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SOFT ENERGY
THE ONLY OPTION
WHAT DO YOU CALL A NEWSPAPER THAT...?

- stands aside from the media establishment and represents the interests of a minority viewpoint.
- has appeared in the evening and not the morning.
- has appeared in monochrome and not in color.
- accepts written or written and graphic contributions.
- has not appeared in the evening.
- accepts written or written and graphic contributions.
- is printed in black and white.
- accepts written or written and graphic contributions.
- is not printed in the evening.

AND MUCH MORE!!!

ISSUE NOW! is our NOW at selected Newsagents and bookstores, or write to: To Box 640 Emergency News, for your subscription.
The anarchy debate began in Chain Reaction 45 with ‘Marching for Peace’, a report from Frieda Black basically supporting the actions of a group of anarchists at the 1986 Palm Sunday rally in Melbourne. A letter in response by Sarah Green opposing those actions was published in Chain Reaction 46.

I notice Sarah puts anarchist in quote marks the first time she uses it and I guess that’s her point throughout — that here on Palm Sunday, calling themselves or being seen as anarchist, while doing things that don’t seem to have anything to do with free co-operation.

This is an extremely important point for most activists, with implications far beyond anarchism. But it has different faces to it, in that there are seeming contradictions implying different conclusions, and we need to tread carefully. There is the question of people calling themselves anarchists, who are not, and there is the question of people calling others called anarchist because their enemies wish to isolate and abuse them.

The attacks on the women peace campers recently is an example of this second part. It may seem boring and irrelevant, but I really believe that we should all know and understand some of the history of what has been done to anarchists, because it is a process which confronts us with difficult but not insurmountable problems.

In this the Centennial Year of the Haymarket explosion for which anarchists were blamed and executed, and of the first May Day procession, which was led by anarchists (both events in Chicago, 1886) it’s amazing to think just how long-standing is this media distortion correlating anti-authority actions with violence. Let’s be quite clear — the evidence proves that the executed and imprisoned anarchists were innocent and that the Chicago police were running a vice and protection racket, part of which consisted of claiming plots by agitators to build fear and hysteria. This frame-up was used by State authorities and conservative groups right around the world to blunder the whole idea of a revolutionary movement and force it into the self-constraining, respectable politics of Parliament.

Repeatedly since, the same thing has happened and the victims are always the same — the people who want to struggle around their own lives and make their own decisions about when and where. They want responsibility for themselves on whose behalf they claim, and power over their own lives. This takes self-confidence and assertiveness which means they are prepared to fight back if they find injustice or repression. Basically, self-management in non-hierarchical groups is non-violent. It has to be. But the enemy must be confronted.

The trouble in Melbourne that Sarah Green speaks of arose because anarchists defined for themselves who the enemy was and how and when they were going to respond. Of course, that response came out of the personal backgrounds and psyches of these anarchists and, I would say, was terribly limited, with rather too much of the male heroic because of that.

The wonderful women of Pine Gap, Cockburn Sound and Parliament House lawns also defined for themselves who the enemy was but were much more creative in their response (see Dwayne Campbell’s articles in November Rebel Worker). They refused to allow their spinal duties and their camp to be shaped by anyone other than themselves.

The real tragedy of much of the anarchist movement, especially in isolated English-speaking Australia, is that the solid achievements of anarchism are simply not known. Anarchists are not perfect, and nowhere has Utopia been created, but as just one example: the Spanish anarchists controlled huge areas of land in the 1930s and initiated major changes in social justice, industrial organisation and agriculture. These reforms, many of which would be extremely interesting to Chain Reaction readers, were based on the affinity group, joined together in federations, not hierarchies. In this way, the transport system continued to run, the factories continued to turn out buses, machinery and aeroplane engines, and food continued to reach the collective shops, and the utilities continued to produce water and electricity.

So, I tend to agree with Sarah on this point. Those demonstrators who attacked the pro-Aussie group showed no knowledge of anarchism in what they did. They might have been more positive, and constructive things for me to voluntary co-operation and self-management — for example to undermine the social revolution in Spain. In this and in other cases the evidence is clear of lies being told about anarchists by people whose centralised form of organisation gives them a greater chance of reaching the public through media, either corrupt or partisan.

Keep Gippsland Green

On Sunday 23 November the East Gippsland Coalition, a grouping of Victoria’s major nature conservation organisations, gave the people of Melbourne a chance to publicly express demands for the protection of East Gippsland forests from the ravages of clearfelling and woodchipping. Under the ‘Keep Gippsland Green’ banner, over 7000 people participated in the biggest ever demonstration over a Victorian conservation issue.

The big crowd reflected the Coalition’s work in building an active and visible public base for the campaign to keep Gippsland green. Over the past year public pressure has swung the political debate from one in which the ALP could make up its mind over whether to create any parks at all, to the present state where the issue is the extent of three new national parks in East Gippsland.

From the springboard of the rally and the establishment of strong and growing of the social revolution in Spain. In this and in other cases the evidence is clear of lies being told about anarchists by people whose centralised form of organisation gives them a greater chance of reaching the public through media, either corrupt or partisan.

Activities at the rally were designed to bring together people and encourage them to join the fight for Gippsland. The day began with nature rambles in the Botanic Gardens where people were introduced to examples of East Gippsland’s unique and diverse plant community, from temperate rainforest to dry, open woodlands. East Gippsland is a natural wonderland of international significance.

After the rambles, people assembled in the Domain to hear Linda Putman of the East Gippsland Coalition, and Bob Brown. They spoke of the global importance of East Gippsland’s forests. Bob Brown told the gathering of the rate of world forest destruction and reminded us that people acting together have, and will, protect the earth. Linda Putman spoke of the majesty of the forests which include the world’s tallest flowering plants. She drew a comparison with the Arts Centre tower (which a few days before gained prominence as a fly-pole for a huge forests banner). The trees of East Gippsland are over three-quarters of the height of this Melbourne landmark.

The procession was led by a giant Tiger Quoll, representative of the animals of East Gippsland threatened by destruction of their forests.

The rally’s destination was a concert featuring The Flying Emus, Broderick Smith, Paul Kelly, with Coloured Stone and Goanna heading the bill. The rally and concert sent a powerful message to politicians that they cannot brush aside the demands of conservationists. It was the first shot in a growing movement to keep ‘Keep Gippsland Green’.

Contact the East Gippsland Coalition: Tel: (03) 663 1561. Report by John Stone and Peter Tucker of the East Gippsland Coalition.
Algae, yeasts, bacteria and molds are growing so fast in the core of the Three Mile Island Unit-2 reactor that they are clogging filters and pumps, according to an Environment Protection Authority report. The report says regular spraying of blackberries beside streams could cause herbicide levels in the wasteways to exceed permissible maximums and was completed as a result of complaints from local residents about the water quality of the Albert and Little Albert Rivers in early 1986. The residents had complained that Conservation Forests and Lands Department spraying of nonionic weed killers hadn't contaminated their water supply and that high amounts of suspended solids in the water were damaging their pumps. One resident claims herbicides caused the death of trees along riverbanks.

The report says blackberry control spraying wide of streams could be expected to cause short-term increases in herbicide levels. A quick check of 1980 report which showed that spraying along the nearby Tara River caused contamination by the poison 2,4,5-T and amitrole well above permissible levels. Concentrations of 0.05 parts per million of 2,4,5-T and 0.24 ppm of amitrole were found close to the area. The poisons were still being detected 8 km away. The maximum permitted levels of 2,4,5-T and amitrole under the Victorian Health Act are 0.02 and 0.01 ppm respectively.

The German baby-food company, Milupa, launched a £2 million promotional campaign during summer 1986 to obtain a larger share of the UK market. The company is also distributing 3 million samples and 4 million "10 pence off" coupons to mothers. BEAN groups in Germany and the UK have vigorously protested against this massive commercial offensive and point out in a letter to the World Health Organisation (WHO) that it is in blatant contradiction of the company's stated intention to stop undermining breastfeeding.

Sources: Consumer Currents

REEF REFORESTATION PROJECTS

Reforestation projects in Gipsland's Szelebecki Range are polluting local rivers with herbicides and sediments, according to an Environment Protection Authority report. The report says regular spraying of blackberries beside streams could cause herbicide levels in the wasteways to exceed permissible maximums and was completed as a result of complaints from local residents about the water quality of the Albert and Little Albert Rivers in early 1986. The residents had complained that Conservation Forests and Lands Department spraying of nonionic weed killers hadn't contaminated their water supply and that high amounts of suspended solids in the water were damaging their pumps. One resident claims herbicides caused the death of trees along riverbanks.

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Sources: Consumer Currents

ROXY CONTRACT DOUBTS

Western Mining Corporation and British Petroleum Co. of Australia have contracted to sell the Swedish Steel Europe Board 300 tonnes of Roxby Downs uranium per year for the next ten years. Roxby Downs is due to come on stream in 1988 and this, the first contract signed, will have to be followed by many more if the 2000 tonnes per year production of uranium is not to end up as yet more fodder for the world-wide uranium glut. According to Nuclear Fuel, petroleum sources have hinted that the project could be scrapped if there aren't enough contracts to warrant sign-up.

Sources: WISE, Glen Aplin, Voltascope

KAKADU LISTING DELAY

The Federal Government will introduce legislation to prevent mining in the Kakadu National Park following the failure of its High Court bid to clear the way for World Heritage listing of stage two of the park.

The High Court's three most senior judges refused an application by the Government for special leave to appeal against an interim injunction restraining it from supporting the listing of all of stage two. A spokesman said the Federal Court injunction would allow the Government to support the listing of all of stage two, except areas about 65 square kilometres over which the mining company Peko Wallans has an interest. But the Government had decided it did not want those areas to be excluded from the listing. Because the World Heritage Committee does not meet again until November 1987, the High Court decision has effectively delayed for a year the Government's attempted listing of stage two. The senior judges said there was no evidence that delay would have any detrimental effect.

If the Government's spokesman said that the Minister for the Environment, Mr Barry Cohen, who introduced an amendment to the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975 to prevent mining in the park, the Government hopes that the amendment will be passed by the Autumn session.

Source: Age

Two military plutonium plants at the Hanford nuclear reservation in the State of Washington in American, plutonium for nuclear weapons. In the 29 September incident workers started to transfer plutonium-bearing solution to a tank where it could have formed a critical mass. Critically would produce intense radiation and large amounts of heat and could cause an explosion in the 1940s. Five people have been killed in the US in criticality accidents since the 1940s.

Source: Nature

The Greenpeace conservation organisation has used a bloodstain adterity to force eight international sports shoe companies to stop selling shoes in Britain that are made of kangaroo leather.

Greenpeace claims to have pledges from Adidas, Diadora, Lotto, Minco Sports, New Balance, Nike, Puma and Tazchni not to sell in Britain shoes with kangaroo-leather uppers from 1987 onwards. But two of the companies - Adidas and Minco — told the Weekend Australian they would return to the British market in 1988 with kangaroo-leather shoes if customers demanded it.

The successful campaign used by Greenpeace in Britain may be repeated in the United States and Europe. Greenpeace is determined to drop the slaughter and now has four people in Britain, Australia and North America devotion their time to the issue. In London, Greenpeace representative Ms Lorraine Thorne said the industry was "self-regulated, cruel and ecologically unwise". She said the industry was responsible for one of the largest massacres of wild mammals in the world.

Source: Australian

THE ODDS

Until recently scientists said that the chances of a serious accident in a nuclear reactor were one in a million years. With 400 reactors in operation that meant a risk of one in 2500 years. Now, after Chernobyl, Three Mile Island and Windscale, Swedish and West German scientists have recalculated the odds. They say the chances of a serious accident at a nuclear power station are as follows: 75 per cent chance of one in 5 years, and 90 per cent chance of one in 20 years.

Sources: ABC Radio National/ternson
MONKEY EXPORT BAN

The Philippines has acceded to international pressure to ban the export of all wild primates from their country. The ban will severely affect the traffic in crab-eating macaques (the species used in dental research at the Royal College of Surgeons). Indonesia now remains the only major supplier of this primate.

Source: WISE communique

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HAZMIN!

A General Accounting Office (GAO) report has found potentially dangerous soil and groundwater levels of solvents, nitrates, chloride, fluorides, streptomycin, cadmium, selenium, mercury, iodines, arsenic and chromium at eight of nine US Department of Energy facilities which is investigated.

Source: WISE communique

EARTH NEWS

ANIMAL MINE DETECTORS

The US Navy is spending millions of dollars annually studying and training porpoises, dolphins, seals and whales. Navy officials say the dolphins are trained to search for signs of oil spills, and to locate the equipment used to clean up the spills. The dolphins are used to detect objects from great depths and to serve as underwater sensors. However, many of the research programs are classified and hidden from public view.

The Navy conducted a special experiment in the Charleston, South Carolina, harbour in which porpoises were used to detect mines. The test was considered highly successful because the dolphins were able to detect about 80 percent of the mines — a rate that meets or exceeds the Navy's experience with various mechanical devices. The test was part of a program focusing on the use of mammals for underwater surveillance and object-recovery purposes.

The information stated, 'They don't try to move them, just find them.'

Source: Liberator (UK)

MONKEY EXPORT BAN

The British Labour Party is committed to winding down nuclear power. If Britain goes to the polls before the Spring of 1988, as is generally predicted, an incoming Labour government would phase-out the use of nuclear power as soon as it is technically and economically feasible. The Labour party's policy is one of a major shift to the exploitation of renewable energy sources.

Refusing to buy power from French nuclear-power stations via the Channel link.

Reprocessing of Magnox spent fuel will continue at Sellafield while an alternative way of handling the fuel is sought. The thermal oxide reprocessing plant now under construction at Sellafield will be completed, but the £1.5 billion scheme will be turned into a R&D facility for waste management.

Hazardous waste management activities, meanwhile, will be broadened to include wind, wave and tidal power.

New report from the Institute of Energy on Energy for the Future critical to the failure of long-term energy policy in Britain. The Institute calls for an energy policy which involves combining the rapid development of alternative energy sources and the introduction of a trading system for energy facilities which it plans for a European reprocessing plant for fast-breeder reactors at Dounreay.

Source: New Scientist

NUCLEAR WIND-DOWN

A number of internal BP documents were made public at a media conference conducted by the Watching Brief media team in Melbourne late in October. Several pages of briefing notes and strategy papers reveal details of company and Government operations and negotiations relating to uranium mining in particular.

Some of the matters covered include:

- Prospects of sales of uranium to Taiwan and how to get around the fact that Taiwan isn't a member of the Non-Proliferation Agreement. Trade Minister Dawkins was seen to be in favour of the sales. Foreign Minister Hayden surprised everyone by saying he would examine the possibility, and then concluded that it would breach the law and Australia's nuclear safeguards policy.

- Olympic Dam Marketing, which tires to sell uranium from Roxby, has approached the Department of Trade for approval to negotiate sales with France.

- There is a dispute in South Australia between the government and the Joint Venture which tires to sell uranium to France. The debate heats up in that Australian company is backed by Ron Payne, who is not supporting any changes and will monitor closely any new schemes from Dr Company.

- The company is advised that 'It is important for BP to be active in community relations' with Roxby residents. The agreement not to build the Olympic Dam was not a good one for the company. BP if the uranium debate heats up in that State.

- BP leaks: a removal of floor prices for uranium and will give special consideration to allowing uranium to be sold for less than the current floor price of $US531 for some contracts.

- South Australian Premier John Bannon opposes any changes to the original agreement unless there is agreement by all parties involved, or if there were the gravest possible differences between the Government and the Joint Venture. Bannon has publicly opposed sales of uranium to France but has rejected calls to amend the Indenture Agreement on those grounds.

- There is a dispute in South Australia between the Min­ister for Health, John Connolly, and the Minister for Mines and Energy, Ron Payne, over the export quota for Roxby. Payne is responsible for health, safety and radiation protection. A number of internal BP documents were made public at a media conference conducted by the Watching Brief media team in Melbourne late in October. Several pages of briefing notes and strategy papers reveal details of company and Government operations and negotiations relating to uranium mining in particular.

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Tropical rainforests once covered a sizeable portion of the earth, stretching from Central and South America across to Africa, South-East Asia and the Pacific Islands. Once taken for granted, the existence of the tropical rainforest is today at a point of crisis. Nowhere has forest destruction taken place at a more frightening pace than in the Asia-Pacific region. In 1979, Malaysia and Indonesia alone accounted for 58 per cent of the total world production of hardwood logs and 75 per cent of all hardwood log exports. The share of forests to total land area fell in the Philippines from 60 per cent in 1960 to 27 per cent in 1985, in Thailand from 53 per cent in 1961 to 29 per cent in 1985. It is clear that much of the forests of tropical Asia will be gone forever by the first or second decade of the next century unless some very drastic steps are taken to reverse the current trend. Since rainforest resources are almost entirely situated in the Third World, their destruction has grave implications concerning the development prospects of those countries.

It is urgent that this rainforest resource crisis be brought to the world's attention. The Conference on Forest Resource Crisis 6-8 September 1986, brought together from 21 countries' representatives from active non-governmental organisations of the Third World and industrialised nations, concerned planners in regional agencies, researchers and educationalists from universities, and members of the media. The conference identified the South-East Asian insular countries (Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei and the Philippines) as the region where tropical deforestation is highest in the world today, the main cause being commercial logging. In Central America huge tracts of rainforest are being cleared for cattle grazing in order to feed the hamburger demands of North America. Large-scale mining and construction of huge hydro-electric dams also pose a threat to the Amazon. Reports from various Third World participants revealed critical situations exist in their respective countries. The common factor was rapid deforestation leading to drastic ecological consequences, signs of which are already evident.

Experts at the conference warned of topsoil erosion, destruction of catchment areas, and the disruption of the hydrological cycle which could lead to world climatic changes. A number of participants emphasised the plight of tribal peoples whose lands and homes were being taken over by timber companies and projects. Such people directly depend on the tropical rainforest number about 200 million world wide. Destruction of the tropical rainforest will destroy their livelihood and culture. For countries which rely on timber revenue for development funding, unchecked deforestation will also threaten that source of revenue. It has happened to Thailand already: once an exporter of valuable tropical timbers, today it is an importer. The demise of the timber industry naturally results in unemployment. In Malaysia, where timber production is now controlled due to forest depletion, employment in the industry has dropped from just under 95,000 in 1983 to just over 73,000 in 1985.

The conference brought to participants' attention the fact that tracts of vulnerable forests are being destroyed for the construction of houses which are a symbol of prestige. Much tropical wood is being used for sustaining luxury consumer lifestyles in industrialised nations, with exotic furniture and disposable chopsticks being two examples.

Participants at the conference exchanged valuable information and experiences. Activist groups in the industrialised nations related campaigns for alerting their communities to the effects of their lifestyle on Third World forests and tribal peoples. Strategies for lobbying governments and institutions involved in projects causing deforestation were also discussed. Individuals and groups from the Third World related their efforts in persuading their respective governments of the need to curtail deforestation in order to avoid ecological and economic crisis. The conference ended with the formation of a World Rainforest Network (WRN) to link groups and individuals involved in the effort to save the tropical rainforests. In Australia, the contact is the Rainforest Information Centre, 7 Wetherspoon St, North Lismore, NSW 2480. This centre will act as the co-ordinator for Australia and New Zealand in what will be a concerted, worldwide campaign. It is hoped that the WRN will be able to get observer status at the first conference of the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) in Japan in 1987. The WRN also plans to lobby ITTO members to adopt a code of conduct for sustainable forest management and to set up a fund to protect areas of rainforest.
In September 1985 FOE PNG was at an all-time high. Our nuclear-free Pacific working group organised a month of films culminating in a panel discussion during April/May 1985. In August, further shows and poster displays were held for Hiroshima and Nagasaki Days. It is from this point that something of a downward turn began when several of our very active core members left PNG either permanently or for extended periods. However, we are glad to report that we are redounded by some encouraging developments concerning PNG's first ever project - the Gogol woodchopping operation in Madang province.

This is the largest logging operation in Papua New Guinea and the first on this scale in the tropics that utilises mixed tropical tree species for woodworking production. Between 1973 and 1983 a total of 1-400 hectares has been cleared. Eighty-seven per cent of the cleared forest has degenerated to secondary regrowth and grasslands, while only a small area has been redeveloped for re-afforestation. Also, forest trees would be planted along with the cash crops.

With the invaluable assistance of Dr Simon Sadi of the University of Papua New Guinea in liaising with the villagers and forest officials, we have now reached the point of being able to place our first order of cocoa seeds. This initial order is a way of a pilot project and will account for less than $1000 of the money. When we are able to assess the success or otherwise of the project we will go ahead and commit more money. We feel very optimistic about the project.

In general, our immediate response with one of the village leaders to find out what sort of trees they would like to plant. They favoured cash crops. While from our point of view this is not quite ideal, our objective is to assist the people of Gogol. The forest on which they had depended for all their needs was gone. The promised development project had not materialised nor had anything like the expected volume of re-afforestation. Also, forest trees would be planted along with the cash crops.

People from its earliest days. Our former secretary, Nola Stewart, visited the area three times. Through Nola's efforts we redeveloped for re-afforestation in 1983 a total of 3-400 hectares culminating in a panel discussion - the Gogol project had not materialised nor did we have anything like the expected volume of re-afforestation for all their needs was gone. The promised development project had not materialised nor had anything like the expected volume of re-afforestation. Also, forest trees would be planted along with the cash crops.

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If you relied on TV news for information you could be forgiven for thinking that the Women for Survival Camp in Canberra began the day a woman kicked a aeroplane. In fact we had been camped outside Parliament House for a week by then. And if you believed everything you read in the papers, you might well think that women spent their time in Canberra pestering politicians’ feet and assaulting Senators and photographers! In an effort to balance the distorted media coverage of the women’s camp, I’d like to share with you some of the actions and spirit of the camp.

Women camped on the lawns outside Parliament House for two weeks from 13 October 1986. Parliament began sitting on Tuesday 14 October, and politicians arriving at the airport and at Parliament were greeted by groups of women singing songs for peace and chanting ‘Close Pine Gap’. Chanting, banner-waving women on the steps of Parliament House were a recurrent presence throughout the camp, especially as politicians arrived each day.

World Food Day fell on Thursday 16 October and we performed a wonderful piece of theatre outside Parliament, expressing our opposition to the proposed Plant Varieties Rights legislation, to the irradiation of food and to the current exploitation and impoverishment of Third World countries by the rich countries, especially focusing on the insane extravagance of the arms race while people starve. This piece was so good we took it to perform in the mall in Canberra the same day. As well, a discussion on these issues was held back at the camp with Senators Janet Powell and Jo Vallentine and Penny Lee from the Australian Council for Overseas Aid.

About 200 women were camped there in the first week, and at the weekend hundreds of women poured in from local areas and interstate by car and off planes, trains and buses, the excitement growing with the numbers. On Friday night there was a ‘Reclaim the Night’ march, one of the most thrilling I’ve ever been in, as hundreds of black-clad women bearing flaming torches strode up the centre of town, chanting and singing and finally dancing in the mall.

Sunday was the big day — 19 October — the date from which the lease on Pine Gap can be terminated with one year’s notice. We set off on foot to the US Embassy, a sea of colour and sound, with all our banners, music and songs. One of the joys of Canberra for demonstrators is that everything is there, so on our way through the embassy belt we chanted New Zealand for its anti-nuclear stand, and blused South Africa, calling for an end to apartheid and freedom for African people. At the US Embassy, we sang: angry chants calling for the end of foreign military use of this country, beautiful melodies expressing our love for the earth, songs of determination and hope. A woman shared a poem she had written on behalf of this country and women suffering and working against uranium mining and export.

At midday we were back at Parliament for the Spiral Dance. A thousand women linked hands and encircled the House — what a thrill it was to know that we had reached all the way round, despite initial attempts by the police to prevent us. Our police liaison collective did a great job! Energy was high, and we spiral-danced around the Parliament and in the street for an hour or more, to the beat of the drums, women weaving in and out of the fluid, ever-connected spiral; such a contrast to the stark, rigid box of Parliament House.

The Pine Gap lease date is also Maralinga Day and in the afternoon Women for Survival, led by Aboriginal women, marched to the British High Commission to express anger and outrage at the explosion of atomic bombs on Maralinga, and to call on the British Government to take responsibility for compensation to the Aboriginal peoples and for the clean-up of the wasteland they created.

It was a fantastic and successful day and so it is little wonder that from the following day, hostile politicians set out to provoke confrontation, the media eagerly joined in to attempt the obscure the issue.

One result of all the hostility and scaremongering in the media was a level of public interest so intense that crowds of people gathered at the front of the camp day and night; some came to abuse us, many stayed to talk. We talked ourselves hoarse about issues of war, peace, feminism, power; we gave out leaflets about Pine Gap; we collected signatures on our petition against Pine Gap. This direct contact with people is not often found at demonstrations and I believe it’s at least as important and world-changing as any well-presented media event. Even the group of macho men who set up a protest camp against us came down on their second day to say that they realised they’d been wrong, that they now understood what we were about, and that they were sorry for the trouble they’d caused!

As the week went on we continued to pressure Parliament both from the outside with our presence on the lawns and on the steps, and on the inside: women met with Bill Hayden to present our case; others lobbied their local Members; we presented petitions to the Senate and the House of Representatives and we managed to sneak a banner in to the Public Gallery during Question Time. Balancing the attacks of right-wing politicians, women parliamentarians sympathetic to our cause — Labor, Democrat and Independent — spoke out in Parliament on the issues of Pine Gap, the right of public protest and the importance of the women’s peace movement.

Throughout it all the women’s spirit and energy was strong. We worked well together, keeping the mundane necessities of the camp going, defending the camp nightly against predatory men who couldn’t cope with the notion of independent women, and supporting and caring for each other.

The over-the-top hostile reaction in the media to women’s space was a clear sign of how taboo it still is in this patriarchal society for women to work together and to find our own solutions. Seeking each other out against the isolation that men tried to keep us in and control us by for so long. We will not be silenced now. Women have something important to say to each other and to the world. Feminist values have to be affirmed in this violent, necrophilic culture; women’s understanding of the interconnectedness of life is much needed in a society marching towards environmental and nuclear destruction, and women’s space is a first necessity in the process of liberating women from male domination and so liberating us all from the patriarchal pursuit of war.
The cost of the Bicentenary

You cannot escape the South Australian Bicentenary, or its ideology. Its logos, emblems, registration stickers, disposable drink containers, serviettes, are displayed on flags outside local councils and businesses along the main street of Adelaide. It is stamped on broadleaf wrappers, sweaters, T-shirts. So far, the Bicentenary has involved significant members of the trade union movement and the Aboriginal community, as well as a spectrum of community groups and local councils. There are events every day: the Royal Show and the Festival of the Arts, ‘re-enactments’ and extravaganza openings, motorcycle rallies, funfests, flower shows and family reunions. The Bicentenary is based on a strategy using community involvement to attract tourism and investment capital.

If we look behind the liberal facade, we find an event founded on racism, supporting conservative ideologies of nationalism and colonialism. The Jubilee presents us with the image of a proud pioneering history and a happy intergrated community. In doing so it whitewashes the history of Aboriginal genocide and smooths over the divisions amongst us of class, race and gender. The sheer enormity of the event has silenced many of us in our confusion, effectively immobilising opposition.

Our desire to write this article comes from the uncomfortable silence of opposition to the South Australian Jubilee and the forthcoming Bicentenary celebrations. We are both white feminists, involved for some years in the anti-nuclear movement. We have had contact with the Kokatha people, traditional owners of Roxby Downs, and face the issue of land rights. We have worked to expose the links between our anti-nuclear work, our feminism, environment and indigenous peoples’ struggles. Since 1985, we have worked with three Aboriginal women to produce the White Invasion Diary 1985 as a challenge to the South Australian Jubilee.

Several drafts of this article have been circulated to nearly twenty people in South Australia’s Left, including two Aboriginal women. This has challenged and clarified our writing and consolidated links between us.

The South Australian Bicentenary is celebrating 150 years of white settlement, its people. From their experience with the Jubilee, Miller discuss what the Bicentenary holds in store.

We are familiar with the US’s use of nationalism to justify military, political and economic intervention in other parts of the globe, particularly Central America. The Australian Government is less aggressive, but has a similar arrogance towards the peoples of the Pacific and the Aboriginal community. Just as we support the Nicaraguans against US military interventions, we also need to support the Aboriginal community’s fight for land rights and self-determination. Challenging the Jubilee and Bicentenary is part of this.

The Jubilee aims to provide something for everyone including the ‘left’, particularly environmentalists and Aboriginal communities. It has promoted, and sometimes funded, projects such as the greening of Adelaide, cycle tracks, the restoration of old buildings, playgrounds and a disability resource centre. Many of us have lobbied for such projects in the past. Now we are left with the difficult question of whether or not to participate, whether to take employment on a Jubilee project, whether the project can be rescued by involving Aboriginals or at least discussing it with them.

In South Australia there has been a collective sigh of relief that no major ‘Left’ organisation is significantly involved with the Jubilee. However, an uneasy silence prevails, as some amongst us take Jubilee funded jobs and many of us attend Jubilee productions. Our responses have been individual and isolated...a passive resistance of minimal effect.

It is common in politics to rank issues in order of importance. But it is a dangerous situation to be a colonised people. Our position is as bad as any other colonised country. We’re not respected as warring indigenes like the American Indians, because our resistance to invasion has been differently whitened out from history. They stole our land, our children and they feared a policy of genocide and assimilation on us...it cannot be a celebration for Aboriginal people, and if it can’t be a celebration for us then it shouldn’t be a celebration for non-Aboriginal Australians.

Though only a State-based celebration, the Jubilee vigorously promotes a nationalistic feeling, which will support the Bicentennial celebrations. The proud-to-be Australian feeling that is encouraged is all part of the acceptance of confrontation between nations, competitive attitudes between different peoples and the militarisation of our society. It is founded on racism and cultural imperialism, obscuring any sense of internationalism, undermining the solidarity of people across national boundaries, and maintaining the control of international capitalism.

We look behind the liberal face of the Jubilee, and the Bicentenary, or its ideology. Its logo emblazons motorbike rallies, funfests, flower shows and family reunions. The Bicentenary is based on a strategy using community involvement to attract tourism and investment capital.

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We have much to gain by seeking cooperation and solidarity among peoples in struggle. By finding ways to support each other or at least to avoid undermining each other, we all move forward in our strengths. As Ronnie Gilbert sings:

And in the name of progress
how we ground each other down.
But no one is the winner when you're building on bloody ground.
We're a people born of many shores
our journey's so entwined.
And we'll be on a sinking ship
if we leave anybody behind.
Don't want to be a melting pot.
We're a rainbow family
And it's gonna take everything we've got
to set each other free.
We may have come here on different ships
But we're on the same boat now.

Developing a dialogue with Aboriginal communities (and amongst ourselves) is vital. As Anglos, we can learn much from Aboriginal political tactics and processes. Hopefully, we can also make accessible our tactics and resources to Aboriginal organisations.

While a useful political statement or slogan, an outright boycott of the celebrations is not a practical option. Can we stop buying bread, using the roads, posting letters or using government services? Even if we could, as white Europeans occupying Aboriginal land, we are all implicated in the celebrations. No section of the European community, including the women's movement, has negotiated treaties with the Aboriginal communities. Whether we celebrate or not, our relationship with Aboriginal Australians remains unresolved and, too often, not even discussed. In the long term, the Jubilee and the Bicentenary are just further examples of the continued dispossession of Aborigines from their land — just another year of living under racism.

Whether we participate or not is still a question that each group and individual must face. We are a long way from a collective, all-encompassing response. However, a fundamental issue for us all is Aboriginal land rights and self-determination. We need to incorporate these issues into our lives, more than a sticker on the fridge and the motion of support passed at a meeting. We cannot continue with the racist assumption that Aboriginal issues are only the concern of the Aboriginal people. We also have a responsibility: we are living on their land; contemporary Aboriginal difficulties stem from that reality. We have to take it out of the too-hard basket. This means examining our own racism. With this understanding and questioning we can begin to build working relationships with the Aboriginal people, and form groups that are supportive, not oppressive. Only then will it be possible to envisage a collective response to the Bicentenary.

Consciousness and respect for other people's struggles is demanded of us. In our Australian setting, with the Bicentenary upon us, it is crucial that we begin to build a constructive, unpatronising, unromanticised relationship with Aboriginal Australians. We must face up to our history. While this is hard work we believe that finding ways to synthesise our struggles, yet maintain our differences and autonomy, will be an exciting, liberating prospect, bringing a new experience of community.

The Bicentenary, in promoting the concept of community based on colonialism, racism, classism and sexism, provides us with an excellent time to promote an alternative concept of community, which is cooperative, non-racist, non-sexist, internationalist and in harmony with the environment. The Right may have set the agenda, but it is an agenda that we can use to develop empowering ways of working and living.
The horrific consequences of nuclear power have been demonstrated by the recent accident at the Chernobyl power station. Radiation swept across Europe, risking the health of hundreds of millions of people.

Australia's CSIRO released a report in 1986 warning of ineluctable increases in global air temperature due to increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide is produced by burning fossil fuels - oil, coal, gas - our major energy sources. This will affect agriculture by altering rainfall patterns and low-lying coastal areas will be flooded by partial melting of the polar ice caps.

Soil Formation

Liquid fuels are used primarily for industrial heating, lighting, transportation and in some instances for power generation. We can best understand the effects of fossil fuels by looking at the fuels our industrial society presently uses. Currently over 90 per cent of our energy comes from non-renewable sources; after a certain time, the supply will be exhausted.

- Coal is used to generate most of Australia's electricity; hydro schemes are also a small percentage. Electricity is for lighting, driving electric motors and pumps, and all kinds of electronic equipment, including telecommunications.
- Liquid fuels are used primarily for transport, which consumes a large proportion of our total energy supply.
- Natural gas provides much of the energy required for domestic and industrial heating.
- Nuclear power is used in some countries to generate electricity, though not yet in Australia.

The world uses these forms of energy that have escalated over past decades, often with devastating environmental effects. Nuclear power can no longer be presented as the answer to our energy problems. Thousands are estimated to have died from radiation exposure from the Chernobyl disaster. But nuclear accidents are not the only cause for concern. The nuclear industry produces radioactive waste that is toxic for thousands of years and considerable evidence exists to link the civil nuclear industry with the production of nuclear weapons. Plutonium - a product of thermal nuclear reactors - can be reprocessed in reprocessing plants and used to make nuclear warheads or to fuel fast-breeder reactors. These fast-breeder reactors use plutonium to breed more plutonium from uranium 238, an abundant isotope of uranium currently stockpiled at enrichment plants around the world. The supply of uranium 235 is expected to last up to 100 years with the recent slump in the growth of the nuclear power industry, due to public opposition. However, the nuclear industry still hopes that it will be able to overcome public opposition and proceed with its breeder-reactor program. Powerful military force is being exerted to keep the nuclear-power industry alive, no matter what the dangers.

Conventional fossil-fuel technology also has considerable problems. The rise in carbon dioxide which has followed the increase in the burning of fossil fuels has meant that the earth's temperature is rising. Consequences of this include rising sea levels and loss of low-lying areas. The carbon dioxide effect so far suggested has been to speed large amounts of money either removing the carbon dioxide as it is produced, or combining conservation with the introduction of more efficient technologies for energy use and generation. If carbon dioxide production increases at 1986 rates, there will be twice as much in the atmosphere by 2050, or about 17 billion tonnes.

Acid rain is another consequence of the burning of fossil fuels. Coal in particular contains substances which, when burned, produce gaseous oxides and oxides which combine with water to form acids. These then fall to the earth. The US and Britain are the major producers of acid rain which tends to fall mainly on their neighbours. Capital investment in suitable technology can reduce emissions by 50 per cent. Some countries have already turned to nuclear energy to satisfy a large part of their electricity needs. Electricity from nuclear reactors, despite industry claims, is more expensive than other sources and electricity satisfies only about 10 per cent of the energy needs of an industrial country. In 1985 nuclear power contributed 11 per cent of the world's electricity but only 2 per cent of total energy. Meeting an increased proportion of the world's energy needs from nuclear reactors would result in large increases in the diversion of financial resources away from essential needs of people including those in the desperately poor Third World.

The path to nuclear power, already well trodden, promises no way for any of its problems to be overcome. Capital investment in suitable technology must be increased, and the funds currently being diverted to the nuclear industry must be transferred to those in the desperately poor Third World.

The SOFT ENERGY PATH

Some countries have already turned to nuclear energy to satisfy a large part of their electricity needs. Electricity from nuclear reactors, despite industry claims, is more expensive than other sources and electricity satisfies only about 10 per cent of the energy needs of an industrial country. In 1985 nuclear power contributed 11 per cent of the world's electricity but only 2 per cent of total energy. Meeting an increased proportion of the world's energy needs from nuclear reactors would result in large increases in the diversion of financial resources away from essential needs of people including those in the desperately poor Third World.

The path to nuclear power, already well trodden, without debate by some countries, is also travelled by Australia. It is known as the hard energy path. It is not a solution, only a recipe for future environmental catastrophe. It is time we chose, while we still have the chance, a pattern of energy use compatible with our shared long-term goal of survival, the soft energy path.

THE SOFT ENERGY PATH

There are renewable-energy technologies, well advanced despite poor research funding, which can provide the energy we require. As with conventional fossil fuels, no single renewable energy source would be expected to satisfy all requirements. However, when properly matched to the form of energy required, renewable sources combine to make a reliable, safe and environmentally benign energy supply known as the soft-energy path.

But is such a path realistic? What country still hopes that it will be able to overcome public opposition and proceed with its breeder-reactor program. Powerful military force is being exerted to keep the nuclear-power industry alive, no matter what the dangers.

Chain Reaction/Soft Energy 2

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Chain Reaction/Soft Energy 3

ENERGY FROM THE SUN

Ultimately, solar energy is our only option. The sun will continue to shine for thousands of years. Its energy can be used directly as heat or electricity, or indirectly from vegetation, wind and water. This
**ENERGY FROM WATER**

Harnessing flowing water is one of the oldest technologies in the world — many waterwheels can still be seen. Hydro power uses water to spin a turbine connected to an electric generator and it supplies over 20 per cent of the world’s electricity. However, major environmental damage and social disruption have been associated with big hydro-electric schemes. The Franklin River in Australia is an example of where this renewable source was better left 'untapped'.

Figures indicating the potential of hydro power must therefore be interpreted carefully. Australia reportedly has the potential to generate about twice its current level of electricity from water sources.

The use of small schemes, including existing water storage and irrigation systems reduces the demand for projects with unknown environmental outcomes. Australia has an estimated 230 megawatts of extra capacity of this type.

Another form of water energy is wave power. After years of research on wave power, the British Government decided in 1985 to discontinue funding, claiming that the electricity generated was too costly. Other scientists in Britain claimed the Government cost estimates were up to three times too high and pointed out that a Norwegian company had used the same generators to build a 500-kw station to supply power at 3 to 4 pence/kwh. (This is less than the normal price of electricity in Britain.)

**HEAT FROM THE SUN**

Currently oil, gas and electricity are converted into heat for homes, commercial buildings and industrial processes. Solar energy can supply this heat, particularly in the low temperature ranges used in heating for homes and offices and some processes in industry, but also in higher temperature ranges.

**Solar industrial process heating**

Results from six industrial process heating systems funded by the US Department of Energy were reported in 1985. Five of the six systems operated at over 200°C, providing energy for a variety of processes — latex production, brewing beer, refining and phenol production. The report concluded that solar energy could be used for industrial process heating. Further evidence that solar energy can provide process heat is the Honeywell factory in Western Australia, where concentrating solar collectors produce 100°C temperatures and the savings will repay the investment in approximately six years.

**ENERGY FROM ORGANIC MATERIAL**

Biomass — material of organic origin — can be used either directly as fuel, or converted to another form of fuel. Wood has been burned for heat and light since the discovery of fire and in many countries, biomass is still the primary fuel in rural areas.

Energy from major potential sources of liquid fuels for transport, particularly ethanol which can be made from sugar cane or grains such as wheat or barley. It can be blended with gasoline or used as a 100 per cent substitute. There are no technical problems associated with its production but it costs about 50 per cent more than gasoline.

Some countries are already major users of ethanol. Brazil has 1 million cars running on 100 per cent ethanol, the remaining vehicles using a blend of gasoline and ethanol.

**ENERGY FROM THE WIND**

Wind has been used as a energy source for many centuries, for example for water milling wheels. Major uses today include electricity generation and lifting water in rural areas. Wind energy is an instantaneous, kinetic form of energy which must be used when available or stored in some form for later use.

Wind generators have proved their economic and technical viability in areas where wind speeds average 20 kilometers per hour or more. There are over 15,000 wind generators in California alone, and in 1985 they generated 632 gigawatt hours, the equivalent of 10 per cent of Western Australia’s electricity supply.

Australia has good wind-energy sites in Western and South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania — mainly in coastal areas. Two small companies manufacture wind turbines which sell at a cost below $1000 per kilowatt and are price competitive with most forms of new fossil fuel electricity generation.

**ENERGY FROM GARBAGE**

Our society generates garbage at a frightening rate. While one of the uses of garbage is to bury the waste, we have been losing most of it to the oceans.

Several plants are in operation around the world which incinerate domestic refuse directly and provide energy in the process. There is a system in Florida capable of incinerating 1000 tonnes each day and producing electricity for about 10,000 homes.

The cheapest form of garbage disposal is still to bury the waste in disused quarries or other suitable areas for landfill. But even here energy can be recovered as the waste decomposes. The simplicity with which methane gas may be utilised for direct heating or power production is demonstrated at a former council refuse tip in Northcote, Victoria. Three small wells made from 100mm diameter plastic pipe have been dug down to the decomposing garbage. The continuously generated gas is drawn off by a pump and supplied to a slightly modified gas engine which in turn operates a generator. The electricity produced is fed into the normal electricity grid. It has been estimated that if the 0.5 hectare former tip could be halved, a megawatt for approximately 10 years.

**GEOTHERMAL ENERGY**

Geothermal energy is drawn from the residual heat of certain rock formations. Two areas of geological sites provide energy this way — deposits of hot underground water and formations of hot springs.

Geothermal energy is distributed unevenly across the earth, yet Australia has a large reserve of low-temperature geothermal areas which may be suitable for some industrial and residential purposes.

For example, Portland on Victoria’s south-west coast, has started to use hot water from geothermal springs to heat the town’s swimming pool complex and four municipal buildings. Further developments are planned.
ELECTRICITY-

Soft technologies provide more than a solution to environmental problems. They can also help in addressing global and national inequities.

Many people believe that the adoption of soft technologies will result in a drop in the standard of living. Yet there is no simple correlation between standard of living and energy consumption. The average per capita energy consumption of Western European countries is half that of the United States, yet the standard of living is similar. The choice between a hard or soft energy path is not a choice between a high or low standard of living. Indeed, a higher quality of life results from taking the soft energy path.

It is a question of the way we wish to live. The hard path, leading to a polluting, energy-consuming society, results from the belief that our happiness is tied to an ever-increasing demand for energy, and that the need for growth results in new technologies and processes. The soft path, leading to a solar, energy-efficient, economy, recognises that all industrial processes—more than others—affect the environment and seeks to minimise energy consumption where main-taining modern services and comfort. This means more benign and less threatening technology, providing comfortable, safe and healthy living allowing individual participation in community self-management.

THE CONCEPT OF ENOUGHNESS

An emerging area of debate rarely raised in the West is the concept of enoughness and global equity.

Most of us expect an increased standard of living to improve our consumption. Yet consumption is a process, and one which is becoming more and more. We have internalised the difference between quality of life and comfort of life. We have to learn not to equate our national and personal consumption as "proof" of our well-being. Surely a more desirable goal would be stable and desirable goals.

Three-quarters of the world's current energy consumption is by one-quarter of the world's population who live in the developed world. What of the other three-quarters who share the responsibility of the world's energy consumption? What is their consumption pattern and what is it likely to be in the future?

It has been estimated that a subsistence level of living would require an individual to annually consume energy equivalent of 40kg of coal. Using 1976 figures, about 36 out of 140 nations consumed less than this, one per capita basis which approximates to over one billion people consuming less energy than required for bare subsistence.

The average Australian consumption rate was over sixteen times this level. If this consumption was extended worldwide, fuel use alone would be about the current rate. Even if this were possible or desirable, the environment would be devastated.

There must be strategies to reduce energy consumption, including a national strategy to examine the need for growth. Coupled with the use of renewable energy, this will allow a reduction in energy consumption in the developing world without further strain on the earth's resources and environment.

CONSERVATION

Conservation does not mean freezing in the dark, it simply means using our resources more efficiently. Conserving our supply of fossil fuels can tide us over during the transition to the solar future—about fifty years. Enormous resources exist for saving energy and implementing conservation measures which will effectively extend our fuel reserves. Western society has become dependent on an industrial system which uses and consumes energy in a way that is not efficient. Measures that can be taken include:

Houses/Dwellings/Offices: Introduction of building regulations that encourage or require passive solar design features and solar cells and collectors.

Industry: Energy can be 'cascaded', where heat from one process is used for another process which requires less heat and so on down the line. Heat from industrial processes can also be used in local homes, offices and factories.

Transport: Investment in adequate public transport systems. Gradual restructuring of cities to reduce the need to travel long distances to work, school and recreation.

Government support is needed to encourage and assist adoption of energy saving measures. A simple increase in energy prices may decrease energy usage, some people would be able to afford higher prices and people on low incomes would be directly affected. Real financial incentives and support are required for individuals to invest in energy saving devices. The prices of these devices would be reduced if government policies led to increased usage.

Current Australian Government policy basically assumes that fossil fuels will continue to supply our energy requirements.

In March 1986, the Department of Resources and Technology launched a series of discussion papers on Australia's energy requirements and future energy directions, Energy 2000 National Energy Policy Review. The next paper in the series focused on renewable energy. At its launch, the Minister, Senator Gareth Evans, stated:

- A fundamental question is whether the rate of development and introduction of new renewable energy technologies should be left to market forces, or whether there should be some degree of intervention by government.

The paper assumes the future of renewables should be left to market forces with minimal government assistance. It recognises the potential of renewables in Australia to supply energy needs yet consistently dismisses these technologies due to their "intrinsic lack of economic viability".

However, the real costs of energy are distributed over the lifecycle of equipment and these subsidies go into already mature conventional energy industries rather than encouraging new technologies or supporting new energy sources to overcome institutional and community barriers.

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In 1984-85 renewable sources of energy supplied 6.3 per cent of Australia's energy demands, mainly from hydro-electricity, biomass, solar energy and so on down the line. Heat from industrial processes can also be used in local homes, offices and factories.

The paper assumes the future of renewables should be left to market forces with minimal government assistance. It recognises the potential of renewables in Australia to supply energy needs yet consistently dismisses these technologies due to their "intrinsic lack of economic viability".

However, the real costs of energy are distributed over the lifecycle of equipment and these subsidies go into already mature conventional energy industries rather than encouraging new technologies or supporting new energy sources to overcome institutional and community barriers.
AUSTRALIA'S ROLE

Australia has considerable reserves of uranium and has not yet had to embrace nuclear power. This is not the case for neighbouring Indonesia which plans to build a 1300 megawatt nuclear reactor on the island of Java in 1988. An accident similar to that at Chernobyl would be devastating as Java is the most densely populated area of the world. The initial radiation cloud would also engulf areas of Australia and South-East Asia. Moreover, the level of technological expertise in Indonesia is much lower than in the Soviet Union, making the scenario even more horrifying.

A fundamental change in Federal and State Government policy towards a renewable energy strategy would benefit Australia and contribute to a nuclear-free region. Renewable energy industries would ensure our own energy future and we would be in a position to share these technologies with our neighbours — a significant contribution to regional peace.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Write to the Minister for Resources and Energy, Senator Gareth Evans, C/- Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600, asking questions based on information in this booklet.
- Contact universities and other institutions of education and ask about their research and urge support for renewable energy.
- Contact your local council asking for their policies and building regulations and suggest that all new buildings incorporate solar architecture.
- Re-assess your own energy consumption.
- Write to the National Energy Research and Development Council and ask that research funding into renewables be increased.
- Write to the Minister for Science, Barry Jones, MP, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600, asking about the Government's long-term (ie. 50 years) plans for when the supplies of fossil fuels run down.
- Write to the Commission for the Future, 95 Drummond St, Carlton, Vic 3053, and ask that they address energy issues.
- Contact FOE to get copies of this booklet to pass to friends.
- Raise the issues with your local Members of Parliament (State and Federal).
- Write letters to businesses on their energy policies.
- Support campaigns for better public transport.
- Start petitions to help inform people in your area of the issues.
- Send replies to your letters, newspaper clippings and information to the Soft Energy Action Group, 366 Smith St, Collingwood, Vic 3066.
- Join the Soft Energy group — contact Friends of the Earth on 419 8700.

JOIN FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

All members of Friends of the Earth receive the FOE national magazine, Chain Reaction four times a year and the FOE Newsletter six-eights a year.

Membership is:
- $30 - Households
- $24 - Workers
- $18 - Concession

Name:
Address:
Postcode:

Friends of the Earth
366 Smith St, Collingwood
3066 phone - 419 8700

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REFERENCES


FURTHER READING

The Nuclear Environment, MAUM/FOE, 1983.
Confronting the Nuclear Threat, MAUM/FOE, 1983.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Further copies can be obtained from Friends of the Earth, 366 Smith St, Collingwood, Vic 3066.

Field and radiation: A bad pair

A new method for preserving food is at hand. Invoking the exposure of food to radioactivity, it is seen as a blessing by agribusinessmen. But the new technology is not without its pitfalls and problems, many of which are unknown and glossed over by the proponents. Ian Paletta discusses the technology and its effects.

"Too much food." That was the title of an article run in Foodweek, the trade publication of Food Industry Management, 5 August, 1986. The article described how Baden Cameron, chairperson of the Brisbane Markets Trust, believes that "We simply have too much of everything." What Mr. Cameron is arguing for is an opening-up of the export food industry via irradiation.

At present, Australia is unable to export much of its mangoes to the markets in Japan and the US (and the southern States) due to the presence in Queensland of the mango seed weevil. The pesticide EDB, which has been used in the past, has been banned by the US because of health reasons. Cameron estimates that the export mango trade could earn Australia up to $2 45million per year by 1990. However, before we get too excited about this claimed boost to the Australian economy we must consider what this process entails.
All the problems discussed thus far are related to the dose of radiation. The relation of the dose of radiation to the damage is the unit for measuring dosage is the Gray (Gy). In the US, the recommended maximum dose is 1 kGy. For Aus-
tralia, it is 10 kGy, ten times that for the US. At this dose of 10 kGy some of the bac-
tera that cause spoilage of food will be kill-
ed. This increases the shelf life of food and will
not go off as quickly. It also means less food with
problem with re-infection. Many fungi
common to food produce aflatoxin, a pow-
erful agent for inducing liver cancer. Aflatoxin
production has actually been found to be stimu-
lated by irradiation by up to 84 per cent in
celent and 74 per cent in potatoes. Two foods
commonly irradiated to inhibit sprouting.

A number of harmful bacteria are also related to irradiation. Clostridium botu-
lens, the causative agent of botulism food
poisoning, is one of the most resistant. Without the competition of the bacteria that
are killed by irradiation this organism could
grow quite freely and we would not be able
to smell or see that the food was off. There
is also the possibility that foods that would
become resistant to radiation if it was
used on a large scale.

A Nuclear Industry

Food irradiation is a nuclear industry, it
tails the use of radio-active materials and the
operation of nuclear reactors. There is concern
to workers health in the industry. In the US, where food has
radiation contact the Anti-Uranium
Collective, Australia.

The biggest fear with food irradiation is
that it will make the food radio-active. It is for this reason that the International
Committee on Food Irradiation, consisting of the World Health Organisation,
the Food and Agriculture Agency and the
Food and Agriculture Organisation, have
noted that the loss is accumulative. A healthy
food could be contaminated with radioac-
tive elements can be produced, particularly when
some studies suggest that some radio-active
food is irradiated the chemical bonds
and Cesium-137 can also be used. When a
material is irradiated the chemical bonds
within the material break and reform. The
manner of chemical bonds affected in this
way depends on the nature of the material and the amount of radiation (dose) to
which it is exposed. At very high doses the material is
sterilised.

Food would not be exposed to such high
doses because poisons and DNA are cros-
sed, cells are killed, and unwanted side ef-
tects such as malnutrition and abnormal odors and
tastes are problems in some foods. The trick is to
prolong the shelf life by inhibiting the growth of some or-
ganism such as an increase in the size of the
food. Amongst the

Irradiation has been used in Australia for
some time now for the sterilisation of medi-
cal products. The material to be sterilised is
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the plants in Australia, gamma-ray emitting
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In a bid to meet an agreement on the price of the plant it was decided that China would provide certain parts of the plant rather than import them. However, Framatome has refused to guarantee the quality of the parts produced in China. In the wake of Chernobyl, the prospect of these reactors operating so close to Hong Kong and its 6 million residents has sparked a massive wave of public opposition. The anti-nuclear movement in Hong Kong has been joined by 117 labour organisations, youth groups, social welfare organisations, unions and district boards. A major petition campaign has demonstrated the depth of opposition from Hong Kong to the proposed nuclear project, a public hearing should be held to investigate and assess the desirability of the project. It would seem timely for China to be planning an alternative energy program rather than travelling the nuclear path. In a report titled *The Decline of the World's Nuclear Energy* published in the Beijing journal *World Economy* in September 1984, Yang Huisen, a member of the Economic Institute of the State Planning Commission, argued that the economics of nuclear power were making it a dying industry in nearly every industrial and newly industrialised country. He suggested that the money should be spent on the development of a long-term sustainable energy program, including the establishment of a Renewable Energy Industry Bureau, and that expenditure on the nuclear program should be halted, as China is blessed with an abundance of coal, oil and natural gases as well as hydro-power, wind and solar energy potential.

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In view of the safe, alternative energy sources which could be expanded by the Chinese Government, and the ability of both the Chinese and Hong Kong Governments to satisfactorily ensure the safety and commercial viability of the Daya Bay Plant, the public demand for the shelving of this controversial nuclear-power plant must be heeded.

The information in this report was taken from *APPEX* action alert of 30 October 1986, and the Hong Kong FOE newsletter.

What you can do to help

Send letters and telegrams of protest to the following:

- Premier Zhao Ziyang, Beijing, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
- Mr. Deng Xiaoping, Vice-Chairman, Beijing, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
- Mr. Zhan Yuqiang, General Manager, Guangdong Nuclear Power Joint Venture Company, CNPC, People's Republic of China
- Shanghai, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
- Send copies of letters and telegrams to the following newspapers in China and Hong Kong and as well to APPEX, C/3 SAM 37, Lorong Birch, 10250 Penang, WEST MALAYSIA.
- Editor, Renmin Ribao, 2 Jietai Xi Lu, SHIBEI BEIJING, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
- Editor, Guangming Ribao, 106 Yongan Lu, 0822 BEIJING, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
- Editor, South China Morning Post, Tong Chong St, HONG KONG

French disconnection

The French nuclear industry has been proceeding almost without hindrance. Now that stage is coming to an end. Opposition is growing in the wake of Chernobyl and the very economics of nuclear power are creating problems. While those that oppose nuclear power see this situation as inevitable for any hard-energy path, the proponents are still hopeful of a 'recovery' for the industry. John Hallum reports on the state of play and the future directions of a technology developed beyond sense.

With the Hawke Government's decision to export uranium to France, it is a good time to look at the supposedly inexorable growth of the French nuclear program. The French industry has been more successful than the now well-publicised debacle that is the US nuclear industry. But the juggernaut is slowing. In the late 1970s France was ordering 6-8 reactors a year. Under the Mitterand Government, orders were slowed to one or two slightly larger reactors a year, and under the new conservative Chirac Government they are down to one a year. There are dark rumours that by 1988 and 1990 there will be none at all.

The slowdown is partly due to the very success of the French nuclear program. France's market for electricity is saturated. It produces more of its electricity from nuclear power than any other country: 70 per cent by early 1986, up from 5.5 per cent a year earlier.

Mereille Boitiaux, Chairman of the State-owned Electricite de France (EDF), admitted some time ago that "We will start to be a little over-built in nuclear (power) by 1987, maybe 1986." In January 1986 he admitted in *Le Monde* that France would have two 1300 Megawatt plants too many in 1990. He said the over-capacity meant that nuclear plants would have to be operated for less than 2500 hours per year, the threshold below which they cease to be competitive with coal.

Boitiaux blamed the glut on over-enthusiastic projections of future energy demands. The EDF had projected a demand for 415 billion kilowatt hours a year by 1990. Now the projection is down to 349-390 kilowatt hours. Environmentalists and the CDFT trade union group had long since predicted that the forecasts would be too high and had been laughed at. The CDFT has now predicted that France will have twelve nuclear reactors too many by 1990. Despite the looming over-capacity, France can't seem to stop ordering plants, not yet anyway. As of May 1987 France had the...
world's second largest nuclear program with 41 plants in operation, 23 under construction, and six in the planning stage.

In January 1986 the Mitterrand Government authorised EDF to apply for a site permit for the Le Carpentier project; two large (1450 Mw) reactors to be built on an island at the mouth of the Loire. They were to replace the Le Puelin project, started in 1979 and abandoned in 1982 because of citizen opposition. The Government had many more plans up its sleeve. The Industry Minister, Laurent Fabius, wrote to Marcel Boiteaux confirming that one reactor a year would be ordered up to 1989. He said electricity demand actually justified only one new plant to 1990 but the Government "wants to preserve the advance of the French nuclear industry."

The reactor manufacturer, Framatome, still hoped the program might be extended to one and a half or two reactors a year. These hopes were dashed in April when Rene Carla, EDF's head of design and construction, said EDF's efforts to sell more electricity were likely to be "hampered" by low oil prices. He said the letter from Laurent Fabius authorising one new plant a year assumed an electricity demand of at least 370 billion kilowatt hours per year by 1990. But if the demand was at the lower end of the predicted range these might be no orders for 1988 and 1999. The future of the Le Carpentier plant and three other planned plants, Penly 3 and 4, and Civaux, is now in orders for 1988 and 1990. The future of the agreement to buy "all the tonnes of coal and all low oil prices. He said the letter from Laurent Fabius authorising one new plant a year assumed an electricity demand of at least 370 billion kilowatt hours per year by 1990. But if the demand was at the lower end of the predicted range these might be no orders for 1988 and 1999. The future of the Le Carpentier plant and three other planned plants, Penly 3 and 4, and Civaux, is now in orders for 1988 and 1990. The future of the agreement to buy "all the tonnes of coal and all

The Breeder Program

France is said to lead the world in fast-breeder technology. Its only rival, since the US abandoned the Clinch River breeder project, is the USSR. The French Superphoenix fast breeder is at 1200 Mw, the biggest operating. In West Germany, the SNR-300, has yet to receive a licence.

But the French fast-breeder program faces a crisis in direction. Things started to unravel for it in December 1984 when Marcel Boiteaux said that Superphoenix would cost 20 billion francs, including 5 billion francs for financing (about $2.4 billion). This was not bad by world standards, but the French were not pleased. Boiteaux told the French parliament that building the plant had been "harder than we expected." EDF, who owned 51 per cent admitted it was too expensive. He said, "The fast breeder reactor is needed as an alternative, should the tensions linked to uranium supply become too great."

The next French breeder is now seen as a "receding target." Meanwhile, the breeder construction consortium, Novasome, is having financial problems and may have to lay off many of its 750 workers. But EDF insisted that it was not foolish to start designing new breeder reactors. EDF is trying to sell its excess electricity overseas. A 2000 Mw cable has been constructed to the UK, and Britain's electricity authority says that French electricity will be 25 per cent cheaper than its own. But EDF is having trouble selling to Spain (electricity exports down 50 per cent in 1985) and West Germany. According to a manufacturer, Swiss officials of the Saarland State are complaining that under French regulations, radioactive emissions from the new Cattenom nuclear plant in Lorraine may exceed those allowed from German plants by a factor of five.

EDF's largest customer so far has been Switzerland. Total exports contracted from 24.8 billion kilowatt hours in 1984 to 23.4 in 1985, hardly the dynamic growth it is counting on.

The Chernobyl disaster stoked the fires of new concern. The French Government, hard hit by the oil crisis, has committed to spending 24 billion francs on a nuclear life-saver project, called Supercarbone-1. But in July, the CPDT union group called for a national debate of energy priorities. It was 2.3 times as much as Paluel-1 and 2 reactors.

EDF's efforts to sell more electricity were likely to be "hampered" by low oil prices. He said the letter from Laurent Fabius authorising one new plant a year assumed an electricity demand of at least 370 billion kilowatt hours per year by 1990. But if the demand was at the lower end of the predicted range these might be no orders for 1988 and 1999. The future of the Le Carpentier plant and three other planned plants, Penly 3 and 4, and Civaux, is now in

The next French breeder is now seen as a "receding target." Meanwhile, the breeder construction consortium, Novasome, is having financial problems and may have to lay off many of its 750 workers. Maybe this is just as well. It would seem foolish to start design work on Superphoenix-2 without at least twelve months' operating experience on Superphoenix-1.

When the first Superphoenix was connected to the grid in January 1986 it had cost 23 billion francs for the plant itself, engineering, fuel, a spent fuel pool, financing and exchange losses. It was 2.3 times as much as Paluel-1 and 2 reactors.

EDF's dealings with its European neighbours are now strained. EDF is trying to sell its excess electricity overseas. A 2000 Mw cable has been constructed to the UK, and Britain's electricity authority says that French electricity will be 25 per cent cheaper than its own. But EDF is having trouble selling to Spain (electricity exports down 50 per cent in 1985) and West Germany. According to a manufacturer, Swiss officials of the Saarland State are complaining that under French regulations, radioactive emissions from the new Cattenom nuclear plant in Lorraine may exceed those allowed from German plants by a factor of five.

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In the Malaysian state of Sarawak on the island of Borneo, timber companies are logging the rainforest. For the people who live in the forest the logging is a final blow. Peter Graf has visited the area and reports on the situation.

The destruction of the Indians of North America and the Borneo Semang is a sad testimony to the ruthless exploitation of native peoples around the world. The tribal populations of Malaysia and Indonesia share the same fate. The Punan, one of the last tribal societies untouched by Westernisation, are threatened in their existence due to the unchecked activities of timber companies on their tribal lands.

The Malaysian state of Sarawak, on the island of Borneo, is home to more than 30 tribal peoples who live there. The Punan, one of the last tribal societies untouched by Westernisation, are threatened in their existence due to the unchecked activities of timber companies on their tribal lands.

The Punan are the last of the native inhabitants of Sarawak, the Malaysian state of Borneo, who are virtually untouched by Westernisation. In many ways they are quite different from the approximately thirty other native tribes of Sarawak. The Punan, within the boundaries of their tribal territories, are a nomadic people who have never disturbed.

They are nomads of the rainforest and subsist on hunting and gathering. They are nomads of the rainforest and subsist on hunting and gathering. They are nomads of the rainforest and subsist on hunting and gathering. They are nomads of the rainforest and subsist on hunting and gathering. They are nomads of the rainforest and subsist on hunting and gathering. They are nomads of the rainforest and subsist on hunting and gathering. They are nomads of the rainforest and subsist on hunting and gathering. They are nomads of the rainforest and subsist on hunting and gathering. They are nomads of the rainforest and subsist on hunting and gathering. They are nomads of the rainforest and subsist on hunting and gathering. They are nomads of the rainforest and subsist on hunting and gathering. They are nomads of the rainforest and subsist on hunting and gathering.
Phillip Toyne

The ACF: Where to now?

The Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) is Australia's largest conservation organisation. This year the ACF appointed Phillip Toyne, former legal adviser to the Central Land Council, to be its Director. Larry O'Loughlin from Chain Reaction spoke to him after two weeks in his new job.

ACF's name and address at top of trains through what was once a lovely arched command. A small desk pushed into the office.

The new Director was wearing moleskin trousers and a wealth of organisation with healthy Central Australian strength of the organisation is coming from each area, so there is a good cross pollination of ideas and views that way. But we need a campaigning presence everywhere.

I wondered aloud whether there was a difference with organisations from out bush being far more grass roots than ACF. It's recently become obvious that the ACF has too much to do for the employed staff to cover the field, and there's an exciting new push inside the organisation to redefine the role of members into a more much more vigorous one than it has been in the past.

That's being done in two major ways — a rethink at the role of the branches so that they will have some significant role, not only in campaigning, but in the preparation of policy. Also, the role of the volunteers. We want to utilise our volunteers in a whole range of things. Recently we had volunteer orientations to get people more attuned to what the organisation is about. It is much better if volunteers are involved in the work of the organisation, and not just spectators to it.

Hard financial times and a lack of resources seem to in­ diced that ACF will be cutting back on its activities. But Phillip Toyne was not ready to accept limitations.

'It does mean that we must be more stringent in assign­ing priorities. We have got to maintain a national view of things so that we're not finding ourselves buried in local issues from which we can't extract national mess­ ages.'

He cited as a good example, the ACF's decision not to get involved in the dispute over the high-tension power lines through Brunswick, Victoria, which is rapidly becoming a powerful issue in several local councils area. Although the ACF is not involved, he still sees that it has a role to play. 'It ought to have an interest in the question of whether high-tension lines constitute a health threat to people because there are literally thousands of kilometres of power lines going through residential areas around the country.'

Phillip Toyne also wants to see the ACF rationalise its campaigns and activities so that it does not duplicate the work of other organisations or compete with them. He says he brings no blindings new insights to these problems or how to resolve them, and believes that the best thing to do is to talk.

I see another glimmer of light and ask whether the ACF will now be supporting other sorts of activity beyond policy formulation and lobbying. Yes, he says, but it is a balance. 'There is a tension between the peace movement and certainly the environmental movement.'

Phillip Toyne believes that the ACF's great strengths are being put on us by business and the mining and timber industries in particular. The Federal Government is doing everything it can do to reinforce this. The big task ahead of the environmental movement is to assert that there are quality-of-life values that have to be added to the equation of what's going to be done in this country. We have got to start tack­ ling the political structures to make sure that we can start injecting these views into the debate. Also, we've got to develop the capacity to challenge economic judgements and to show that the ACF's working on now.

The ACF is currently preparing a major submission on the economy to present to the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration. 'Our basic proposition will be that it is economic madness to simply exploit our forests and our minerals — to fling off vast quantities of unprocessed materials overseas and then to have to import manufactured materials at much higher cost. Our argument will obviously be that we're all trying to live in a country where we have sustainable growth based on renewable resources, but that we've got to be extremely wary about the use of our national resources and not take short­ term profit from resources which must run out. That's going to rely on expert economic advice; and that's some­ thing I don't have; very few people in the environment movement do, but it's something we've got to go beyond.'

ACF receives more money because, when it comes to dealing with government, 'I'm not saying that they have to pull their punches, but they have to fight very hard to get their money each year.'

Phillip Toyne sees that one of the ACF's great strengths is that the bulk of its money comes from private sources and that gives the organisation a great deal of latitude in running campaigns as hard as they can. "At the same time, I'm shining off vast quantities of unprocessed materials overseas."
Am I right?!? I hope not, because if they are I would have to reconsider everything I have ever understood about environmental values. Please find out for all of us and maybe interview key people with questions of this sort.

Peter Kurz
Mallacoota, Vic 3889

It is interesting to note the difference between the vitriolic attacks being made on the Women for Survival in Canberra and the almost complete lack of concern for the much more serious violence to be seen at any weekend football match.

Could this be because the women are protesting for peace and the sporting fields are used as training grounds for the violence and contempt for others so necessary for the mindless cannon fodder of war?

Or is it because these women have thrown off the yoke of macho madness that has such a hold on the media in other processor of a large section of the population?

Despite the frustrated squawks of protest from the goody-goody housewives and the predictable nursery from the more irate of our politicians, the political parties of all persuasions would do well to read the message — there is an increasing number of people in Australia who want a say in decisions that affect them.

Living in Mallacoota and very much loving the area I have written to 400 of my guests and urged them to write in about the woodchip issue for East Gippsland.

Over 80 have sent copies of their letters to me and I am very happy to have such good friends.

You article on the woodchip industry in Number 47 Spring 1986 was a good up-date. There is one aspect of the whole issue that baffles me and I feel might warrant a further article in Chain Reaction.

Why do government employees and politicians go for the woodchip option when there is such an obvious distaste for this industry in the population?

What makes these people tick?

Why would they go for the woodchip option?

Asking these questions as a naive person I would have to agree that we are together, against ground-swell of opinion, because they are better informed and perform their duties honestly.

The most inevitable advent of stonethrow for the Northern Territory provides a unique opportunity for the establishment of a participatory democracy by peaceful means. Is this to be achieved?

Firstly, we require a Constitutional Congress, not one selected by the government of the day, one that is accessible to any interested organisations or people on a voluntary basis.

As interim decisions on the 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, GPO Box 530F, Melbourne, Vic 3001, Australia.

The image is also sympathetic. The culture and values of the people and their clash with white society is also shown. Skippy, the king of a people who no longer exist, is a drunkard. You can still sense the spirit of the topos in him and his sadness at no longer being believed in. The stories of Skippy and the others who still believe in the spirits now only serve to scare the children and amuse the adults.

They are on the fringe of their own traditional culture as well as white culture.

The film deals mainly with problems internal to the Aboriginal community: the sadness of the older Aborigines like Skippy, the inability of others such as Mollie and Joe Conroy to understand the spirit world, and their displacement from it and from the ‘white fella’ world which is seen as being in the grip of the white fella.”

The film is worthwhile seeing if for no other reason than to prove that people do want to see films about Aborigines. But it must be remembered that the issues are glossed over in a compromise for commercial success, a compromise that may go undetected by mainstream audiences.

Ian Foletta is a member of the Chain Reaction collective.
OCEAN DUMPING WAS WASTE 1957.

Journalists Bartlett and Steele won the Pulitzer prize with The Philadelphia Inquirer, a book based on a series of articles that appeared in that newspaper late in 1983. Written in journalistic style, it is immensely readable, though its contents are horrendous. The authors draw from the records of local, State and Federal agencies and courts throughout the United States, providing a comprehensive bibliography.

The situation is bleak. The authors document at least 150 locations across the US where high-level and/or low-level radioactive wastes are stored. They explode the myths perpetuated by the authorities that a 'safe' solution has been found by examining the existing technology. There are chapters which examine the accumulation of high-level waste, and the unsuccessful search for reprocessing and worse.

It is alleged that the Congress, the White House and the bureaucracy have repeatedly misled the American public by giving overly optimistic assessments of technology that announce ambitious programs that have little chance of success. They have initiated projects then scrapped them based on policies of false assumptions.

A tangled web of State and Federal regulations, many of which have never been implemented, has led to a situation where no central record-keeping system exists to document what wastes are where. Nor is there any uniformity of approach in dealing with waste across the nation.

Because authorities do not wish to admit that they have been approaching waste management irresponsibly for years, official policy is likely to continue to favour 'doing nothing' as the preferred waste-management technique.

Forevermore highlights the tremendous difficulties—political, technological and environmental—associated with the treatment of radioactive wastes. Australians would do well to heed the lessons of the American experience. While this country does not have the legacy of a ramshackle nuclear-power industry, it does have the makings of a nuclear-waste management problem: the Maralinga test sites, waste dumping in Australia, and the Queensland Government's plan to build a reprocessing plant in Australia.

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Forevermore examines the history and failure of the fuel-rod reprocessing industry both in the United States and overseas. Initial moves to establish a commercial nuclear-power industry were based on the assumption that used fuel rods would be recycled into fresh fuel in a reprocessing plant. This centrepiece of the nuclear industry has failed on economic, technological and environmental grounds.

The book also considers the way in which the reprocessing myth is still used to peddle the 'peaceful' uses of nuclear power in countries interested in developing nuclear power. The links between the Reagan administration's advocacy of reprocessing and the nuclear weapons cycle are demonstrated. In a chapter entitled 'The Politics of Neglect', the political process which has led to official policy on nuclear waste being that of neglect by default is examined.

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The Sydney collective and then the Melbourne collective have struggled on, with members approved by FOE groups established in March and April, and its national meeting in January 1986. The new Melbourne collective was duly produced from the less than ideal living conditions of a shared task, was to move from our typing in Swanston Street, Melbourne, to the low-technology contributions - some typing in a low-key sort of way, with our major contributors sending in work through computer disks. We still appreciate low-technology contributions - sometimes the pen is mightier than the computer.

The collective has worked fairly well in a low-key sort of way, with our major contributors being about covers. We continue to try to sort out how the collective should operate given different levels of involvement for different people. We try to operate by consensus, but most of the time we just agree with each other instead.

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**BACKSTAGE**

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