mining and exploration in proposed parks say?

Firstly, there are no hindrances being placed on exploration presently occurring in either proclaimed or proposed parks. The question of disturbance to Cobberas-Tingaringy or Snowy River National Parks through exploration has not been tackled. Exploration geologists do not pussy-foot around. They work with off-road vehicles, with explosives, with picks and with large drills for obtaining core samples. They are often working in areas which are remote, and untouched and unscarred.

In almost every situation mining exploration will be allowed to continue in a proposed national park. The government's announcement of December 1983 puts it a little differently: no new exploration or mining would be approved in proposed parks, except in some special circumstances where exploration had begun in areas before they were proposed as parks.

When this statement is coupled with the fact that almost all of Victoria is covered by an exploration licence of one sort or another, and that in areas of high mineral potential, exploration would almost certainly have already begun, then the policy of opposition to mining in national parks loses a lot of meaning. In an area where economically viable mining could take place, it will take place almost regardless of the nature conservation value of that area. The guidelines state that no mining will take place in reference areas, or where 'significant features... would be adversely affected'. That still leaves an awful lot of national park.

With exploration continuing unabated then, what are the conditions and requirements that a mining venturer has to fulfil in relation to the actual mining operation? The primary one is the preparation of an Environmental Effects Statement. This must include surveys of the features of the area which may be affected, a socio-economic analysis and a rehabilitation plan. Preferential treatment will be given, however, not necessarily to proposals which are the least damaging environmentally, but to

those of economic significance, those that create jobs and earn the most revenue for the state. While these are truly laudable principles in many cases, in national parks, proposed or otherwise, the decision to mine, or not to mine should be based solely on environmental criteria. In not doing so, the prime reason for the existence of the park, whether it be the ecological, geomorphological or aesthetic significance of the area is not being upheld.

Degrading National Parks

The most disturbing aspect of the guidelines however, is the legitimisation of this avenue of exploitation of Victoria's national parks. They are a further step away from the internationally accepted definition of a national park. That definition, of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), reads, in part:

A national park is a relatively large area... where one or several ecosystems are not materially altered by human exploitation and occupation.

In Victoria there are seven national parks where grazing of non-native animals is permitted, five where forestry operations take place (including clear-felling of timber in some cases) and five where mining operations are current. Bogong National Park, for example, suffers all three. The proposed additions to the system of parks in the Alpine region are in some cases scarcely worth adding to the register of national parks, for the exploitative activities occurring now in these regions will continue once they are proclaimed as parks. In other cases, their proclamation as national parks will not occur until the timber operations (again mostly clear-felling) cease.

The degradation of the term 'national park' from the IUCN definition does not even mean that all environmentally significant areas of the state are included in such parks, or that all ecosystems are represented in the parks system. Not surprisingly, the ecosystems that are missing are those that are the most exploitable. For example, river red-gum as a forest species is not represented in a Victorian national park.

Multiple-use Management

This mixing together of often totally unsympathetic land uses is indicative of the trend towards 'multiple-use management'. Multiple-use management is the concept that, if properly managed, no uses of land are completely incompatible. It is a term favoured by foresters when justifying their intrusion into what would otherwise be considered conservation zones. Plans for timber harvesting for example are couched in terms telling us that they, experienced land managers, can manage a forest so that exploitative activities are done with the minimum of fuss, the

R. CROCKER

BILL FELLOWS

Examples of exploitation of national parks: logging, grazing, mining and tourism.

minimum of damage to the environment and all under the strictest conditions, so that we the public can have our conservation zone and a timber resource as well. The message loud and clear is don't worry about the pure concept of national parks, leave it up to us, the forests will be managed just as we know best, and you'll never know the difference.

Grazing is justified as being essential to reducing the fire hazard of an area; roads are needed for fire control. Mining of course really takes up very little room; you can tuck the mine away in an area where very few people go anyway.

Acceptance of multiple-use management depends on us feeling comfortable with the idea of land managers doing what they know is best, and us not

worrying too deeply about the things we can't see, or what the environment would have been like if humans hadn't intervened. It depends on us accepting that ten year old shining gums are pleasant enough, and not knowing the rainforest which existed there beforehand. In a rehabilitated mining area, it depends on us not knowing which parts of which ecosystems were irretrievably upset through silted, polluted streams, through land cleared for the road, through the disturbance of habitat in the mining area.

It takes a real optimist to see the trend reversing. With the creation of the new 'mega-department' of Conservation, Forests and Lands virtually all land management in Victoria is in the hands of one minister and one set of bureaucrats. Ironically, it appears that the only

parts of the state's public lands that are free from the spread of the doctrine of multiple use are Melbourne's water catchments, managed not by a land management authority, but by the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works.

Five percent of all land in the state is national park. Cynics may well ask, so what? It is surprising, with the rise of multiple-use management, that the government has decided not to proclaim all of Cobberas-Tingaringy. The same arguments that have been used could easily be crafted to justify mining within the park. Doubtless, it is only a matter of time before such a scenario emerges.

Contact: Conservation Council of Victoria, 285 Little Lonsdale St, Melbourne Vic 3000. Tel: (03) 663 1561.

GEORGE KREIGER

JOHN BROWNIE

Back to the limits

Who is rich and who is poor? What are the physical limits to the growth in global use of resources? Can the Third World attain the present levels of resource consumption of the West? Is our affluence the cause of Third World poverty and environmental damage? Is advocating the strategy of 'living simply' a real solution to solving the problems of the global economy? Ted Trainer continues the debate which began in *Chain Reaction* 34 with his article 'Limits to Growth' and was followed by Keith Redgen's reply in *Chain Reaction* 36, 'Beyond the Limits'. Readers are invited to contribute to the debate.

Keith Redgen's critical response to my article 'The Limits to Growth' (*Chain Reaction* 34) points to a few aspects of my position which should be clarified. The concern of the original article was primarily to show that one must see particular environmental problems as consequences of a deeply flawed society which is also generating many other problems. At one level the basic fault of this society can be analysed in terms of commitment to living standards that are much too high. A glance at resource estimates shows that there is no chance of all people ever having anything like the per capita resource-use rates that people in rich countries now have. It follows that continued commitment to affluence and growth will inevitably lead to more and more serious problems of resource scarcity, Third World poverty, international conflict and environmental destruction.

The apparent disagreement between Keith and myself centres on the causal significance of affluence, and therefore the value of recommending de-development and voluntary simplicity. Keith argues that capitalism is the cause of the problems and that the situation will not be altered much by urging people to drop out to frugal lifestyles. My response is that on both counts I entirely agree. I am disturbed that my original article seems to have given a different impression so I would like to emphasise or extend some of the points I made in it.

If one accepts the existing resource estimates then there is no way of avoiding the conclusion that affluence for all is impossible and therefore that, in order to ensure it for ourselves, we are taking much more than our fair share of global resources. Our affluence is therefore an important cause of

Ted Trainer is a lecturer in education at the University of New South Wales.

Third World poverty. But, as I thought I had made clear, it is the economic system which is the basic cause of our affluence and the unsatisfactory distribution of world wealth. Firstly it is a market system, which means that the rich can outbid the poor for available resources and draw the Third World's land, labour and capital into producing luxuries for us rather than into producing for those in need, for themselves. Secondly a capitalist economy cannot tolerate any reduction in the volume of production and consumption. Unless we all go on frantically consuming, and more next year than this, unemployment and bankruptcies increase and the economy threatens to plunge us all into depression. We are obliged, indeed condemned, to strive for more and more economic growth and therefore to go on generating all the big problems, as long as we adhere to this economic system. It is an economic system which does some things well, for example it encourages production, efficiency and innovation, but is most unsatisfactory at getting the right things produced and at avoiding unnecessary production, and it cannot distribute production or wealth according to human need (because it is always much more profitable to produce what the rich want).

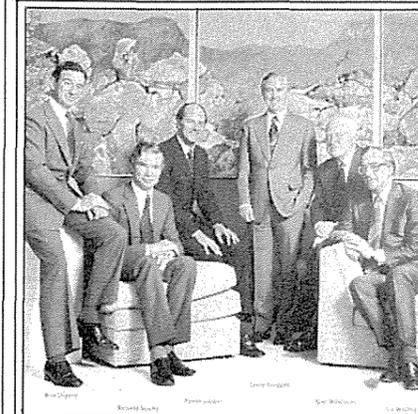
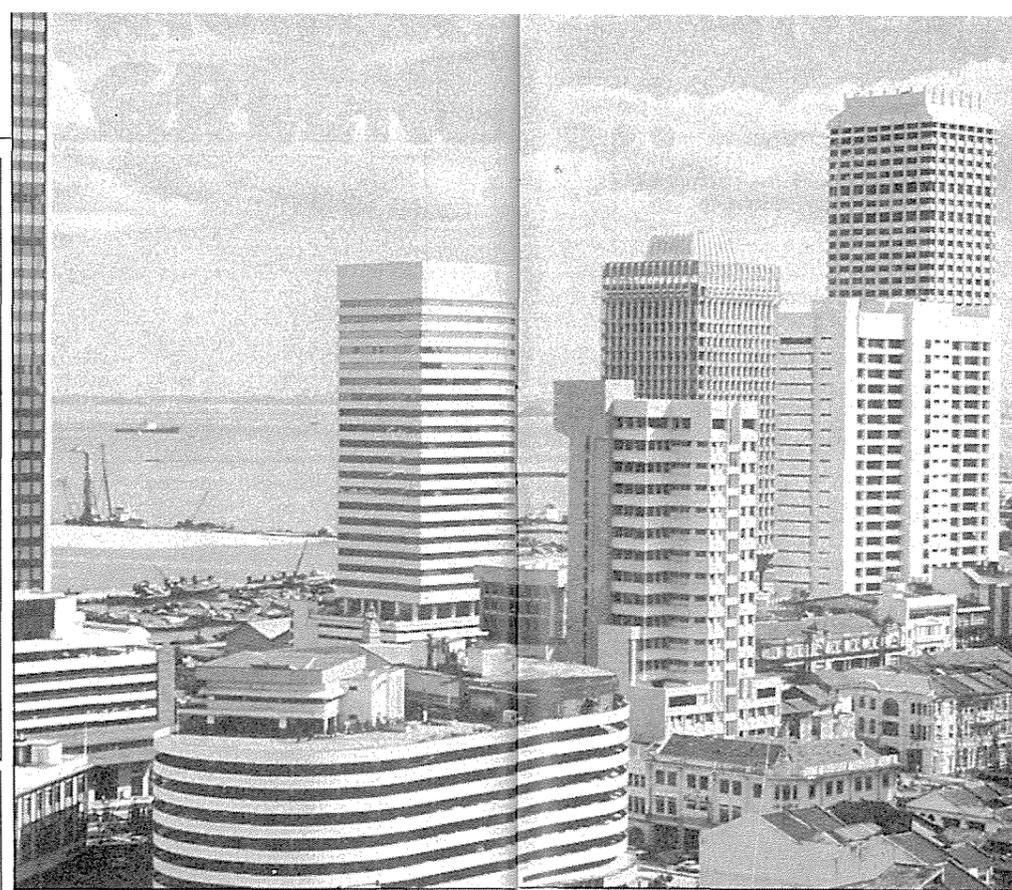
Regarding the solution, if the now vast 'limits to growth' literature is correct about the impossibility of affluence for all, then Keith cannot baulk at the claim that the solution has to involve de-development to a way of life where average rates of resource use are much lower than they now are in rich countries. It does not follow that the way to achieve that state is by simply pleading with people to cut their consumption rates, which is what he seems to think I'm advocating. Firstly our presently high per capita levels of resource use are in large part due not

to personal consumption but to the absurdly resource-greedy systems we use, such as transporting millions of people to centralised workplaces every day, throwing nutrients away via expensive sewer systems rather than recycling them through compost heaps, and especially producing food in energy-expensive ways and then transporting it around the world when most food should be grown in our neighbourhoods. Then we have huge and unnecessary water and energy systems, hoards of experts and officials to do all the things we could do for ourselves, and an entire industry spending billions to get us to buy things we do not need. Perhaps the largest part of the solution lies in shifting from these largely unnecessary institutions and systems. Neither that nor the reduction of personal consumption will occur if we just leave the changes to the consciences of separate individuals. We will get nowhere unless there are *decades* of public education and discussion leading to a level of understanding and commitment that will sustain the enormous structural change involved in phasing out unnecessary industries, decentralising, providing subsidies and assistance for change to more co-operative and self sufficient ways, etc. Unfortunately if these structural changes are to be made at all smoothly they will have to involve the state heavily (although when we get things reorganised there will be far less need for state apparatus than there is now). So it is not just a matter of encouraging individuals to drop out of the consumer rat race. In fact it is more important that enlightened individuals should stay

in the rat race to help with the educational task.

I am not suggesting that the transition is likely to be smooth. De-development means death for big (not necessarily for small) capital, so it is most likely that at some point there will be vicious struggles and that force (hopefully in the form of legislation phasing out various industries) will be needed. This will not be such a problem if the proportion calling for change is overwhelming.

Finally I must comment on Keith's apparent conviction that in any case the solution is impossible because people are so obsessed with the pursuit of affluence that they will not accept de-development and voluntary simplicity. Of course they won't - at present - but we have to work hard for a long time getting people to understand that the pursuit of affluence and growth is fatal, that it is a major source of all the big problems, that this economy has to be scrapped, and that a satisfactory alternative way *can* be conceived. At best I think this will take two decades and maybe we do not have that long. But either we tackle this gigantic task of public education and succeed at it, or we all go down the drain. The challenge to Keith is, is there any other way? My argument is that if the limits to growth theorists are reading our situation accurately then there is no other option than to work as hard as we can at getting people to understand these things so that some day there will be the necessary level of insight and will to carry the transition through.



Shell executive board members looking comfortable.

Centrespread: Singapore skyline.

Thai bankers and government officials enjoying themselves.



A case for simply living

I write to thank you for pursuing the debate on limits to growth by publishing Keith Redgen's reply to Ted Trainer's original article. It is a debate which needs to be heard and one which I would like to contribute to with the following tentative observations.

Redgen's point that it is not over-consumption but the capitalist system that produces mass-poverty is not one I wish to dispute. If one grants its truth, the vast disparities of consumption, of which our consumer society is one side of the coin, must then be seen as a by-product of that capitalist system. Within this context, Trainer's case can be restated. The 'old' crisis of capitalism (such as were witnessed in the 1890s and 1930s) are no longer the greatest danger, having been surpassed in potential for damage by the 'new' crisis of capitalism (with features such as pollution and depletion of resources).

Redgen dismisses too easily the threat of this new crisis, suggesting that we could survive it if we planned well and used alternative energy sources. However there are few signs of either of these changes coming about, at least not before great damage has been done. Catastrophe continues to stare us in the face. Indeed it is very difficult to see any solution to the problem, and it is for this reason that the debate is so important. It does not seem enough to say abolish capitalism and all will be

well. As Redgen remarks, wealth is an extremely powerful symbol in our society, and it is hard to see how socialism could change this, at least in the immediate future.

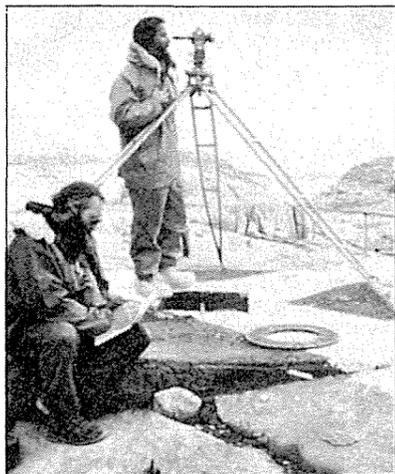
Whatever the solution, it would seem that the simply living strategy must be part of it, (for the middle classes, not for the poor) though only part, alongside other forms of political action.

Firstly, it can be of practical educational value, illuminating the amount of need generated by the capitalist system, and pointing to the damage this has done to our environment, and to how it has separated us from each other. Living simply need not involve dropping out, but it does necessitate community action, eg recycling.

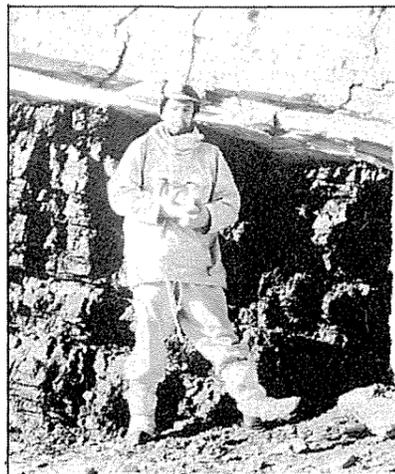
Secondly, part of the solution to the crisis of consumption facing us lies in international redistribution of wealth and resources. Simply living is a money saver, releasing money to help the Third World struggle. Charity has, and rightly so, got itself a bad name, but not all money-giving is charity. In a period such as ours when the problems are enormous, one cannot afford to wait for the revolution to solve them. The need for immediate reform is desperate and so is the corresponding need for our financial support for politically aware environmentalist and aid groups.

Stephen Howes
Melbourne

World park on ice



The process of opening up Antarctica for minerals exploitation began with scientific expeditions. Above: land surveyors. Below: an expedition stands in front of a coal seam find.



Antarctica – inaccessible, inhospitable, a desert of ice with the coldest, windiest and driest climate in the world – is the world's last remaining continent of near-pristine wilderness. The campaign to save Antarctica has not, however, strongly attracted the attention of the conservation movement, and only a few committed environmentalists in the USA, Britain, New Zealand and Australia have struggled together over the past ten years to achieve their aim of the total protection and preservation of the Antarctic environment. Most of these environmentalists have recently reassessed their approach to that struggle and have shifted from the previously used World Park strategy. Growls of anger and howls of 'sellout' coming from some quarters have prompted **Lyn Goldsworthy** to write this article, which attempts to explain the reasons behind this reassessment.

Before the Antarctic Treaty nations (generally known as Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties and hereafter referred to as ATCPs) decided to negotiate a minerals regime, the Antarctic had been under the de facto protection of its seemingly economic uselessness. The campaign to declare the region a World Park was initiated to give some legal reinforcement to that de facto protection so that in the event of changing economic circumstances the protection of the Antarctic environment would be ensured. It was seen as a simple solution for an area considered to be of unique importance in terms of its wilderness value.

In the light of the negotiations for a regime to govern mineral activity within the Antarctic, environmentalists desperately need to find new strategies by which to present their demands. This is essential if we are to be successful in achieving our original, unaltered, objective of protecting the Antarctic environment.

Although never clearly defined, the World Park was envisaged as a general protection regime which would encompass, and therefore be compatible with, the peaceful uses covered by the Antarctic Treaty. These uses included scientific activity and associated necessary logistic support, tourism, nature reserves and (perhaps) fishing. Military activities, the exploding of nuclear devices, the dumping of nuclear and

Lyn Goldsworthy works with Fund for Animals in Sydney.

other toxic wastes, and mineral exploitation were not considered compatible. The Antarctic Treaty system was seen to have sufficient flexibility to incorporate the World Park concept in its entirety.

The first major demand for the declaration of the Antarctic as a world preserve was put forward at the Second World Conference on National Parks in 1972. The conference recommended that the Antarctic Treaty powers negotiate to establish the continent and its surrounding seas as the first World Park under the auspices of the United Nations. In 1975, at a regular Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM), New Zealand took up this recommendation and proposed that Antarctica be given international park status. In so doing New Zealand indicated its willingness to drop its own territorial claim; but the proposal was not taken up seriously by other ATCPs and New Zealand allowed the proposal to lapse.

It is important to place the New Zealand initiative in a historical context. Mineral exploitation was initially raised at an ATCM in 1970. At the next consultative meeting in 1972 a study to investigate the effects of mining was commissioned. In the Antarctic summer of 1972-73, the research ship, *Glomar Challenger*, discovered hydrocarbon traces during offshore drilling tests. This together with the advent of the oil crisis and the corresponding desire of most nations to secure non-OPEC controlled oil supplies spurred the ATCPs to hold a special informal meeting on the issue in mid-1973.

New Zealand's World Park proposal was made in 1975 and was obviously a response to the World Conference on National Parks recommendation. The need to secure new sources of oil was, however, foremost in most nations' minds and this proposal was probably seen as standing in the way of national interests. It is also important to recognise that mineral exploitation was interpreted, especially by the USA, as a peaceful use of Antarctica and therefore already covered by the provisions of the Antarctic Treaty.

The 1976 Consultative Meeting decided to study the issue more fully and requested the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) to prepare an assessment of the likely environmental impacts of mining activity in the Antarctic. By the time of the next ATCM it had become imperative to complete negotiations for the Convention for Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) as a rapid escalation in fishing activity was thought imminent. Negotiations on a minerals regime were thus deferred. However, a moratorium on commercial mineral activity was declared until this regime could be completed.

The response by ATCPs to the

Continued on page 40

REVIEWS

Films

The Day After, directed by Nicholas Meyer, produced by Robert A Papazian, 35mm, colour, 125 minutes. Available from Village Roadshow. Tel: (03) 61 3811.

Reviewed by Peter Christoff

The impact of any film depends on the context in which it is interpreted. This is a banal point, but one which is central to an assessment of the effect *The Day After* has had in the USA, in Europe, Britain and Australia.

The *Guardian Weekly* (18 December 1983) reported that:

Some fifteen million people watched the American film, *The Day After*, when it was shown on British television at the weekend. The twice-weekly soap opera, *Coronation Street*, attracts about a million more and often promotes more excitement than did the attempt to portray the aftermath of a nuclear war.

Various reports from the USA emphasise that public opinion polls showed, after the screening, a slightly increased support for President Reagan and no effect, or probably an adverse effect on the peace movement. Three months after the release of *The Day After*, there is no mention of it in the media. After screening to a television audience of over 80 million people, it seems to have sunk without a trace.

Or rather, as *Der Spiegel* (No 48:1983) a West German weekly magazine, reported:

A film like *The Day After* stirred the patriotism which many Americans now feel. Simultaneously the horror, which the film presents its viewer, creates a defensive response which the renowned American psychologist, Robert Jay Lifton, has called 'psychic numbing': a narcosing of the soul.

By other accounts, the defensive response is a little more active. In the TV broadcast which followed directly after the national screening in the USA, the power of the Presidency and its wisdom was reaffirmed. One of the participants, General Daniel Graham, said:

The alternative to the A(merican) B(road-casting) C(ompany's) horror show is the creation of a defence system which protects our nation from nuclear destruction. (*Der Spiegel*, 48:1983)

The differences in context and political climate between the USA and



From the film *The Day After*.

Europe are largely obvious – as are the similarities. In Europe, the constant presence of NATO forces and the physical encirclement by bases and nuclear missile silos is as complete as is the presence of the military in Kansas, where the film is set. The difference, however, in recent historical experience now manifests itself in the European response to the Pentagon's attempt to raise the nuclear stakes and highlights the discrepancy between the environment of the film, undisturbed by war – or any sense of history at all – and that of its European viewers.

The substantial incongruity between the European audience's experiences and the film's 'environment' enable them to more critically view and reject the powerful and often almost amnesic effect of the film which (like all films) constructs its own terrain of the 'familiar'.

For Australians, who exist without those everyday reminders of potential nuclear genocide, the film's 'familiar' terrain is also alien and not immediately digestible, despite our constant diet of American television castoffs.

Yet the similarities between the film's world and those of its European and Australian viewers – not to speak of its American audience – are also abundant and disturbing. The culture of capitalism in the present 'nuclear age' is becoming increasingly universalised. Viewers of the film on

any of these continents would find the social forms familiar. The film builds towards the eruption of World War III through scenes of banal domesticity (rustic harmony, Father and Daughter, Husband and Wife, Young Love) juxtaposed with scenes of banal militarism (missile silos in farmland, an airborne command post taking off from a local airfield) and culminates in the disturbing and moving image of missiles being launched against the USSR. This however necessarily has a different effect on the imagination and suppressed fears of those who live within this environment to that of the Australian audience.

Despite this, the commonality between ourselves, crude caricatures of whom inhabit this film, and the real people they in turn represent, enables the film to draw us into sympathy with the 'human condition'. It is through their condition of powerlessness that the film's characters have the potential to gain the identification of all viewers.

The film reaches its peak at the moment when the missiles are being launched and it is at this point that it could have successfully made a strong and direct political comment on the substantial issues of the arms race and America's participation in it. Instead, and especially from this point on, *The Day After* operates as a device for blunting and censoring critical comment and debate on disarmament.

It is here, then, that we should look

REVIEWS

at the destructive impact of the film, an effect which has been more potent in the USA because of its extensive audience there and because of its 'natural' relationship to that audience. To apologise for the film's political shortcomings, as Phillip Adams has done on the grounds of it being limited by American media conventions and the political overtones of the American television broadcasting establishment, is to exonerate what ultimately was a calculated act of cinematic opportunism. The film has, incidentally, though not accidentally, become an instrument of neutralisation directed at the Freeze movement in the States. 'Freeze' was the strategy adopted by the USA disarmament movement to restrain Reagan's policies for placing Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe and developing new armaments such as the MX missile.

Likewise, to regard the film as merely forgotten or 'forgettable' (as does the *Guardian's* writer and others), is to underestimate the degree to which this film can itself actively suppress concern about the issue by returning it to the realm of personal fears and individual impotence. *The Day After* confirms ignorance, fear, fatalism and apathy as the dominant modes of response to the nuclear threat. In an American context especially, the film emphasises the powerlessness of people to reverse the arms race. It also misleads one into an expectation of a survivable, and in parts almost desirable, post-holocaust future: a New Beginning.

The first half of the film functions by drawing an American audience into an uncritical identification with all the key symbols of 'America the Great' and 'America the Innocent'. Children, ploughed fields, the rural architecture of the mid-west, the flag flying from a pole on the front lawn all serve to generate a middle-class, patriotic, depoliticised and sanitised vision. These scenes, however, exist apart and cannot be integrated into, the juxtaposed reality of military preparations and nuclear machinery which occupy this physical and social landscape literally like an alien army.

Every film creates, in the dark space of the cinema (or on television), its own version of 'reality'. The 'reality' of *The Day After* is the state of nationwide, (the film nauseatingly Americo-centric) blithe unconsciousness or suppressed terror. Resistance to or criticism of the arms race appears never to have existed — the history of the past five years of the disarmament movement is totally negated.

In the manner in which its fictional and biographical mode is used to exclude factual detail or critical insight, the film has done two things for its American (and to a lesser degree, its other) audiences. Firstly, it has begun to close off the possibility of open discourse on the issue. It denies the connection between individuals in their everyday life and the support this gives to the nuclear state. Its 'innocent' victims cannot recognise where, when or how they help to produce and reproduce that which may destroy them . . . or how they could also therefore oppose and dismantle it. Secondly, *The Day After* trivialises and diminishes the possibility of the extinction of life on a global scale by reducing it to easily digested formulae which are so free of violence that they can barely be distinguished from those of other B-grade movies. The survivors 'New Frontier', the 'back-to-the-horse-and-buggy' imagery and morality of the film's post-nuclear vision are a seductive and deliberate distortion of known nuclear realities. The breakdown of fundamental social behaviour which occurred in Hiroshima does not happen here.

With its glamorous pyrotechnics, the film has initiated its own genre of 'nuclear holocaust preview films' (eg *Testament*) which exploit the process of making the unthinkable a realisable future. The central issue of our time has begun to be commodified — sold and 'trashed' — displaced as a political fashion which quickly becomes passe.

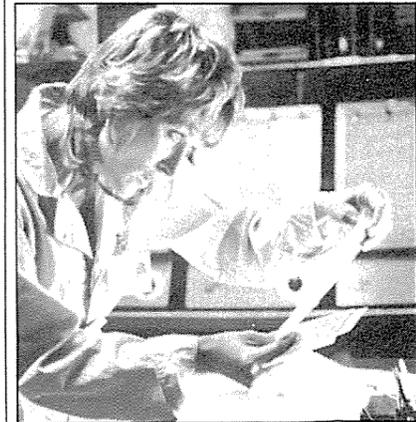
The film operates also to obscure attempts to genuinely define a critical cinematic response to the nuclear question. We should now be talking not about its banality and its fatalism, but rather about what a critical and incisive film about this issue should look like. While there have been a number of extremely good, biting films (mainly documentaries: *Home on the Range*, *Allies* . . .) made in Australia recently, none here, or elsewhere have really tackled the problem of the global perspective required to haul this question into focus. Neither have they overcome the problem of making a film which can convincingly appeal to its audience on an intellectual and an emotional plane. (John Duigan's new film, *One Night Stand*, successfully achieves the latter at some cost to the former — even given its intended teenage audience.)

Peter Watkins' soon to be made *The Nuclear War Film* seems to date the only film which will be attempting to create and maintain both an actively oppositional and a consistently international perspective throughout. It should provide both a successor to his earlier film, *The War Game*, and a much-needed antidote to the rash of radio-active Hollywood extravaganzas which loom on the horizon.

Peter Christoff is active in *People for Nuclear Disarmament* in Melbourne.

Silkwood produced and directed by Mike Nichols, 35mm, colour, 129 minutes. Available from Village Roadshow. Tel: (03) 61 3811;

Reviewed by Stephanie Bunbury



From the film *Silkwood*.

It's a recurring theme in American drama — the struggle of the little guy on a moral mission against some mean fat cat. Through courtrooms of dubious jurists; dark streets left to run wild by bent coppers and prairie towns besieged by unscrupulous *rancheros*, the democratic hero pursued his citizen's duty to make everyone listen and give the enemies of fair play and constitutional rights their just deserts. Yes sir, it all goes to show that the price of freedom sure is constant vigilance. And as the last scene always shows goodness triumph once more, we can all rest easy.

In real life, Karen Silkwood was one of those little guys. She was an ordinary American worker in a mundane job in a nuclear plant, who became concerned about the company's disregard for safety procedures. But her vigilance was in vain: her investigation into the Kerr-McGee company's attempt to falsify the results of product checks and her subsequent death are now part of anti-nuke legend. Out there in the real world, democratic heroes don't win.

But in Mike Nichols' *Silkwood*, this point is somehow lost. The problem — and the success — of the film lies in Meryl Streep's bravura performance in the title role, a tall poppy amid the nicely observed hometown squalor of Oklahoma. Whatever the real Karen Silkwood was like, Streep's version is so tremendously brave, perceptive, witty and cutely larrikinish that she emerges as a Southern version of Joan of Arc. Whatever happens in the end, however little effect her efforts had on the American nuclear industry, her personal struggle seems triumph enough.

The issue of industrial safety in the nuclear industry has been aired too little, but the point is carried home simply by the sight of a worker taking his hand out of the vacuum-sealed plutonium production line to pull

bubble-gum from Karen's mouth. 'Safety drill' is just a word: 'We can't do the drill; it'll stop production ten minutes', says one worker.

Radiation may be invisible, but the film has a sickly ambience of filth with a parade of junk food and chain-smoking. The filmmaker obviously has a strong sense of place — whole life histories are summoned up with the sight of a front porch swing or that of a middle-aged woman screaming with pain and humiliation as radiation is scraped from her skin under a shower.

Indeed, all the minor characters have a cool truth about them: Karen's lecherous supervisor, who tries to anoint her beauty spots with the pen he uses to touch up pictures of fuel rods taken in safety checks; the bosses who offer the contaminated Karen the world if she will sign them out of responsibility; the grumbling, joshing, god-fearing white trash of the production line: they are all exactly right.

But beside Karen, they just melt away. They are the little guys, and they are just not important enough. In part, this is the result of Ms Streep's captivating performance, but more to the point, it is part and parcel of the thriller genre. The camera follows Karen through every scene — the whole nuclear nightmare is seen through her eyes, and the tension builds around her personal efforts to evade detection by the bosses. She is our point of reference and we're on her side all the way.

Our hearts are with her, too, at home in the backwoods, where she lives with boyfriend Drew (Kurt Russell) and friend Dolly (Cher). As Karen becomes more and more involved in investigating the company files for the union, Drew feels the pressure mounting and moves out. They are reunited, in a too-neat echo of Karen's final destruction, after she has a car accident when he turns up driving a tow-truck. It is not long after that their re-discovered love is destroyed once and for all by her death. So Karen's final car crash becomes a romantic tragedy of love thwarted, those sweet Southern apple-pie dreams crushed by circumstance.

Kerr-McGee's machinations take rather a back seat during all this. They are pushed further into the shadows by Karen's relationship with Dolly, who is unrequitedly in love with her. Was it Dolly who told the executives about Karen's plundering of company records? In the end, one may ask, what does it matter? Only, perhaps, to those who can avert their eyes from the real struggle in the *Silkwood* story to smaller conflicts in her imagined personal life. It is a comforting thought, this, that it all comes down to troubles in the love-nest, a restful little red herring.

It is all a matter of compromise, of course. Perhaps, if the film did not disguise its subject behind a great dramatic performance, fewer people

would go to see it and the Hollywood machine would find it unmarketable. If it did not read like a thriller, if it did not mediate the social issues surrounding nuclear power through domestic love and pain, maybe Karen Silkwood would have never got any further into the public eye than the graffiti that asks passers-by, 'Who killed Karen Silkwood?' But the point remains, that millions of dollars, and a couple of hours in the cinema later, nobody has answered that question.

Stephanie Bunbury is a journalist working with *The Age* who enjoys watching films.

Books

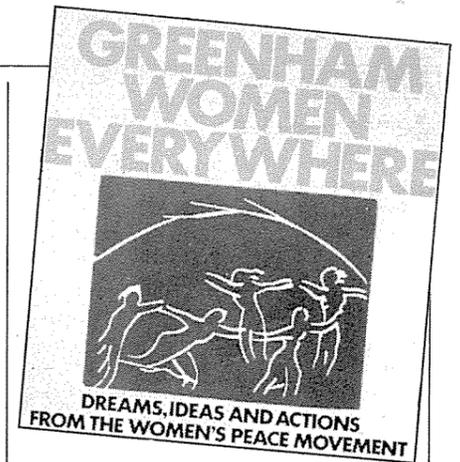
Greenham Women Everywhere: Dreams, ideas and actions from the women's peace movement by Alice Cook and Gwyn Kirk, Pluto Press, London, 1983, 128 pages, \$8.95 (soft cover).

Reviewed by Julie Kinna

Greenham Women Everywhere presents an account of activities in the British women's peace movement, centering on the camp at Greenham Common. The approach taken by the authors is descriptive, not analytical and it therefore provides an accessible introduction to, in the words of the subtitle, the 'dreams, ideas and actions from the women's peace movement'. A range of views on a number of issues are expressed, regularly interrupted by personal statements which reflect a wide variety of individual motivations for involvement in the autonomous women's peace movement. In this way the book does not take on the voice of the experts, and also avoids the fragmentation and repetition of an anthology.

As an introduction to the movement it provides a valuable skeleton — a chronology of actions centering on Greenham with parallel accounts of media coverage and legal proceedings. The eclectic nature of the presentation however, makes it an elusive target for criticism. Although not necessarily the opinion of the authors, women are often presented in the book as carers — mothers of the future generation, exercising their maternal responsibilities. Although I found presentation of a range of perspectives valuable, it remained superficial, lacking recognition of the political implications of each position.

On first reading I found the descriptions of nuclear horror many women experience in dreams particularly striking. These dreams act as motivation for many women to enter the peace movement. I stepped back from the book at this stage for two reasons; firstly, I have never had such dreams and found in fact that intensely emotional reactions can be alienating if you are not familiar with such responses. The book presents some rather rigid



models of behaviour — alternatives are not sanctioned.

Secondly, *Greenham Women Everywhere* seems to focus almost exclusively on emotional reactions to the nuclear issue. This seems counter-productive to one of the major aims of the movement — that being to provoke debate. Participation in a public debate surely necessitates a display of knowledge and technical understanding of the issues on a par with the opposition.

The press characterises women's actions at Greenham and elsewhere as 'naive', 'sincere', 'emotional', thus seeking to denigrate them by using attributes that are thought to be 'female' or weak. What is left out of their stories is that this kind of response is not the easy option it is believed to be. It is easier to think about cruise missiles in the abstract language of political debate . . . than to think about one person's death from radiation sickness. In order to be able to respond emotionally to the fact that our planet may be destroyed by nuclear weapons, each person must struggle through the layers of apathy and paralysis that surround this issue. (page 14)

The authors fail in their focus to explore the potential contradictions which it poses.

Similarly the issue of personal responsibility is dealt with in very simplistic terms:

It is hard to accept that each individual is to blame for nuclear weapons . . . If we do not stand out against nuclear weapons, then we are, however reluctantly supporting them. (page 31)

This seems naive — it does not take into consideration the complex pressures operating in people's lives, particularly women, and fails to recognise that individuals do not have the same opportunities to take part in political action.

Greenham Women Everywhere runs the risk of superficiality by touching too briefly on so many issues. For the novice, however, it provides valuable exposure to the core issues of the acceptance of personal responsibility; the mechanics of political action and the concept and practice of nonviolence. The strength of the book lies in its examination of issues of relevance to women on the edge of the movement.

Julie Kinna is a woman on the edge of the movement.

Continued from page 36

World Park proposal could not be described as encouraging. To many nations 'World' implied internationalisation, a concept to which they were vehemently opposed, and 'Park' conjured up so many images as to be virtually meaningless. Environmentalists were also unable to convince any nation, except for the brief initiative by New Zealand, to take up the proposal seriously. Despite this, they continued to push the idea as they believed it to be the best strategy through which to achieve the protection of the Antarctic environment.

The first time that the World Park concept looked untenable was when the Living Resources Convention (CCAMLR) - a fish harvesting treaty - was being negotiated. Because, on paper at least, the Convention sets out to ensure that the degree of resource exploitation is within the limits of the ecosystem, it was not seen as a major setback to the implementation of a total protection goal. It was believed that fishing and protecting the Antarctic environment were not necessarily mutually exclusive activities. However, the initiative to negotiate the minerals regime was seen immediately as a direct threat to the World Park concept. Conservationists had interpreted the absence of mineral exploration and exploitation provisions within the Antarctic Treaty system as a tacit agreement against such activity. (This was not actually a realistic interpretation. The ATCPs avoided the issue during the original drawing up of the Antarctic Treaty provisions in the late 1950s because of its complex, contentious and potentially irresolvable nature.) The initiative was perceived as an indication that there was significant interest in mineral development, and as a move away from the universal goals of peace and harmonious scientific cooperation towards monopoly control of Antarctic resources.

Environmentalists gloomily predicted that sovereignty disputes and freedom of access claims would prove irresolvable and would eventually result in the breakdown of the Antarctic Treaty system. They saw such a breakdown as undesirable because, however inadequate, the Treaty prompted environmentally sound provisions like demilitarisation and denuclearisation, and peaceful scientific cooperation to a level unprecedented in the rest of the world.

CCAMLR negotiations were concluded in 1980 and the way opened for the negotiations to begin on a minerals activities convention. The decision to open negotiations formally was made at the Buenos Aires Consultative Meeting in 1981 and formal deliberations began in Wellington in May 1982. By this time, the USA position on open access to mineral exploitation within the peaceful uses provision of the Antarctic Treaty had hardened. It must be recognised that, as in other

international forums, the USA wields considerable power within the Antarctic Treaty system.

The other Treaty nations recognised that the absence of an agreed set of rules and regulations to govern minerals activities would inevitably place the Treaty under extreme stress. High priority is placed by ATCPs on the maintenance of the Treaty, as witnessed by their response to this pressure in 1981 in endorsing a number of principles designed to strengthen the existing structure. These included recommendations to maintain the Treaty in its entirety, to recognise and not jeopardise claimancy rights and to not prejudice the interests of all humanity.

Many of the Consultative Parties are naturally resource-rich nations, or do not have the desire or ability to develop appropriate Antarctic-adapted technology. Furthermore, the existence of commercially exploitable resources, either on or off shore, has yet to be established. We may surmise that these nations have agreed to negotiating the minerals regime not necessarily because they have a definitive interest in the exploitation of minerals, but because they place a high priority on the maintenance of the Antarctic Treaty.

Despite the decision to formalise the minerals regime, environmentalists continued to push the World Park because they were confident that negotiations would break down. This confidence was reinforced by the obvious fear among the ATCPs generated by the prospect of the United Nations debate. (Malaysia led a Third World initiative to campaign for the Antarctic to become the 'common heritage of all mankind'. A move was made to have Antarctica raised at the thirty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly meeting in late 1983. The ATCPs were concerned that a UN debate would place extreme pressure on the Antarctic Treaty system and possibly cause it to break down.) The ATCPs survived the UN debate. (The meeting agreed to a full and comprehensive study to be undertaken by the secretary-general and made no moves to dismantle the existing system. Furthermore, a recent briefing with Australian government officials also indicates that substantial progress is now being made and negotiations may be completed as early as 1986. Environmentalists can no longer ignore the impending existence of the minerals regime.

By late 1983 it became obvious that the completion of the minerals regime was inevitable. The Beeby Draft, the document drawn up by Chris Beeby from the New Zealand delegation to be used as a framework for discussions, formulated techniques to bypass the supposedly insoluble problem of disputed sovereignty claims. Unfortunately, the World Park cannot consistently

incorporate minerals activity and is totally at odds with the minerals regime. To continue with this strategy is analogous to an ostrich sticking its head in the sand.

The environment movement must now reassess its strategies. Can a small and not powerful movement realistically expect to persuade at least sixteen governments with varying political philosophies, varying attitudes towards the value of wilderness, and generally reflecting the prevailing world addiction toward mineral exploitation, to drop the minerals regime? Mass mobilisation, such as that successfully utilised by the Tasmanian Wilderness Society, is not realistic or appropriate. Blocking the Antarctic, for instance, even if physically tenable and politically advantageous, would be environmentally unsound.

We must also realise that we cannot destroy the minerals regime without also destroying the Antarctic Treaty system, and, as previously noted, while the Treaty has its faults, it does go a long way towards providing the environmental protection we are seeking. Destroying the only system in the world which promotes denuclearisation, demilitarisation and scientific cooperation is like throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Furthermore, even if a World Park regime which excludes minerals exploitation could be formalised, it would surely be vulnerable to renegotiation under the pressure of a 'minerals scarcity'.

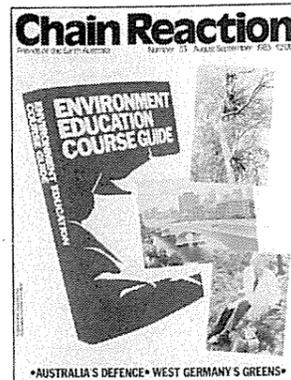
The desire to close our eyes and wish away the entire unpleasant prospect of minerals exploitation is very strong. But this denies us our strength and ability to influence the structure of the minerals regime. It also denies us the ability to create new strategies and to demand, at the very minimum, the total protection of large tracts of the region. We must recognise the good elements of the Antarctic Treaty system and ensure that the survival and biological productivity of all species and populations of animal and plant life are not endangered by any new conventions which are introduced into the Treaty system.

We must continue to demand that exploration and exploitation of minerals be not permitted. The environmental implications of mineral activity are enormous and conflict with other legitimate uses of the region. Nevertheless, recognising the inevitability of the minerals regime, we must at the same time demand that any mineral activity be restricted to limited areas and that stringent environment controls are imposed at all stages. Mineral activities should not be given priority over the other legitimate and peaceful uses of the Antarctic.

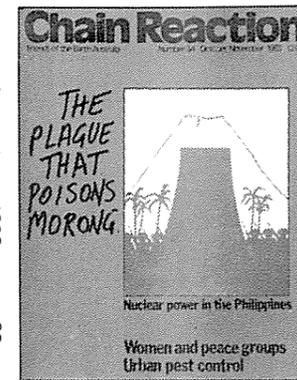
Most importantly, we must recognise that there is no simple solution to the problem of protecting the Antarctic environment.

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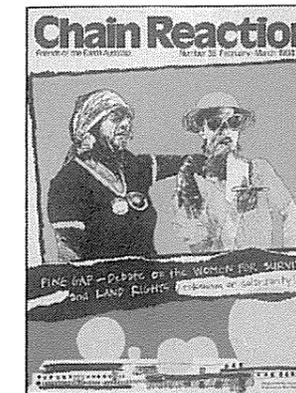
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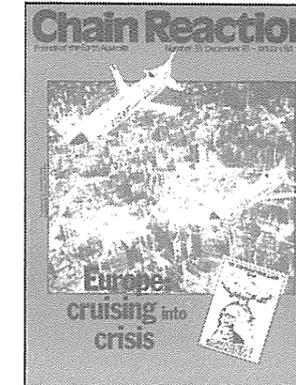
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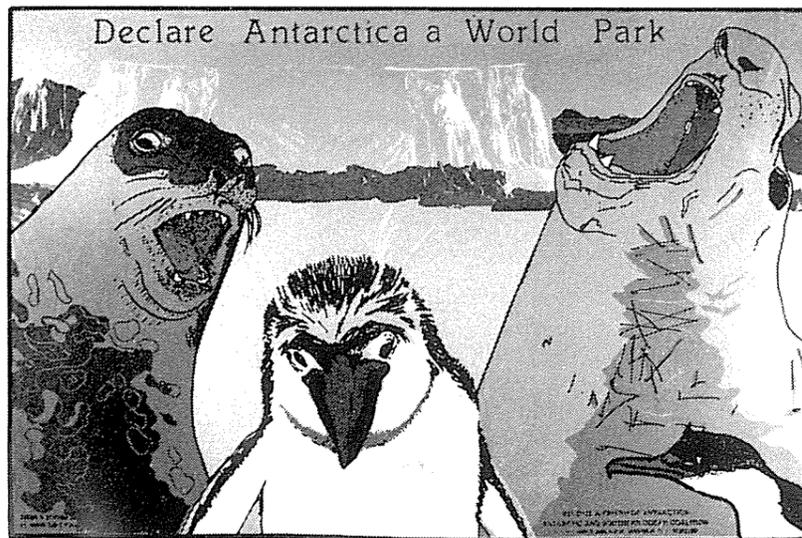
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