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Letters

Building Jerusalem

Could it be that we conservationists are getting rather long on Utopian rhetoric and a bit short on realistic analysis and decisive action? (And I do not mean the 'direct action' that can be another form of rhetoric, but the kind of action which involves practising, or showing how to practise some of the changes we advocate so vociferously.)

---

TV violence

Everyone has different opinions. I suppose I have, but what if you agree as well as disagree with one issue? 'The impact of television on children' (Chain Reaction, 65) blamed TV, not the parents, not the children. You see violence on TV non-stop on the news, current affairs, children's cartoons and movies. Once I read the article it led me to think that there is not just one side to the issue but two. What Anne San son wrote was true, the violence is seen, seen by children in cartoons or even if they glance at the news. It will interest them and they will stop what they are doing and watch the actions, nothing else around them will be in their notice. The children don't understand the reporter explaining the report, all they are interested in is the group, targets and fighting. Yes, violence is in the Ninja Turtles and Voltron and their toys are violent tools, but little boys won't watch or play 'sissy' things. The parents could help with this by explaining the cartoons are all make-believe. If parents get that worried don't let the kids watch TV - simple!

I all depends on whether the children are impressionable or not. As they get older they will understand and hopefully their parents would have taught them violence is not right.

Peta Gordon
Groawahong, WA

It's an IS plot

On reading 'How was AIDEX?' by Louise Macdonald, I was not surprised to learn of the shenanigans of the International Socialists (IS) at the protest. You do not have to be paranoid to posit the view that the IS behaves exactly in the same manner and with the same tactics as a CIA-sponsored group. These groups, found widely throughout South America, South Africa, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and so on, have been in the forefront of disrupting small-scale organisations and demonstrating articulate 'alternative' views. Under the guise of 'Left' wing sentiments, they do a good job of keeping the focus away from the genuine issues. And, of course, they never fail to promote a lot of violence which the cameras soak up.

Think about it.

M. Taylor
Holland Park, QLD

Friends and FOEs

With astonishment I have read the article about the corporate takeover of Friends of the Earth, by...
Hungry Coyote', in your April 91 issue, I think publishing this article in this form is wholly unfair to a sister organisation of the Earth Australia.

First of all, the article is just one opinion about what happened in the mid-eighties in FOE US. As chairman of Friends of the Earth International from September 1988, I have tried to reconstruct as good as possible what has happened, and I know that there are other versions as well. Two specific complaints:

The title suggests that corporate interests were successful in FOE US. In the article noth­

ing is said about this. It is true that some of the persons involved were rich or in jobs had to do with corporate interests (an offshoot of FOE US in the late Thirties), and the least what you could have done is explain as editors what happened afterwards with FOE US. The article gives an impression of an organisation at the end of its existence. Reality nowadays is completely differ­

ent, FOE US indeed had a difficult time after the Split. However, in 1990 it merged with the Environmental Policy Institute (an offshoot of FOE US in the Seventies) and the Oceanic Society. The name for this new organisation is Friends of the Earth. This new FOE US has become one of the main pillars of FOE Interna­tion­

Consept are good, but the whole attitude is wrong. The word "corporate" is used in the initial "official" response from The Wilderness Society in The Times on Sunday back in 1987. It seems quite fashionable these days to discredit or ridicule certain political opinions by calling them 'conspiracy theories'. Quite the contrary to forming a conspiracy, the people involved in the professional elite had insufficient time, organisation, or resources to detail in advance a comprehensive blueprint for action which a conspiracy would necessitate. Indeed, my very point in the article was that so dominated were they by electoral politics that little opportunity lay open to them for anything more than incremental, kneejerk responses and decisions.

Jon mentions sponsorship: a couple of points about the 'Bond deal'. First, leading up to the 1987 Federal Election I was told directly by a number of sources about Bond Corporation's offer. One of these sources was a most trusted friend who was then on the seven member ACF Executive. Next, the TWS 'books' had three holes in them with only $1,000 quoted as 'election expenses'. It was obvious that the Channel Nine (Bond's Channel) advertisements cost much more than centered on one figure but, at the time, there was no record of their payment or the source of their payment. I'm sure these "books" had been fixed up since.

When confronted Jonathon about the source of this funding at the time he admitted that there had been at least one large contributor which he refused to name. I remember that I believed that TWS was an official organisation and he had no right to withhold sources of funding. Since this time, The Eye (Summer 1988-89, pp. 9-10) has reported hidden finances (more than just some ‘wine for a raffle'), and I have no reason to put it nicely, to alter my judgement about Jon's group of TWS accounting.

The final point about Bond's alleged funding is that it all appear in any books or records. Bond owned the seaboard Channel Nine stations. It would have been illegal to fund an election campaign so directly. It has recently been shown how creative Bond is in shuffling finances to protect his own personal fortune from the grip of bankruptcy. It would be unethical to have taken much to channel the funds through a separate person or company. Perhaps the money was not given to TWS directly? It may have been that TWS merely received cheaper rates? Whatever the details, the fact remains that the deal was a covert one. Even from the mem­
vast numbers of individuals (such as myself) involved in the conservation movement, which the little network purported to represent. Jonathon's interest in comparison with Leech Walesa sums up a major difference between the two of us. I perceive the environment movement as a social movement which is ever-changing. Its chief strength lies in its flexibility to adapt to new circumstances.

Jonathon, on the other hand, is caught wholly within the constraints of formal organisations and political parties. To Jon, the movement is not a movement at all; but a single, regrettably body (a lobby group) which must adhere to one, single holy-grail (that of the organisational bureaucrats) in order to achieve 'optimum effectiveness'.

In his response to my article Jon asks me to specify what 'tradeoffs' were made. Jon, the trade-offs may not have been between wilderness areas. Instead, you traded votes for the Labor Party with the Wet Tropics. You and the other professional elites traded when you undertook the aforementioned financial dealings. Far worse, however, was your trading of the movement's integrity without even asking its participants for permission.

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The newly-appointed Executive Director of the Australian Conservation Council, Tricia Caswell.

 Movements in the movement

The Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) has a new Executive Director, and Greenpeace Australia is about to lose its Executive Director.

Following the departure of Phillip Toyne, who is taking up a fellowship at the Australian National University in Canberra, ACF has appointed Tricia Caswell, formerly Industrial Officer with the Victorian Trades Hall Council, as Executive Director for a five year term.

Ms Caswell has held a number of positions over the years including Executive member of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, member of the Australia Council, member of the Australian National Commission for UNESCO, councillor with the Fitzroy City Council, and teacher in the technical and TAFE areas.

Ms Caswell has also been a member of the Australian Labor Party for a number of years. In the interests of demonstrating complete impartiality and independence from political influence, I will be resigning my membership of the Australian Labor Party prior to taking up my position at ACF,' said Ms Caswell after the announcement of the appointment.

Greenpeace Australia Executive Director, Paul Gilding, will be taking up the position Executive Director with Greenpeace International, based in Amsterdam, from 1 February 1993.

Greenpeace International announced in late September that its Executive Director of four years, Steve Sawyer, would be retiring from the position, and be replaced by Paul Gilding, aged 33, who was appointed Executive Director of Greenpeace Australia in 1990, after working on Greenpeace Australia's Clean Waters Clean Seas Campaign. 'I regard the move to Greenpeace International as a great personal challenge,' Gilding said. 'The next decade will be critical to the quest to find permanent solutions to the awesome threats facing the planet. I'm looking forward to keeping Greenpeace at the forefront of that quest.'

Gilding said under his leadership Greenpeace would continue its hard-edged direct action campaigns on corporations and governments which consistently refused to take serious measures to cease environmental destruction. He said Greenpeace would also continue to explore cooperative work with corporations and governments that were rising to the challenge in providing environmentally beneficial technology, employment, infrastructure, and consumer goods.

Car reduction plans

Oregon's Department of Land Conservation and Development has adopted planning policies to reduce car use by 20 per cent over the next 30 years.

While many Oregon citizens indicate that they would like to commute to work and do shopping on foot or by bicycle, in many instances it is unsafe or unpleasant for them to do so.

In response the Land Department has established the 'Transportation Planning rule' requiring that bike parking facilities be included in the plans for most new multi-family residential developments, as well as retail, office and institutional developments, major transfer stations and park-and-ride lots.

The rule also requires that safe and convenient pedestrian and bike access be established between new residential developments and transit, shopping areas and park-and-ride lots.

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We encourage and cooperate with corporations which are setting the trends in environmental design, environmental technology, and employment. It is clear that such corporations will continue to increase market share in the future without depleting the world's finite resources or destroying our water, land and air,' he said.

Greenpeace has around 5 million worldwide supporters and offices in 30 countries.

Source: Australian Conservation Foundation; Greenpeace Communications, London; Greenpeace Australia.
Holes in the Ozone

Since the amendment of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer in June 1990, scientists have discovered that industrial chemicals are destroying the stratospheric ozone layer much faster than predicted. They warn that the Protocol will allow significant deterioration of the ozone layer in the coming decade. Ministers will renegotiate the Montreal Protocol in Copenhagen in November 1992, against a backdrop of weak commitments, gaps in loophole, and disputes over funding. The Protocol currently phases out CFCs, halons and carbon tetrachloride in industrialized countries by the year 2000 and methyl chloroform in 2005. Developing countries have an extra ten years. The protocol does not control HCFCs or methyl bromide.

Earth News

Chefs versus mutant food

Leading US chefs and food safety advocates gathered in Washington DC in July 1992 to protest a joint Council on Competitiveness/Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ruling in late May allowing genetically altered foods to be marketed without testing or labelling. It was also ruled that genetically engineered foods not be treated differently from naturally or traditionally bred foods.

We are not going to sacrifice the entire history of culinary art to rationalize the biotechnology industry,' said chef Rick Moonen, of the Water Club restaurant in New York City. The companies Monsanto, Upjohn, Calgene, and PloL-Lys are all using gene splicing to produce genetic foods. In genetic food, animal or even human genes are inserted into plants or other animals creating 'transgenic' foods. Examples of biotechnology use include: human genes added to pigs in order to create leaner meat, and to fish to increase their size; fish genes added to tomatoes to make them more resilient; and chicken genes added to potatoes to slow spoilage.

Cooking to save the world. First discovered in the 1950s, the mine has not had a major block to development. Approval for the Kurdanji deposit was discovered on deposit was discovered on 22 May 1992 and 12 weeks later government approval was granted. The most shameful part of it all is that the people whose traditional country surrounds the mine are still homeless,' Mr Dodson said. 'The governments knew that, but made no real attempt to fix it despite having a perfect opportunity. The Kurdanji, whose traditional country is covered by pastoral leases two of them owned by MM - have long-standing claims for community living areas, claims the company has always resisted. It's a disgrace that we can have the High Court back traditional land rights in the Mabo case, and then within months see governments turn their backs on a landless people in the rush to fast track a mining project.

Over 30 years after the deposit was discovered on Kurdanji land, MM can get government approvals within three months and yet the Kurdanji still have no secure land tenure on their own country. 'And NT and Commonwealth Ministers are crowing about this being a model example of the new approach to development approvals and inter-governmental co-operation,' said Mr Dodson.

FROM THE SoUeRCE: MultiNational Monitor, September 1992

Fast-tracking a disgrace

The "fast-tracking" of government approvals for resource development projects has proved to be disastrous for Aboriginal people,' said the Northern Land Council Director, Mick Dodson, following the 14 August announcement that the huge McArthur River mine had the green light to proceed from both the Northern Territory and Commonwealth governments. The MIM Holdings Ltd's (MIM) lead-silver-zinc deposit, near Baroona in the Gulf of Carpentaria, is estimated to be one of the largest in the world. First discovered in the 1950s, the mine has not proceeded due to the high costs of refining the ore. But earlier this year MIM took up the Federal Government's "One Nation" offer of development incentives including subsidies and promised fast tracking of government approvals. A hurriedly drafted Environmental Impact Statement was released by MIM on 22 May 1992 and 12 weeks later government approvals were granted.

The most shameful part of it all is that the people whose traditional country surrounds the mine are still homeless,' Mr Dodson said. 'The governments knew that, but made no real attempt to fix it despite having a perfect opportunity. The Kurdanji, whose traditional country is covered by pastoral leases - two of them owned by MM - have long-standing claims for community living areas, claims the company has always resisted. It's a disgrace that we can have the High Court back traditional land rights in the Mabo case, and then within months see governments turn their backs on a landless people in the rush to fast track a mining project.

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FROM THE SoUeRCE: MultiNational Monitor, September 1992

Hidden plastic

The US plastics industry is exporting its wastes to avoid domestic regulations and community opposition to waste-handling facilities and manufacturers, who have replaced the "biodegradable" labels with "recyclable", claim that their wastes are generating employment in the third world. The US Chamber of Commerce's manager of Resources Policy denied accusations that the United States is dumping waste at a 1991 Congressional hearing. Materials for recycling ... are sold to enterprises in countries with sophisticated manufacturing facilities.

Plastic, however, can ... may never be recycled into the same product. Each time plastic is heated, its chemical composition changes and quality decreases. Plastic bags and bottles dropped off at local recycling centres in the US are shipped to developing countries where much is not recycled at all. In 1991, over 400 million kg of plastic wastes were sent all the way to Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, Europe and Asia, the main target with over 30 million kg shipped to the Philippines and 70 million kg to Indonesia. Over 120 million kg was sent to Hong Kong, the largest single importer, where it is mostly stored awaiting shipment to China to be dumped. In the Philippines, strict laws banning waste imports did not stop US firms and waste brokers from shipping over 30 million kg of plastic waste to the country. The Philippine Navy says it needs more money for surveillance to stop dumping of imported plastic wastes in remote islands.

FROM THE SoUeRCE: Inter Press Service - Ann Leonard.

Democrats keep anti-green legislation

Legislation regarded as a major block to trade union action on environmental issues has been retained with the help of the Australian Democrats. Independent Victorian Senator Janet Powell, a former Democrats leader, will continue with plans for a November 1992 bill to repeal Sections 45D and 45E of the Trade Practices Act. The Democrats, whose very clear policy to support repeal was approved by a Party membership vote, have killed most repeal chances by sending the matter to a committee until May 1993, after the Federal election. Sections 45D and 45E were added to the Trades Practices Act by the Liberal/National government in 1978 and 1980 to stop trade unions imposing secondary boycotts on companies.

FROM THE SoUeRCE: Senate Hansard: Green Weekly.

Number 67 • 11
had all ganged up on the bureaucrats. Every one was sick and tired of the rationalists from Departments of Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Treasury. Five o'clock eventually arrived. The Forum leaders, suffering from shell shock, cancelled the following day's session.

It is essential the government bureaucrats take note of the extreme criticism which came forward from many sections of society. A meaningful final report needs to be produced to present to the Heads of Government later this year. There needs to be clear strategies which will lay down the foundation for a positive program to reduce greenhouse emissions and establish Ecologically Sustainable Development.

Source: Ted Floyd, Friends of the Earth Sydney.

Maitland news

Maitland Friends of the Earth had a successful annual general meeting in September, with varied and enthusiastic discussions and office-holders found for every vacant position. The meeting decided to focus more on recycling over the next year, especially as the local Council was in the process of adopting a community recycling program.

There are a number of active groups within Maitland FOE including: Education and Display which organises talks and displays on a variety of issues in the Maitland area, as well as arranging talks with local groups; Recycling, which has been lobbying the Maitland Council on the need for and type of local recycling program; and, Tree Planting, which collects seeds, propagates them and organises working bees to plant them (and native understorey and grasses) at needy spots in the community.

General meetings are open to all members and interested people and are held on the first Tuesday of the month.

For further information contact: Keith Fitzgerald, Coordinator, 57A Burg St, East Maitland, NSW, 2323.

Verdict on the Earth Summit

The Earth Summit exposed the enormous gulf between what the public wants and what its leaders are willing to do.

People everywhere are demanding a secure future on an ecologically and culturally diverse planet - a challenging vision that could be realised within a decade. Instead, the Earth's citizens witnessed the collective failure of political leaders to agree upon key measures for a new direction for life on Earth.

Despite the deepening ecological crisis and the stark connection between inequality and human deprivation, those leaders failed to seize the historic opportunity offered by the Earth Summit, as did their predecessors at the 1972 Stockholm Conference.

The overwhelming majority of leading politicians backed short term economic expediency - business as usual - instead of an integration of environment and economy. They succumbed to lobbying by excessively powerful business groupings intent on safeguarding their own narrow interests.

The greatest irresponsibility was demonstrated by the governments of industrialised countries, the ones with most power to change the status quo. The North has done little to signal, let alone assent to paying a fair share of the debt burden and fair trade, as well as direct funding) to protect their national environment and improve the quality of life for all their people.

New international conventions on Climate and Biodiversity, while promising, have not been effective in many respects, may lead to negotiations on more progressive follow-up protocols.

New international conventions on Environment and development have been abandoned, at least for the time being. It is clear that existing political groupings and structures are not fit for the task ahead.

In spite of the Summit's failures, the world witnessed some important progress in Rio de Janeiro. The debate about the environment and development was placed at the centre of the world's political stage. The debate has changed fundamentally - politicians have been forced to acknowledge the nature and scale of the crisis. The challenge now is to monitor how governments respond after the Earth Summit and to increase the momentum for change at all levels - the stakes have never been higher.

Non-governmental achievements

- The world's leaders met.
- North-South inequity has been exposed as the root cause of most threats to the planet and its people.
- Inequity within many countries has been seen to mirror the international divide.
- Governments have been forced to respond to the powerful evidence of the need to abate the environment and development crisis by taking urgent and effective action nationally and internationally.
- The world's richest nations have been confronted in public with their responsibility to help developing countries obtain the money they need (through alleviation of the debt burden and fair trade, as well as direct funding) to protect their national environment and improve the quality of life for all their people.
- New international conventions on Climate and Biodiversity, while promising, have not been effective in many respects, may lead to negotiations on more progressive follow-up protocols.
- The UN's formal acknowledgement of the contribution of such NGOs allows them to argue for increased influence at national level.

Source: Andrew Lees, Friends of the Earth International.

Join your local Friends of the Earth group

FOE Adelaide University
C/ Clubs Association
University of Adelaide
Adelaide, SA, 5000
Ph: (08) 228 6665

FOE Flinders University
Students Association
Bedford Park, SA, 5042
Ph: (08) 201 2614

FOE New South Wales
PO Box 3231
Glenfield St, Sydney, 2003

FOE Wellington
PO Box 428
Wellington, 5172
Ph: (045) 62 2522

FOE Brisbane
PO Box 10159
Adelaide St
Brisbane, Qld, 4000

FOE Stanthorpe
c/- Lyn Alexander
PO The Summit
Stanthorpe, Qld, 4377
Ph: (076) 82 2254

FOE Sydney
PO Box A47
Sydney, NSW, 2001
Ph: (02) 281 4070
Fax: (02) 281 5161
Email: foesydney@ozemail.com.au

FOE Fitzroy
225 Brunswick St
Fitzroy, Vic, 3065
Ph: (03) 419 8700
Fax: (03) 419 8701

FOE Maryborough
c/- Clayton St
Maryborough, Qld
Ph: (071) 23 1895

FOE Queensland
c/- WSD Springfield
Kyneton Environment Awareness Group
PO Box 90
Adelaide, SA, 5001
Ph: (08) 23 2855
Fax: (08) 23 2855
Email: chain@foequeensland.com.au

National Liaison Officer
222 Brunswick St
Fitzroy, Vic, 3065
Ph: (03) 419 8700
Fax: (03) 419 8701

FOE International Secretariat
PO Box 1919
100 GD Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Ph: 31 20 622 1369
Fax: 31 20 627 6387
Unwrapping packaging's public relations

The packaging industry in Australia, as one of the main sources of pollution and waste in the country, finds it necessary to maintain a number of public relations bodies and industry associations. David Vincent analyses these organisations and looks at some of the people who work for them.

They're a strange assortment of associations and 'foundations', headed by hired guns, including two former senators - one Labor, one Liberal - and a legion of public relations specialists. Their job is to protect the packaging and beverage industries from what they see as predatory bands of misinformed consumers and green fundamentalists.

The rise of these organisations demonstrates the success of environment and consumer groups in pushing waste and packaging issues onto the political agenda. It also shows how easily the message of consumers and environmentalists can be swamped by the resources of these industry organisations. They have considerable resources: apart from the staff within industry associations, most of the major members have 'environmental affairs managers', fully-paid up members of the white-shoe brigade who work alongside the industry associations.

The introduction of container deposit legislation in South Australia in 1977 caught the vested interests unawares. But since then they've been successful in convincing state and federal governments that non-intervention in the marketplace is the way to go. They demonstrated their muscle again in 1992, with the getting of Victoria's Resource Recovery Bill, which would have seen levies imposed on packaging materials to pay for their collection. Federal Environment Minister Kelly's National Waste Minimisation Strategy, launched in June 1992, again demonstrates the voluntary/education orientation that sits comfortably with industry interests.

Environment and consumer groups, in general, favour a legislative or regulatory approach to the reduction of packaging and have been campaigning for the introduction of container deposit legislation and other packaging legislation. This approach is favoured because the voluntary/education approach ignores certain environmental and social costs, or externalities. But the arguments of the consumer and environment groups have been overwhelmed by the packaging lobby.

Just who are these powerful organisations that have taken control of public policy and whose interests do they represent?

**Association of Liquidpaperboard Carton Manufacturers (ALC)**

Possibly the hardest-working of all the lobbies, ALC represents the manufacturers of drink cartons. It has ten sponsors in Australia - Gaddeden Rheem, Tetra Pak, Enzo, Weyerhauser, Westvaco, Billerud, International Paper, Champion and Fotlatch. It seems that only Tetra Pak and Gaddeden Rheem have major interests in drink cartons in Australia. They produce the two types of cartons that ALC seems to spend most of its time defending.

The first is the type typically used for milk cartons, a laminate of plastic and high-quality paper. The second is aseptic packaging, or what the Americans call 'juice boxes'. It's the type of package in which fruit juice ('poppers'), soy milk and UHT milk are available. Gaddeden Rheem markets them as 'Combi Brees' and Tetra Pak pushes theirs as 'Tetra Brisk'. Again they're a laminate of materials, this time three layers of plastic and one each of aluminium and high-quality paper.

Friends of the Earth (FOE) and ALC and its members have been involved in something of a battle due to FOE's campaigns to have these cartons banned (as has been done in the US State of Maine) and ALC's tendency to not let the facts get in the way of a good PR campaign. ALC recently instructed its solicitors to seek a retraction from FOE (Maitland) about claims a group member made about the containers. Since then FOE (Sydney) has received a letter from Tetra Pak threatening legal action if the group's statements damage the company's reputation.

Meanwhile, the products ALC represents are among those most at threat from government regulation and consumer boycott. Brisbane City Council recently sought long-term commitments and a guaranteed floor price from manufacturers in these cartons and the Council's pollution control officers have realised that the economics of collection are so poor that ALC has no alternative but to set up collection depots, as it has done at Food Plus stores in NSW. This will lead to a level of returns much lower than that achieved by house-to-house collection, which in turn achieves a much lower return rate than a deposit system.

If the juice boxes were to bear the full costs of collection and reprocessing/disposal, they would be unlikely to be able to compete with other containers and would disappear from the marketplace. This, of course, is what Friends of the Earth would like to see.

**Litter Research and Recycling Association (LRRA)**

Formerly the Litter Research Association, now the Litter Research and Recycling Association just to show that they really are cool and hip and know what this recycling thing is about. Yep, it comes right after litter research.

This association represents a range of interests who believe, rightly or wrongly, that they will be the losers if container deposit legislation is introduced. Its 23 sponsors have interests in beverages (beer and soft drink) and packaging.

The NSW Litter Research Association was formed in 1978, around the time that the then Environment Minister visited Oregon, the first state in the US to introduce container deposit legislation. The industry interests were alarmed when the Minister returned impressed by the Oregon system and favouring its introduction in our most populous state.

The LRRA put up an alternative - it would fund an anti-litter campaign to be housed within the NSW State Pollution Control Commission. But there was a catch: the funding was conditional on the non-introduction of container deposit legislation.

This agreement has continued through to the present day. Former NSW Environment Minister Tim Moore, perhaps mindful of the potential of the agreement to rebound on the government, indicated the condition will be dropped. But NSW LRRA President Ron Werner in mid-1992 indicated to Chain Reaction that his association still regards the funding as conditional.

There are LRRA's in Western Australia, Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria and NSW. All are affiliated except the Queensland branch (where they've stuck with the old LRA tag). They have traditionally put most of their resources into NSW and Victoria as these are the states where there has been the most pressure for the introduction of container deposit legislation. The election of the Queensland Labor government and the Labor-Green Independent alliance in Tasmania produced a flurry of LRRA activity in those states. But a timely injection of funds and whispers in the right ears soon silenced any talk about container deposit legislation.

The LRRA played a part in the infamous Business Regulation Review Unit (BRRU) report on container...
ACF arm-in-arm with Plastics Industry Association

Australian Conservation Foundation Councillor and Melbourne weather presenter Rob Gell launched the PIA’s “Plastics Recycling Register” at a BRRU conference in Melbourne. This is without doubt a major step forward for the image of the plastics industry, Gell told conference participants. The ACF will continue to applaud industry initiatives for recycling, he said.

Plastics Recycling Register is "a major step forward,"] Looking Ahead 3 Newsletter, September 1991)

Reading the register makes it clear what the PIA wants to promote. Under the heading market constraints and opportunities PIA explains:

Not all plastics can be either recycled or reused for the same purpose because of health regulations. Plastics can be recycled again and again, with gradual reductions in the properties of the plastics at each stage. In this process, called a cascade, plastics are used more and more like medicine or as food containers. Later the plastic is recycled into use such as bumper bars, power tool housings and materials handling products. The plastic can then be recycled into building materials, sound barriers and fence posts. At the bottom of the cascade is the potential to use polyethylene to recover hydrocarbons or the plastics could be burnt to recover their energy content. (Plastics Industry Association, Plastics Recycling Register, booklet, 1991, p 4)

It is clear that the PIA is not following the course advocated by informed environmentalists, that of reduced use of plastic and at the very minimum, deposit legislation, published in 1989.2 The LRRA funded a consultancy to conduct much of the research and the organisation appointed a steering committee from Amatil, Smorgons and Containers Packaging to assist in the report’s preparation. The Steering Committee, according to BRRU Director Alan Moran, provided guidance, contacts and vital information.3 And, most importantly, it provided the report the vested interests wanted.

Packaging Environment Foundation of Australia (PEFA)
The symposiun on Packaging Environment Foundation of Australia was established in October 1990 and launched late that year on the same day Ron Kelly held an industry round-table meeting on recycling in Canberra. It is headed by Chris Pulpick, former Liberal Senator and Shadow Minister for the Environment (some say this ap-

Among PEFA’s other aims are the dis-

pointment shows that he was only ever a shadow of an environmentalist) Senator Bronwyn Bishop prior to the 1990 election.

The PIA’s public face is Susan Ryan, former Senator and the nation’s first female Cabinet Minister, as Education Minister and Minister assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women in the 1980s.4 Ryan’s role was made clear on the day of the launch.

The plastics industry has been subjected to much unwarranted and uninformed criticism and I seek to set the record straight and to provide the support and advocacy for this valuable sector of Australian manufacturing.

Packaging is a major concern for the PIA. It is the largest single sector of the industry, accounting for around a quarter of plastic consumption. It is also very vulnerable because the vast majority of plastic packaging is used once discarded, along with PVC, is the plastic industry’s most vulnerable area.

Ryan and the PIA walk a difficult tightrope. Because of the vulnerability of packaging, Ryan and the PIA have directed much of their attention to this part of their industry. But the problem for the PIA is that none of the soft options can provide a solution. Recycling of post-consumer-plastics is expensive enough to make it largely non-viable. It’s much cheaper to make plastic from fresh inputs and a whole lot easier. But at the same time recycling is the only ‘positive’ option the PIA can provide without putting its big hole in the future of the industry.

At the attractive thing for the plastic industry is that it can open up new markets with ‘recycled plastic’ while new plastic production streams along happily – you have your cake and eat it too. Indeed, one of the stated aims of the Looking Ahead campaign is the ‘opening up of new commercial opportunities for plastics industry.’

But, since the poor economics of plastics collection and reprocessing operates against it, recycling can’t provide the solution. Enter the next stage – incineration for the plastics that can’t be recycled. After all, plastics are derived from oil and thus have a high calorific content that can be released when burnt. In her speech to the Australian Polymer Symposium in February this year, Susan Ryan advocated incineration, with energy recovery, of post-consumer plastics that are unsuitable for material recovery. She noted that the PIA is planning a trial with the State Electricity Commission of Victoria.

The others
Some other organisations promote themselves as community organisations while also having close ties to the pack-

ing and beverage interests. Two such organisations are the Plastics Industry Association (PIA) and Keep Australia Beautiful Council (KABC).

Clean Up Australia has made a great contribution to our understanding of what is found in litter. The 1991 clean-up found that 94 per cent of the items collected were packaging-related. But despite compiling this useful database, CUA has been captured by industry interests. The PIA, whose product is the main item collected on CUA Day, is a major sponsor of the Day. Ian Kiernan, Chair of CUA, is also a member of the board of directors of EAPAI. RRRA sponsored recycling program driven by the desire of the beverage and packaging industries to avoid container deposit legislation. Kiernan is now a cohort of the bevy of beverage and packaging interests, a group he calls ‘the garbage club.’

KABC has offices in most states. Its structure and orientation varies between states, but in Victoria and NSW it is clearly captive to the packaging industry. The BRRU reported that in NSW the KABC was receiving $250,000 a year for a year for its campaign in 1989 and around $40,000 from other contributors.5 Oddly enough, despite its access to funds from industry and its lack of recognition from genuine environment groups, KABC groups around Australia continue to receive annual grants from the Federal Government National Voluntary Conservation Organisations funding program.

References:
3. ibid.
5. ibid.
10. Ian Kiernan, Chair, Clean Up Australia, comments made while presenting Recycling Awards, Recycling in the 9th conference, Macquarie University, 24 July 1992.
Forging Australia's nuclear chain

The nuclear industry is moving to make Australia a long term storage site for highly radioactive waste from all over the world according to Maggie Hine.

A NUMBER OF RECENT developments have brought Australia a few steps nearer to realising the ambitions of those who see its future as an international nuclear waste dump. Firstly, the Federal Government is searching for a national nuclear dump site. So keen is it to establish a national waste dump, that it has publicly stated it is prepared to seize land to do so, if the States fail to cooperate in locating a site. The Federal Government has commissioned a site selection study, to be completed by November 1992, and a concern is that the national dump could be expanded to accommodate international nuclear waste.

Secondly, a Code of Practice and Guidelines for the Disposal of Radioactive Wastes has been drawn up by the National Health and Medical Research Council. These documents, which have been the subject of much criticism, will set down the operating terms and conditions of any dump site.

Thirdly, the development and proposed commercialisation of a technology called Synroc (synthetic rock), will go towards servicing an international nuclear waste industry in Australia. Synroc is a Commonwealth invention, being developed to treat the high level liquid waste that results from reprocessing spent nuclear fuel (see box page 22). The backers of the technology, the Synroc Study Group (SSG), have publicly stated that one of the preferred options for commercialising the technology is to establish an international nuclear waste industry in Australia to service Synroc.

Fourthly, legislation has been passed to allow the import of nuclear waste into Australia. Taken together these issues mean that the Australian Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) could ultimately operate a national nuclear waste dump, import low, intermediate and high level waste; transport it throughout Australia – all with immunity from State, Territory and local government laws and by-laws. Australia is on the road to becoming the nuclear dustbin of the world.

That these developments are occurring at the same time is not a coincidence, but a clear indication that certain interests are exerting their power over the political process to ensure that Australia develops a nuclear waste industry.

ANSTO Act amended

In the late hours of 18 June 1992 the Federal Senate hurriedly passed the ANSTO Amendment Act. This Act gives ANSTO legislative powers to store, manage and process radioactive waste as a commercial venture with immunity from State, Territory and local government laws and by-laws. Any venture in which ANSTO has a controlling interest will be immune from such laws. This means that if ANSTO has the controlling interest in a commercial nuclear waste dump, the site will not be subject to State and Territory environmental laws. The legislation also begins to clear the way for ANSTO to import nuclear waste into Australia. ANSTO will have the legislative power to transport nuclear waste throughout Australia.

The amendments to the existing ANSTO Act were put forward by the Labor Government, through the ANSTO Amendment Act, has enabled ANSTO to conduct its activities on a more commercial basis. At the same time ANSTO has been given the legislative protection that is indicative of governments seeking to establish a nuclear industry – such as an industry utilising the Synroc technology.

ANSTO is the operator of the Lucas Heights nuclear research reactor and plays a crucial role in nuclear research and development in Australia. In essence it is Australia’s nuclear industry. The Labor Government, through the ANSTO Amendment Act, has enabled ANSTO to utilise the Lucas Heights nuclear research reactor as a commercial venture with immunity from State, Territory and local government laws and by-laws.

ANSTO, as a Commonwealth entity, has breached NSW planning laws. The ANSTO Amendment Act has given ANSTO immunity from State and Territory laws. This provision in the ANSTO Amendment Act has been seen as a direct consequence of the Court's findings that ANSTO had acted illegally in allowing 10,000 drums of radioactive waste from Victoria to be moved to Lucas Heights for storage.

To bypass the onus on the waste creator to seek the most environmentally acceptable method of disposal of any drum of waste, the ANSTO Amendment Act, gives immunity from State and Territory environmental laws. The legislation also begins to clear the way for ANSTO to import nuclear waste into Australia. ANSTO will have the legislative power to transport nuclear waste throughout Australia.

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Reprocessing waste

High level liquid nuclear waste, of the sort for which Synroc is being developed, is a product of the reprocessing of nuclear fuel rods which have been used in nuclear reactors. This spent fuel is the world's most dangerous waste product. Although reprocessing fuel rods to obtain uranium is uneconomic, because of the availability of relatively cheap mined uranium, it is conducted because it also releases plutonium, which is used primarily in nuclear weapons and also in reactors known as 'fast breeders'.

Reprocessing is the chemical separation of spent fuel into its constituent parts. The rods are removed from storage ponds, stripped of their metal casing and dissolved in nitric acid. The 'useful' materials – uranium and plutonium – are separated from this solution which contains other radioactive materials and becomes the high level liquid nuclear waste. About 97 per cent of the total radioactivity of the spent fuel rods remains in this waste. It includes short and long-lived radioactive chemicals and must be kept separate from the environment for thousands of years.

The Synroc Study Group, along with ANSTO, consists of the Australian National University (through its inventor Professor Ted Ringwood), BHP, Energy Resources of Australia (owners of Ranger uranium mine and Jabiluka uranium deposit in the Northern Territory), Western Mining Corporation (joint owners of Roxby Downs uranium mine in SA, and the Yeelirrie uranium deposit in WA) and CRA (owners of the Kinyrite uranium deposit in WA).

The uranium mining companies' involvement in the Synroc Study Group has played an instrumental role in promoting a nuclear waste industry in Australia. The SSG was formed to give effect to the Federal Government's request to ANSTO to secure Australian industry involvement in the commercialisation of Synroc.

The Government has now sponsored a report detailing recommendations for the commercialisation of the Synroc technology. These include the establishment of a pilot plant and associated waste dump in Australia to test Synroc, and the import of the required high level liquid waste for processing. The ANSTO Amendment Act bestows powers on ANSTO that allow it and the SSG to obtain high level liquid waste from State and Territory laws, the national government can use to its great advantage. All that stands in the way of ANSTO and the SSG fulfilling their ambitions is ALP policy, not a good insurance policy for past experience is anything to go by. What is more, in the course of the Senate debate on the ANSTO Amendment Act the Minister for Industry, Technology and Commerce, Senator John Button, gave no guarantees that 'spent source material' i.e. spent nuclear fuel, would not be imported. When pressed on this issue, the leader of the Australian Democrat Party in the Senate referred to the following response:

"I have nothing to add to what I have already said, except that this Bill is very wide in its ramifications and there may be circumstances where fuel rods have been sent overseas for reprocessing. I understand, we may have to take back small quantities of waste from Synroc from these rods. There is a possibility, not a likelihood, that this could be required of us."

Consequently, the Government, with the support of the Coalition, rejected an amendment put up by the Australian Democrats to ensure that Synroc does not import any reprocessed fuel rods back to Australia for dumping and treatment with Synroc. In the present depressed world market for uranium, this additional selling point for Australian uranium producers would put them in good stead for securing contracts with uranium buyers.

The Act could have been amended to include a definitive statement at least explaining the import and export of pharmaceutical related radioactive material, but banning the import of waste from the nuclear fuel cycle.

Why didn't this happen? Well, it would seem all roads lead to Synroc, and ANSTO's vested interest in the commercialisation of the technology in Australia.

ANSTO is presently storing 94 spent nuclear fuel rods, stored at Lucas Heights nuclear reactor site in Sydney. The spent fuel is from the research reactors located on site. Some spent fuel rods have already been sent overseas for reprocessing. Some countries that have reprocessing facilities require that nuclear waste generated from reprocessing of spent fuel is returned to the country of origin.

That Synroc can treat all types of nuclear waste is a myth. It can only be used to immobilise the high level liquid waste that arises from reprocessing spent nuclear fuel. That Synroc can treat all types of nuclear waste is a myth. It can only be used to immobilise the high level liquid waste that arises from reprocessing spent nuclear fuel.

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The writing is on the wall. The push to increase the dumping of nuclear waste to a dump on – a dump that is politically convenient – is now evident. Once a dump is established under suitable laws and regulations, it is very difficult to prevent countries from sending back radioactive waste that has resulted from the use of pharmaceutical isotopes that ANSTO may export. If this were true, then the

References
4. Greenspeace Australia, POI Flattery and POI Sydney have made extensive comment on the Draft Codes and Guidelines. Copies available upon request.

Maggie Hine has been involved with nuclear issues since she worked on England's Lakes District shortly after the Chernobyl reactor made its place in history.
From centre to margin in ecofeminist thought

Ecofeminism is developing says Ariel Salleh and there has been change in the substantive issues addressed as ecofeminist books by women from outside the ‘metropolitan’ centres have been published.

The ecofeminist movement originated in the late 1960s and early 1970s with actions such as women’s legal challenges to giant nuclear corporations in the United States and tree-hugging protests against loggers in northern India. Both actions expressed a local protest against loggers in northern India grounded in working women’s commonsense understanding of ‘a feminine voice’ to be heard was connected with struggle for a nurturant, protective attitude toward our living environment. The term ‘ecofeminism’ spontaneously appeared across several continents during the 1970s, reflecting this double-edged political perspective.


Applying the sociology of knowledge to ecofeminism, it is perhaps not surprising to find that the shift ‘center’ to ‘margin’ brings with itself a shift in substantive concerns. Symptomatically, given our imperialist context, it is a move from ‘ideas’ to ‘material’ questions. Earlier analyses of the ‘women-nature link’ concentrated on abstract ideas, ideology, the superstructure of daily existence. Hence, the excellent expositions of the Judeo-Christian tradition in Ruether, or the rise of Baconian science in Merchant. It could be argued that this focus on ideology was simply a manifestation of our academia. In a society, such as the United States, where an entrenched class division between mental and manual labour exists and where labour issues are either suppressed or mystified by racism, experience, perception and theory are inevitably constrained in important ways. As Shiva puts it, liberation should ‘begin from the colonised and end with the coloniser’ (p. 53). Two recent North American anthologies lend support to this observation. Both Plant’s Healing the Wounds (Philadelphia and Santa Cruz: New Society, 1989) and Diamond and Orenstein’s Reweaving the World (1990) are, with the exception of one or two essays, largely preoccupied with ethics, life-style, self-realization, cultural ritual and art – this while 456 million people starve today, and one more species will have died out by midnight. Again, consistent with a prevailing climate of bourgeois pluralism, the books come across as a ‘supermarket’ of ecofeminist viewpoints. What is missing is an explicit and concerted challenge to the multi-national structure of economic oppression: a global economy in which a so-called ‘advanced’ world is utterly dependent for its daily survival on the labour resources of an ‘un-developed’ Two Thirds World. Thankfully, this challenge is what Vandana Shiva’s Staying Alive brings to ecofeminism. As far as ‘anthropologists go, the UK published collection by Leonie Caldecott and Stephanie Leland, Reclaim the Earth (London: Women’s Press, 1983) remains the best. It is politically grounded and internationally balanced.

Like Mies’s book before it, Shiva’s Staying Alive arrives as an urgent complement to the export dominant ‘culturalist’ tendency in ecofeminist literature. Director of the New Delhi based Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Natural Resources Policy, Shiva is herself a member of a privileged group. Even so, she has an intimate practical knowledge of the many dimensions of her subject. Her text weaves its way comfortably through geology, plant physiology, economics, mythology, epistemology. The book’s basic thesis is that while Western ‘development’ was supposed
Ecofeminism has drawn attention to the use of language to feminise nature, and Felicity Ruby looks at some of its implications and meanings.

The connection between the oppression of women and the destruction of nature is a concept radical feminists have been discussing for some time. Recently ecofeminism has appeared as a discourse unto itself, to cries of both joy and dismay. For me it is inspiring because it is not a monolithic homogeneous ideology, but makes radical political connections to formulate a vision; it also places hope on the agenda in a seemingly hopeless world.

Both feminism and ecology call for and attempt to understand the implications of change and formulate a new cultural ethic. Both personal and institutional Ynesia King, in Rewriting the World says, 'there is no point in liberating people if the planet cannot sustain their liberated lives.' It is increasingly obvious that women's liberation cannot be separated from the liberation of all. We need a venue. Ecology demands that we respect the relationship between humanity and the ecos with similar sentiments to those we would expect in a caring human relationship. Ecofeminism says we need to work on both now.

Some ecofeminists are inspired by nature on a political level, as it provides metaphors and symbols for peacefu co-existence in a world without hierarchies. The idea that the natural world is a kingdom with a definite hierarchy, in which only the fittest survive, is a masculinist imposition. What actually occurs in nature is anarchy, and the anarchist analysis of power relations is becoming increasingly attractive to feminists. Note, it tends to be males who equate nature with women. They talk of virgin land, rape of the land: men who want to be possessive of nature and women. Some women have equated environmental destruction with rape, and while there is a parallel in that the violence is similar and it essentially comes from the same source, the two acts are not the same. It may be a useful association as it illustrates the atrocity of destroying nature and the acts committed against nature are justified by the same platform as is the rape of women — patriarchy. However, the atrocity of rape is committed against women. My oppression as a woman is psychological terror drawn out over a long time. It is a completed social process involving the attempted corruption of my whole being on a psychological as well as physical level. Rape denotes a specific act of sexual violation and until it is treated seriously. It is unsatisfactory for the green movement to appropriate the term.

As a white, first world feminist in the patriarchal cesspool of Australia, I am not from a culture that embraces any idea of female divinity or respect for the earth as life giving. As such, calling the earth 'mother' (as lifted from a spiritual sense from other cultures) is essentially devoid of any meaning in this culture. It seems to be another infuriating example of men conveniently appropriating the 'feminine' as metaphor. The earth should not be subject to personification. It is what it is — a planet. It sustains life, meaning that it has both male and feminine essences, but essentially has no gender. We are contributing to the patriarchal mentality when we call the earth 'mother'.

Language is the cultural production of meaning and it has been controlled by men. Codes of meanings and representations are cultural practices which arise out of assumptions about the national character. Kay Schaffer in Women and the Bush notes that women have been considered absent in the bush and the nationalistic tradition — yet are constantly represented through metaphors of landscape. The land in this Australian condition is: the dark spiritual emanation of the external female. She is primally cruel and unable to nourish properly. The earth is simultaneously admired 'I love a sunburnt country' and hated as a harbing unyielding pitch. It sounds familiar considering the extreme problems men have with their mothers under patriarchy. This point is emphasised as it is in the Australian condition is: the dark spiritual emanation of the external female, she is primally cruel and unable to nourish properly. The earth is simultaneously admired 'I love a sunburnt country' and hated as a harbing unyielding pitch. It sounds familiar considering the extreme problems men have with their mothers under patriarchy. This point is emphasised as it is in the Australian condition is: the dark spiritual emanation of the external female, she is primally cruel and unable to nourish properly. The earth is simultaneously admired 'I love a sunburnt country' and hated as a harbing unyielding pitch. It sounds familiar considering the extreme problems men have with their mothers under patriarchy. This point is emphasised as it is in the Australian condition is: the dark spiritual emanation of the external female, she is primally cruel and unable to nourish properly.
An ecofeminist bibliography

The following is a list of some of the main ecofeminist texts, including all the works referred to in the accompanying articles.

Andre Godard, *Rapes of the Wild,* Indianapolis University Press.

Identifying the modern environment movement as fellow-travellers with developmentists and we might add, many environmental ethicists too, Shiva points to the underlying Cartesian paradigm they all share. 'Deep' ecologists do make an attempt to escape this instrumentalism, albeit with mixed results, though Shiva appears not to be aware of this ideological grouping among Greens. Using a vocabulary of alienation, commodification, homogenization, to describe the impact of industrial practices, her perception, generally speaking, the role of living men and women are 'organically' implicated in the ready adoption of Gaia imagery by environmentalists, who, using commonsense understanding of sexual differences massaged by such a notion, would use commonsense understandings of sexual differences misconstrued and at an ego level, it satisfies por­tionishes, and at a cultural level, it is not only symbolic, but has at least three sites where it is active and creative. The first is in reproduction or birthing; the second is in production or farming; and the third is in the provision of nurture or caring. In each labor form, women are 'organically' implicated in life-affirming processes and women's knowledge is empirically grounded in the biological basis of gender.

The notion of Prakriti

Drawing on Indian mythology, Shiva introduces the notion of 'Prakriti' as feminine principle or life force. This is distinct from Western-gendered concepts of 'the feminine' which work in a politically oppressive way by equating the feminising with passivity, then attaching women's work roles and personas to this false objectification. Prakriti, she claims, is transcended, an active creative force. Men too can live through Prakriti, but when men's energy is 'gendered' the principle of activity is conflated with dominating, even destructive behaviour, such that creativity is again lost. Prakriti is proposed by Shiva as an alternative 'universal basis for gender liberation. It will serve as a corrective to the fragmented, socially homogenizing and fragmenting 'universal' principles of the Western bourgeois liberal order.

A convergence of this analysis with the 'culturalist' tendency in ecofeminism is thus quite clear. The modernist 'catching-up' orientation of Liberal and Marxist feminists based on 'masculine' universals is obsolete. A re-visioning of the earth goddess, Gaia, is called for. The pitfall in all this is that, while Prakriti may in principle be transcended, the efforts of men and women to realise it are hampered by a language and social institutions that are gendered. Hence the re-creation of cultural feminist ritual by a commercially oriented status quo and the ready adoption of Gaia imagery by environmentalists, who, using commonsense understandings of sexual differences, misconstrued and at an ego level, it satisfies por­tionishes, and at a cultural level, it is not only symbolic, but has at least three sites where it is active and creative. The first is in reproduction or birthing; the second is in production or farming; and the third is in the provision of nurture or caring. In each labor form, women are 'organically' implicated in the biological basis of gender.

The materiality of daily life, Shiva's approach does not stop at this point. There is not the simple assumption so often found among US radicals, from Greens to poststructuralists, that to change our discourse or how we think is equivalent to making political change. In Shiva's India, the link between women and nature is not only symbolic, but has at least three sites where it is active and creative. The first is in reproduction or birthing; the second is in production or farming; and the third is in the provision of nurture or caring. In each labor form, women are 'organically' implicated in the biological basis of gender.

Shiva laments that, like Gaia, Prakriti is deformed, socially homogenizing and fragmenting 'universal' principles of the Western bourgeois liberal order. A convergence of this analysis with the 'culturalist' tendency in ecofeminism is thus quite clear. The modernist 'catching-up' orientation of Liberal and Marxist feminists based on 'masculine' universals is obsolete. A re-visioning of the earth goddess, Gaia, is called for. The pitfall in all this is that, while Prakriti may in principle be transcended, the efforts of men and women to realise it are hampered by a language and social institutions that are gendered. Hence the re-creation of cultural feminist ritual by a commercially oriented status quo and the ready adoption of Gaia imagery by environmentalists, who, using commonsense understandings of sexual differences, misconstrued and at an ego level, it satisfies por­tionishes, and at a cultural level, it is not only symbolic, but has at least three sites where it is active and creative. The first is in reproduction or birthing; the second is in production or farming; and the third is in the provision of nurture or caring. In each labor form, women are 'organically' implicated in the biological basis of gender.

The materiality of daily life, Shiva's approach does not stop at this point. There is not the simple assumption so often found among US radicals, from Greens to poststructuralists, that to change our discourse or how we think is equivalent to making political change. In Shiva's India, the link between women and nature is not only symbolic, but has at least three sites where it is active and creative. The first is in reproduction or birthing; the second is in production or farming; and the third is in the provision of nurture or caring. In each labor form, women are 'organically' implicated in the biological basis of gender.
some universally determined 'feminine essence' but about 'experiences' most commonly shared among working women. Along the same lines, Shiva borrows Mies' observation from *Patriarchy and Accumulation* about men's most common labor forms. Given the gendered deformation of the life force, men tend to feel themselves 'productive' only when they objectify external reality and control it. Hence, the massive appeal of the Western development project.

But this discussion begs a question which Shiva's book raises and does not answer. If Praktikr precedes the gendered construction of society, then it must be Western colonialism that is responsible for men's violence on women. In fact, as the institution of mati demonstrates, patriarchal oppression in India has its own history. Why does the author evade this problem? Is it a tactical decision not to offend Third World brothers in the struggle against neocolonialism? If so, it is understandable, but it neglects women's interests in the long run.

Shiva's treatment of Praktikr as transgressed is too elliptical to be helpful. This discussion, creative fertility is traditionally ascribed to Indian temple goddesses in the form of a life-giving force. Social reproduction may be pre-gendered—principal or—but, as we know, women who labour to give birth generally become mothers who labour to give care. Similarly, anthropological studies reveal how the Indian cultural identification of women with water preserves their daily routine of PEOPLE CARRYING. Praktikr does not seem to be as gender pure as Shiva would have us believe.

**Some criticisms**

Shiva's writing is cryptic in some other areas as well. She says: 'Patriarchal categories which understand destruction as production and regeneration of life as pasticity have created a crisis of survival' (p. 3). This could allow an unsympathetic reader to charge that hers is an idealist argument. However, we know that the body of her book involves a constant interplay between ideas, labor, nature, relationships. Another vulnerable piece of writing occurs with:

 configuring theory with the voice of the 'other' to be heard long before Parisian postmoderns thought of it. Like Shiva's, though unlike the structuralists, the Frankfurt case for 'difference' was thoroughly embedded in a passion for social justice and practical renewal of human identity with nature. Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, each believed that in unravelling the contradiction inherent to women's gender 'mutilation', we would find a way back to what has been lost. This thesis foregrounds the transitional voice known as ecofeminism.

Shiva, I feel, does not unravel these contradictions patiently enough. We especially need close attention to the interplay between Western and other patriarchal systems, particularly in the face of an emergent masculinist backlash—from Left and Right—which seeks to prove that the pervasiveness of men's domination across cultures is a figment of Western feminist imagination. Hopefully, Shiva and her Third World sisters will take up this theme before too long.

The strengths of Shiva's contribution are clearly apparent. Her factual synthesis of geology, plant physiology, economics, and so on, is magnificent. Shiva's sensitive exposition of Indian women's systematic approach to ecological labor is a gift to ecofeminism. Phrases such as 'women transfer fertility' or 'this partnership between women's work and nature's work' convey a dialectical epistemology: one that implicitly discards the Cartesian split between human labor on the one hand, and nature, on the other. Empirical knowledge conceived in daily labor sustains the ecofeminist voice that Shiva translates for us in *Staying Alive*. That in itself is sufficient validation for our political perspective. In my view, Praktikr might just as well have been left to sleep in a footnote.

Ariel Salathé writes about feminism, socialism and green politics.
Preservation Zone should be overturned. Given that an oil spill contingency plan which is shared in the Authority but the philosophical stand behind it is constantly stated. When we are dealing with an area of such profound importance and fragility it is far preferable to take the stand that we should prohibit or restrict activities unless we have good reasons for thinking they are harmless. This should apply to all activities in the Park, not just oil exploration or drilling.

Two other activities that need desperately to be further restricted are fishing and tourism. The harm being done to the Reef by tourists and tourist development is abundantly clear to the casual observer. Yet tourism in the Cairns area is increasing at a rate of roughly 30 per cent per annum and GBRMPA gives permission for development which could be predicted to be destructive. One example of this is the development on Magnetic Island which will severely affect up to 50 per cent of the coral reef in Nelly Bay.

The harm done by depletion of fish stocks may not be realized until it is too late. There is very little research into the long-term viability of Reef fishing and attempts at monitoring reef fish have not been successful. There is not even consensus on the appropriate method for monitoring. Yet very little restriction is placed on what fish are taken. An alternative philosophy that is operating is that operating in wait and see if these practices are dangerous.

The sad truth is that we might not have very long to wait.

Further flaws in the philosophical base of the management practices stem from acceptance of a land-based model, with the assumption that the area can be divided into reasonably distinct regions, albeit with buffer zones. This model is questionable on land and is nonsense in the sea. The larvae of marine plants and animals are sometimes dispersed hundreds of kilometres in the plankton. In an extensive study done in the mid-80s by Gordon Ball, larval drift was recorded up to 728 kilometres though some, perhaps most, larvae settle in three days, 3-8 nautical miles away from the spawning area.

The conclusions from this study relate to about one third of the corals on the reef and they establish the interconnectedness of different reef regions.

Other examples throw a shadow over zoning. The Cod Hole does not always stay in its small Preservation Zone. They may stray into the nearby zone where trolleying is legal. The scientist working in the Scientific Zone on Lizard Island may be frustrated to find his subjects killed in legal fishing a few hundred metres from the shore.

There are threats to the Reef from activities in areas adjacent to the Park, in particular from land run off and proposed oil exploration/drilling. A philosophy which accepts the zoning model within the Park makes it easy to look upon the Great Barrier Reef as a unit separate from the adjacent land and sea. It makes it difficult for the Authority to act as a political force countering the threats from adjacent areas. If the notion of interconnectedness of regions within the Park is accepted then it would be easier to see the interconnection between the Reef and non-Reef areas. This philosophical stance would not, of course, solve problems arising from the meeting of State and Commonwealth jurisdiction.

There are also problems arising from the use of the Reef channel for shipping. There has been an average of one oil spill a year from ships since 1970 but there has been a sharp increase over the last year. Often spills are deliberate and large fines are not effective in stopping them, and existing measures for handling oil spills are hopelessly inadequate. It is difficult for GBRMPA to do anything about shipping. Even the hands of the Federal Government are tied to some extent because of international laws relating to the free passage of shipping, yet it is an area where urgent action is desperately needed.

An alternative philosophy

The current philosophical stand – that limitations should be placed on potentially destructive uses of the Reef only when research shows their destructiveness – should be overturned. Given that we know about the accelerating extinction of species in other places in the world, the policy of 'wait and see' in an area of such profound biological diversity is very dangerous indeed. Instead a more cautious approach should be adopted. If we know that an activity is harmful to the Reef or if we are unsure of its effects then we should prohibit, restrict, or encourage it. That should be the basic philosophical standpoint. Yet given the very uneven effectiveness of the exercise of power from above, the principle should ideally lead to self-policing.

This would, however, be a mammoth problem with commercial shipping and fishing which are areas requiring tighter government intervention. This could include, for example, extension of the pilot scheme for ships passing through the Reef, banning of shipping during coral spawning and putting more resources into 'Reefplan' – an oil spill contingency plan which is currently inadequate to handle large spills.

Fishing off Lizard Island near the 'Cod Hole' where the protected giant Potato Cod are sometimes encouraged to fight for anglers' entertainment.

Self-policing works well with smaller scale activities. The tour boat operators in Hervey Bay exemplify this. There is a good sense of community and recognition that the regulations regarding whale watching are worth keeping to protect the industry.

An alternative philosophy of Reef management should also take more account of the interconnections not only between different parts of the Park but also between the Park and its land and sea edges. The imposition of zones masks this reality. Obviously some local regulation is required, for example spear-fishing of the cod in the Cod Hold has to be illegal, but local regulation could take place within an overall perspective of interconnectedness. The danger with zoning is that it gives a license to harmful activities within certain areas and orientates people's thinking away from the whole.

It is only by keeping the whole in mind that we will have a chance of preserving the Reef.

Dr Denise Russell is Head of the Department of General Philosophy at the University of Sydney.
Who wants to know?

'Right to Know' refers to the right of people to know information on the existence, quantities and effects of emissions of industrial activity. Larry O'Loughlin and Clare Henderson look at different forms of Right to Know and at some problems that need to be addressed.

A NUMBER OF serious accidents and releases of chemicals in recent years has led to an increase in the calls for the 'Right to Know' about the types of chemicals used, the quantities involved and their hazards.

Right to Know has existed as a legislated right in some parts of Europe and a number of States in the United States for some years. The concept of Right to Know received a fillip after the Bhagol disaster in India. This was the world's largest industrial accident in which 2850 people were killed immediately or within a few weeks of the release of methyl iso-cyanate (MIC), a substance related to but more deadly than World War I poison gases, from the Union Carbide plant. It was later revealed that MIC was also being produced in the US in a community unaware of its production or effects.

Although 31 States already had some form of Right to Know legislation, the US Federal legislature passed the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Law in 1986. This law did a number of things, including the establishment of a toxic release inventory, a company prepared listing of the emissions from their industrial operations which was made available to the government and the public. The law also provided for the establishment of Local Emergency Planning Committees with representation from state and local government, firefighters, industry, media and community groups.

The fire at the Coode Island terminal in inner Melbourne in August 1991 has been a major boost to increased awareness of the potential hazards from the use, storage and transport of chemicals in Australian communities.

There have been calls for Australian Right to Know legislation from a variety of groups:

- Community groups such as the Hazardous Materials Action Group, the Public Interest Advocacy Group, and the Environmental Defenders Office have seen the need for Right to Know legislation.
- The issue has been raised for discussion in papers outlining the development of Environment Protection Authorities.
- Australian Council of Trade Unions policy calls for recognition of the right of workers to know about the chemicals in their workplaces.
- The Australian Chemical Industry Council has also called on its members to adopt the Responsible care program which includes a Right to Know component.
- Firefighters and emergency planners are also calling for their need to know to be recognised.

Differences and problems

There are, however, different forms of Right to Know, and the concept can be broken into three parts.

Firstly, there is the right of workers to know the hazards which they face in the workplace. Some occupational health and safety legislation requires that employers and chemical suppliers must provide information to workers about the products they are handling. This is supposed to be done through labelling of containers and the provision of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) and training of workers. Worksafe Australia, the national occupational health and safety policy organisation, has developed model regulations, for adoption by State authorities, which incorporate a form of worker's Right to Know. As far as we understand, although they have been recommended or are under consideration in most states and territories, no-one has actually implemented these model regulations, and there is no other legislation guaranteeing worker's Right to Know in Australia.

This form of Right to Know relies on the various parties - employers, suppliers and workers - being actively involved in the process, and it falls down when for example there are no available MSDSs for combinations of chemicals, or when workers are exposed to a range of chemicals outside their immediate work area. The MSDS also does not necessarily provide information on the potential danger facing humans. Most importantly, workers Right to Know does not provide information for the community around the workplace.

The second form of Right to Know is that of emergency workers, particularly firefighters, to have information about the chemicals at the site of an emergency. They need to know the hazards faced as they dash into a blazing warehouse or attend a spill on a highway. They also need to be aware of the potential environmental damage caused by water containing chemicals running off into storm-water drains.

Work has been done to label industrial premises with details of the class of chemicals they contain and Worksafe's model regulations for the provision and maintenance of emergency manifests of all hazardous chemicals on site, their location and quantities.

The large number and quantities of chemicals in use makes the preparation of manifests very complex, and again, the Right to Know for emergency workers does not necessarily lead to an informed community.

The third main form of Right to Know is the right of communities to know. This assumes that local government, government agencies and the public have a Right to Know about the production, use, storage, discharge and disposal of chemicals and their effects.

Currently there is no legal provision in Australia for community Right to Know, however, the final report of the Coode Island Review Panel did recommend that the Government agree in principle to a legislated Community Right to Know. Independent Victorian Senator Janet Powell has prepared a draft of a form of Federal Right to Know legislation which may be presented to the Senate by the end of 1992.

The US experience

Right to Know legislation could be expected to reveal all necessary information to any member of the public wishing to know the environmental and public health effects of a particular industry or industrial process.

The US legislation has shown that it has particular limitations which should be taken into account when Australian Right to Know legislation is prepared. In the US, only a limited range of facilities are required to report their toxic releases, and polluting exempt facilities include storage facilities, sewage treatment plants, Waste incinerators, waste management operations, businesses, federal and state agencies, mining operations, US Right to Know legislation also includes only 520 chemicals on which reports must be submitted, out of the more than 60,000 chemicals currently in use in the US. The scheme relies on self-reporting - that is, the companies report their own emissions - and the figures may not always be reliable. The maximum amounts which can be used or emitted from a facility before a report is required can be quite high.

The Local Emergency Planning Committees have potential to make changes, however, they are not funded even though they are required under the law, and they often become bogged down in emergency response planning rather than addressing public information needs.

Suggestions are now emerging from activists in the United States that, in addition to amending Right to Know legislation to close some of the loopholes, there should be legislated toxic use reduction measures. The disclosure of information can highlight high volume sources of toxic releases, but this will not change anything unless there is also political pressure or some legal requirement that industries reduce their emissions.

It has also been suggested that demonstrably unsafe chemicals should be banned or phased out, and knowledge of their presence and volume does not make them any safer.

The US legislation has provided experience to show that: Right to Know legislation must include a wide range of chemicals and processes, that all emissions should be covered by Right to Know; that it should not just apply to manufacturing processes, but storage, disposal and processes where the use of chemicals is secondary; the Right to Know should be tied to the need to reduce emissions, and the move towards cleaner production techniques.

Conclusion

Community Right to Know legislation is on the way in Australia, there remains the question of how soon and effective it will be. It also needs a greater campaign by environment groups, not just on its own, but included into other campaigns.

Overseas experience, particularly in the US, has shown loopholes which should be avoided, and that Right to Know needs to be backed up by other legislation, and an active populace ready and able to use the available information to bring about improvements to the environment.

Larry O'Loughlin and Clare Henderson are the editors of Chain Reaction and thought it was your right to know that.

Number 67 • 35
In recent times the sighting of whales in coastal waters have been a rare but welcome events attracting thousands of sightseers and much publicity. Yet, not so long ago, these deep sea animals regularly frequented the Australian shoreline. **William Lines** describes earlier attitudes to whales— which sharply contrast with current perceptions of whale sightings.

By the end of 1805 the convicts were the whalers

... the whaling firms began to pressure the government to lift the pre-emptive rights of the British East India Company over all the produce and trade in the southern hemisphere. Besides Governor King, who consistently sought a lifting of the restrictions on whaling (which prohibited Australian based traders from exporting whale or seal products direct to London), the whaling companies found an ally in Joseph Banks. In 1816 Banks wrote to Lord Liverpool protesting the East India monopoly and added: 'the Americans will most certainly catch the Seals in Van Diemen's Land if the Colonists do not and there cannot be any reason why they should not catch the Whales in their own Seas.' As early as 1801, despite the legal monopoly of the East India Company, independent whalers began to frequent New Zealand waters, where the seas abounded in sperm whales. The first regular visits of Europeans to New Zealand, in fact, were entirely due to those islands' lavish biological display: whales spouted in the bays, seals basked on the shores and fine timber grew in the forests. For years of untrammeled and unsupervised private exploitation followed, until the British government formally annexed New Zealand in 1840. In New South Wales whalers enjoyed official patronage. In 1803 the British whaler *Albion* sailed from Sydney in the company of the Van Diemen's Land founding party and the right whale (*Balistes australis*). Every season, in their tens of thousands, right whales swam north from Antarctica to mate and calve in the bays and estuaries along the coasts of New Zealand, Van Diemen's Land and southern Australia.

News of the living bounty in the 'southern fisheries' reached the northern hemisphere at a time - the late eighteenth century - of diminishing catches of whales. Revived fleets set sale at once from Le Havre in France, Hull in England and from New Bedford and Nantucket in America, for the new southerly richers. Likely profits more than compensated for the long voyages. Soon after reports of the extravagance of life in the oceans to the south of Australia reached Britain, whaling firms began to pressure the government to lift the pre-emptive rights of the British East India Company over all the produce and trade in the southern hemisphere. Besides Governor King, who consistently sought a lifting of the restrictions on whaling (which prohibited Australian based traders from exporting whale or seal products direct to London), the whaling companies found an ally in Joseph Banks. In 1816 Banks wrote to Lord Liverpool protesting the East India monopoly and added: 'the Americans will most certainly catch the Seals in Van Diemen's Land if the Colonists do not and there cannot be any reason why they should not catch the Whales in their own Seas.' As early as 1801, despite the legal monopoly of the East India Company, independent whalers began to frequent New Zealand waters, where the seas abounded in sperm whales. The first regular visits of Europeans to New Zealand, in fact, were entirely due to those islands' lavish biological display: whales spouted in the bays, seals basked on the shores and fine timber grew in the forests. For years of untrammeled and unsupervised private exploitation followed, until the British government formally annexed New Zealand in 1840. In New South Wales whalers enjoyed official patronage. In 1803 the British whaler *Albion* sailed from Sydney in the company of the Van Diemen's Land founding party and the right whale (*Balistes australis*). Every season, in their tens of thousands, right whales swam north from Antarctica to mate and calve in the bays and estuaries along the coasts of New Zealand, Van Diemen's Land and southern Australia.

Day after day the diary of the Reverend Robert Knopwood records whales. On 1 July 1804, 'At 1/2 past 10 Lt. Johnston and self went to Risdon, by order of the Lt. Governor Collins, and performed divine service there. We passed so many whales that it was dangerous for the boat to go up the river, unless you kept near the shore.' The whales did not enjoy their tranquility for much longer; the Van Diemen's Land invaders quickly realised the commercial possibilities of their congregation. Later in the month of Knopwood's diary entry, Lieutenant Governor Collins wrote enthusiastically to Banks about whaling and noted that in the Derwent 'three or four ships might have lain at anchor and with ease filled all their casks'. But the first Van Diemen's Land whalers did not even need ships; they simply set up a shore factory in a bay where the animals were known to gather and attacked them from small boats. Although the new colony suffered terribly from starvation - by the end of 1805 the convicts were rationed to 1.2 kilograms of salt pork and 1.8 kilograms of bread a week, normally a two day ration - the whales were not distracted, nor the whales rendered. In 1806, mobile whalers began frequenting the Derwent, filling their ships with the oil procured from the whales in the river and adjacent bays and William Collins (so relation to the Lieutenant-Governor) established what was probably the first Van Diemen's Land whaling station at Ralph Bay, on the east side of the Derwent. Bay whaling stations quickly spread to other suitable coastal indentations.

Ships from America, Britain, France and Sydney joined the slaughter, set up shore stations and made temporary land bases in safe inlets everywhere along the southern coasts. In its first two decades of the nineteenth century American whalers took over 150,000 southern right whales just from South Australian waters. The opportunity had to be quickly seized. By 1841 there were 35 bay whaling stations on Van Diemen's Land alone but Declared an opportunity set in rapidly. After 1840 the right whale ceased to come to the slaughter. The specie never recovered. A 1978 Australian government inquiry into whales concluded the numbers of right whales were so few and their prospects so uncertain that culling was not possible.

The global context

From the time the American fleets invaded the southern Pacific at the close of the eighteenth century, the business of sperm whaling fluctuated according to political events in the northern hemisphere. At first the Napoleonic Wars depressed European interest, then the British-American war of 1812-14, and subsequent trade embargoes effectively closed all British ports to American vessels until 1830. In any case, Australian ports were ill-equipped to service the whales, and no more than half a dozen American whalers called at Sydney in the three years before 1812. Scores of American and other ships, however, hunted whales in the surrounding seas. The ubiquitous presence of foreign whalers prompted one patriot in 1827 to deplore the failure of the colonials to take advantage of the 'lavish prospect' of the whale fisheries. "We see the London and American ships congregating at our doors, as it were, by dozens, and carrying off yearly thousands upon thousands of the rich harvest which the bounty of Providence has placed within our grasp."

Not all the colonials felt inhibited, however, and some of those who had profited from sealing invested in the new business of deep sea whaling. Sydney merchants sent two ships after sperm whales in 1823, and employed 26 in the business by 1830. The next year, Archibald Moxman, a merchant and ship owner, erected wharves in a cove of Sydney Harbour for the equipment of vessels occupied in the whale fishery. By the early 1850s, with the Americans back in port, both Sydney and Hobart offered whale ships a full range of repair and supply facilities; for a brief while Hobart became one of the great whaling ports of the world. American whalers preferred to operate in the northern Pacific or along the equator, but with falling catches they sought new killing grounds and soon established a regular commerce with Australian ports. While welcome, their presence continued to remind the colonials of their inadequacies.

In 1837 the first recorded American whale appeared off the south west coast of Australia and the Perth Gazette editorialised: 'We welcome any and
Regulating the slaughter?

Whaling in the twentieth century has gradually been restricted because of reduced numbers of whales following the wholesale slaughter of the nineteenth century. Larry O’Loughlin compiled this summary of attempts to regulate whaling since the second world war, and the most recent decisions of the international regulatory body.

In 1946, the major whaling nations signed the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW); three years later, the International Whaling Commission (IWC) met for the first time. The stated aim of the ICRW, and thus the IWC, was to prevent the depletion of whale stocks by adopting measures that would make possible the orderly development of the whaling industry. However, throughout much of its history, the IWC has largely failed in this aim and has presided for more than thirty years over the wholesale destruction of population after population, species after species of whales.

The slow reproduction rate of whales meant that it actually made economic sense to over-exploit whale stocks. Mindful of this, the rest of the world began to express concern for the fate of the whales. In 1960 the IWC appointed a committee to obtain better data for deciding on appropriate catch limits. Subsequently it increased its based catch limits on the estimated maximum sustained yield. The 1972 Stockholm United Nations Conference on the Human Environment called for a ten-year moratorium on commercial whaling. Similar resolutions at the IWC weren’t passed, but in 1974 the IWC adopted the New Management Procedure (NMP), intended to use the best scientific advice to prevent further declines in whale stocks. But the NMP, like previous management attempts, was a failure: it worked well in protecting already-depleted stocks, but was unable to prevent previously healthy populations from being pushed into decline.

By the end of the 1970s, it was becoming clear that only one management regime was likely to work: a total ban on commercial whaling. From 1979, the IWC expanded in size as a reflection of growing world concern over whaling – adopted a series of protective measures: a Sanctuary in the Indian Ocean; a ban on factory-whaling, except for Antarctic minke whales; and a total ban on killing sperm whales.

Then, in 1982, the Commission voted for a global moratorium on commercial whaling which was meant to last for an indefinite period and to take effect from the 1985 coastal, and 1985-86 pelagic (oceanic), whaling seasons. Over 14,000 whales have been killed for commercial purposes in the six years since the moratorium was intended to come into effect. These whales were killed under objection to the moratorium decision (IWC rules allow a country to exempt itself from a decision if it lodges an official objection), and under the guise of 'scientific research'. Scientific killing has been the most flagrant abuse of the moratorium. Article VIII of the ICRW states that any IWC Member State may 'kill, take or treat whales for purposes of scientific research', and with the arrival of the moratorium a number of whaling nations took a sudden interest in furthering their scientific understanding of whales. The first, in 1985, was Iceland and the Republic of Korea. The Korean program ended after less than one season; Iceland stopped scientific whaling in 1990.

Japan began conducting lethal whaling in the 1980-89 Antarctic season; every year since then, Japan has killed approximately 300 minke whales in the Southern Ocean.

Two proposed permits were considered by the IWC in 1992. Norway applied to take 110 minke whales in the northeastern Atlantic in 1992 and 1994 and 1995; and Japan sought to kill 300 minke whales (plus or minus 10 per cent) in the Antarctic in 1992-93 as part of a continuing program. The Commission requested Norway to reconsider the proposed take of minke whales and also invited Japan to continue to reconsider and improve its research under special permit.

The IWC’s Scientific Committee has consistently criticised these research whaling programs as being scientifically flawed, and of no relevance to the present scientific studies of whale populations. The meat from these 'scientifically sampled' whales is sold, primarily in Japan, and scientific whaling is regarded widely as commercial whaling under another name.

Ever since the moratorium decision, whaling nations have been pressing for a return to commercial whaling, requesting 'interim quotas' attempting to have some of their whaling activities re-defined as 'small-type coastal whaling' or 'aboriginal/subsistence', and thus exempt from the moratorium. These pressures have been resisted.

Revised Management

The IWC now has before it a proposed Revised Management Procedure (RMP) which could in theory re-open the door to large-scale commercial whaling. Before the IWC can consider lifting the ban on commercial whaling, it must adopt the RMP by three-quarters majority vote. It was initiated at the 1984 IWC meeting, and was intended to include various safeguards to take into account scientific uncertainties and to decrease significantly the likelihood of extinction of whale stocks as a result of commercial hunting.

Some rules were adopted in principle in 1991. However, there is growing concern that political considerations are taking priority over scientific ones, and that the desire of whaling nations for commercial whaling to resume as soon as possible is forcing the RMP through the IWC before it is ready.

The RMP as presently constituted has fundamental flaws in some ways, it
The IWC agreed by consensus at its 1992 meeting to continue the Indian Ocean Sanctuary (originally established in 1979) for a further ten years.

The Commission received a French proposal to establish a whale sanctuary in the north Pacific to cover the main feeding grounds of the sperm whale and all the baleen whale species except the Antarctic species.

The proposal aims to help protect all southern hemisphere species throughout their migratory grounds and life cycles, and help restore the Antarctic marine ecosystem.

Iceland and NAMMCO

Iceland announced that it would leave the IWC on 30 June 1992 after its demand for a quota of 92 fin and 170 minke whales was rejected at the 1991 IWC meeting. Iceland has recently formed the North Atlantic Maritime Mammal Commission (NAMMCO), other members being Norway, Greenland and the Faroe Islands. However, with just two full Member States (Greenland and the Faroes are Danish territories), its influence will be limited.

In addition, any attempt to use NAMMCO to circumvent the IWC's decisions would be contrary to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which is explicit in stating that countries should co-operate through existing international bodies for the protection of whales. This was upheld at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in June 1992.

Subsistence whaling

Aboriginal subsistence whaling catch limits are set under IWC regulations:

- Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort Seas: total strikes for 1992-94 inclusive shall not exceed 141 (with a provision for a carry-over). In any one year no more than 54 whales shall be struck and no more than 41 landed.

Humane killing

At the 1991 IWC meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, the UK sought a workshop to review present and potential methods of killing whales, in particular the efficacy of the explosive (penetrator) harpoon in killing whales. In 1983, the IWC banned the use of the 'cold' or non-explosive harpoon because it was particularly inhumane. British minister John Gummer has often opposed any resumption of commercial whaling on humane grounds.

A three-day workshop held immediately before the 1992 annual meeting led to an IWC consensus resolution, urging that members continue to promote development of humane killing methods and accepting an 11-point action plan as the basis of advice to its members. This included advice and further work on equipment, methods and the indication of insensibility and death, assessment of cause of death in relation to observed time to death, collection and provision of information on time to death and assessment of the physiological status of the hunted animals.

Environmental change

The IWC agreed by consensus that the Scientific Committee should contact CCAMLR, SCAR and other relevant organizations to exchange information on the effects of global environmental change in the Antarctic region which may be of relevance to whale stocks.

Sources:
- International Whaling Commission media releases
- Greenpeace International background paper

Larry O'Loughlin is an editor with Chain Reaction.


Body of glass


Reviewed by Phil Shannon

With a few more farcical, platitudeous circuses like the Earth Summit at Rio, we're well on the way to the year 2020 of Marge Piercy's latest novel Body of Glass. 2050 is a Greenhouse world where the 'rice and breadbaskets of the delta countries' have been flooded, and farms have turned to dust. Fanine reaps the results whilst 'new viral scourges from the tropics spread their wares without favour for skin colour or 'development' status. Outside the few cities protected from cyclones and UV by huge domes or wraps – out in the 'raw' – values and rates thrived, 'not people. Not songbirds, all dead, so the insects flourished and moved in waves over the land, eating the hills to dust'.

The rich, the rulers of the 23 global 'multis' which own the world, can buy an artificially-created environment.

The rest aren't so fortunate, whether in 'the stripped countries, the places where the multis cut down the rain forest, deep and strip mined, drove the peasants off the land and raised cash crops till the soil gave out', or 'the poor in the developed world who are shunted off to 'the Glop', the 'crowded, violent, festering warren' where people survived, died or 'rotted under the poisonous sky, ruled by feeding gangs and overlords', eating 'put food, made of algae and yeasts' whilst being culturally doped by 'stimmies', electronic Bread and Circuses where they plug into 'some 100s' tears and organisma and forget the world and their cares.

But Piercy, every bit as good a writer, and better (she's a feminist), than the Orwell and Huxley who described dystopias, avoids their pessimism of despair. Piercy's future has 'everyone' together: 'our society is composed of libertarians, anarchists, communists, corporatists, socialists, anarcho-feminists and 'greeners', towns without class distinctions, where women are liberated, trees planted, the few cars public and electric, with nuclear fusion providing the energy (seems to me the 'greeners' are the only ones who have lost that debate in the 'Town Council'). Information pirates liberate information for the oppressed. This knowledge becomes power when the world is.info.

Phil Shannon reads books in Canberra.

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This is a book for reading on the barricades – Piercy's parallel story to the resistance in 2050 is the resistance of the Jews in 1600 Prague where they fight off an anti-semitic mob. The novel, however, is less focused on the drama of action than the philosophy of social action and personal responsibility. The Free Town of Tikva builds a Cyborg – Yod – 'a mix of biological and machine components', a superhero to defend the town. 'He is extremely dismantled after serving the purpose of illustrating Piercy's message that no one but ourselves can save the world, that new men and women have to be made but that the raw material is only ourselves.

And we are a difficult material to work with – social and selfish, argumentative and supportive, noble and petty. Piercy's account of the political process of Tikva will bring a knowing smile to those who, like Piercy, have attended one or a thousand left, feminist or environmental meetings. Tikva citizens like nothing better than a 'good political fight about principles or ecological correctness'. During a 'wonderfully polemical discussion of Yod's status, which promptly turned into a debate about Yod one or another faction', speakers 'had quoted the Mishnah, Marx and the Marx Brothers, Freud, Robert Burns, Schopenhauer, Plato, Gertrude Stein and Krazy Kat' in an 'acrimonious and delicious' discussion that left everybody utterly fatigued, frustrated yet satisfied with the 'gabby, long-winded democratic process.'

All 'greeners' who like a romping good read that will amuse, inspire and spark reflection, could do worse than read Body of Glass.
The Greening of the Red: Sustainability, Socialism and the Environmental Crisis

by Graham Dunkley, Pluto Press (Australia) in association with the Australian Fabian Society and Socialist Forum, Leichhardt, NSW, 1992, 139 pp, $14.95

Reviewed by Phil Shannon

Red and Green are somewhat like Fred and Ginger - not bad on their own but unsurpassable together. At least this continuing relevance of socialism and the environmental crisis is to be socially just. The aim of a democratic socialism is overdosing industrialism. He says 'Both according to Dunkley, most of the environmental crisis is to be socially just. The aim of a democratic socialism is overdosing industrialism. He says 'Both Left to environmentalism, he argues, is at heart either hostile or sceptical, than industrialism as the root cause of ecological problems. Dunkley, however, believes that this view is based on ecological ignorance.

Dunkley's is a frustrating book. What his ingredients of 'tight green', deep green and red traditions' produce is a soft pink and capitalist grey disappointment. Nevertheless, before the practical Fabian takes over, there is a useful review of the limits to growth debate and a provocative critic of the political limits of environmentalism and the green limits of traditional socialism. Dunkley asks the right questions and points us in the right direction of a red-green fusion but don't expect too much of a guide from his answers.

Phil Shannon reads books on cold Canberra nights and writes about them.

Waste Not, Want Not: The Production and Dumping of Toxic Waste


Reviewed by Ade Price

Robert Allen has written a devastating indictment of contemporary Britain which has in recent years emerged not only as a prolific producer of waste but also as an importer and processor of other countries' industrial and commercial rubbish. Currently Britain produces considerably in excess of 25 million tonnes of waste each year. The disposal market is estimated to be worth over £1 billion annually. A handful of giant companies vie for domination over this lucrative market but there are over 4000 companies operating in total. Most important, waste is currently being dumped globally, and core follows frequently tiring out with the result that there is limited innovation and challenge.

There are at least two points which find continuous reinforcement in the enormous wealth of detail provided by this excellent book. They are equally depressing. The first is that even those opposition movements which have been effectively challenged toxic waste operators are nevertheless prone to political exhaustion. While the pressure for corporate expansion and the drive to greater profit accumulation remain remorseless, local level leaders and core followers frequently tire out with the result that there is limited incremental or accumulative character to these processes of local level mobilisation. The second is that this particular protest movement is condemned to reinventing the wheel of political resistance: that is a very arduous and resource-depleting exercise.

The second point is that, despite the pronounced political profiles and the substantial material resources of national and international environmental organisations located in Britain, community-based resistance seems to lack the capacity and opportunity to make a significant difference to the political spinelessness of the state. The result has been a widespread manipulation and co-optation of the political process and a growing acceptance on the part of many of the environmental organisations which have sprung up in recent years. These organisations have shown that they are politically and socially naive, unprofessional in research, confidential and legislative (particularly in the laws of libel), and in many ways very "green" about the ways of the capitalist world.

It is revealing that this occurs as the result of the processes of ecological imperialism which have been brought about by the actions of large multinational companies. These actions have been facilitated by the policies of various governments around the world, including the British government, which have sought to maximise the profits of these companies at the expense of the environment and the health of local communities. The result has been a widespread distribution of pollutants and the degradation of the environment. It is clear that if these processes are to be halted, action must be taken by the state and the public sector to ensure that the interests of local communities are protected.
Thus wrote Bertrand Russell over thirty years ago in an imaginary plea before the Judge of the underworld, seeking recognition - according to the Egyptian Book of the Dead - that the extinction of his species is a matter for regret.

I could not help remembering these words while reading Atomic Australia, a book which grew out of work at Sydney University. Here is a microcosm of human atomic folly during the last fifty years. The treatment begins at a slow and measured pace, with Oliphant and Birmingham University in mind. I was concerned about safeguarding Australia's uranium supplies, the Manhattan Project, and the Anglo-American 1945 Quebec Agreements which were to continue treating this country as a quarry. The stage is set for a delusion of ancient foe and renewed illusions.

Despite Evatt's protestations - perhaps because of his own judicial and liberal rationalism - 'Mother' and 'Cousins' were to behave in a condescending, distrustful and, when necessary, down-right-fearing fashion toward the Australian Governments. This mattered much to Curtin and Chifley and even more so to Evatt. The Doc had been one of the first world leaders to argue publicly that atomic energy was an issue for the United Nations. (pp. 22-23, 80) His very first declaration revealed what was his more fundamental preoccupation: "The efforts of scientists of the United Nations in the period between the two wars had been restricted because of the activities of international cartels and combinations. That must not be allowed to occur again." (Evatt in The Age, 13 August 1945, quoted p. 23).

The Americans thought otherwise, the British just looked askance upon the agitation of colonials. They also waited for better times to come. In December 1949 their luck and their lackey returned. Two years later Churchill 'told Menzies that Australia would be the site' for testing Britain's bomb. (p. 96) Slim had warned development experts that 'the atomic age has now arrived' he said (p. 80). Henceforth the historian's rigorous duty was to take note of the official record.
Bob Hawke" that Bob 'stressed that the uranium issue would be a major political and union problem.' And Carnegie concluded: "Bob's comments confirmed Paul Keating's comments that we have difficulties in the uranium business ahead." Rod was obviously unduly worried. Continuity from Bob to Bob was assured in 1983. Garch Evans, then Attorney-General of the Hawkeating Government (now Minister for Foreign Affairs) would maintain the posture of defender of 'free trade' in Australian–United States Relations, The Extraterritorial Application of United States Laws, Report from the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence (Canberra 1983). Why did the author not find this source? Perhaps she did, but considered it unworthy. And why should there be no mention of the elaborate three-ring circus 'process of consultation on uranium 'policy' before, during and after the 1988 ALP National conference?

Dr. V. G. Venturini was a Puritan in 1944, and remains one today. In 1984 he stood for the Senate on behalf of the Nuclear Disarmament Party. He continues to survive the official truth and the Unified National System.

The Gnome

Reviewed by Daisy Gardener

The Gnome is one of the most fascinating and thrilling books I have read this year. Mr Alan Aldridge (the author) creates the story that you never want to put down, even at the end. It is environmentally aware which I think is great. 'Fungle' the gnome is a passionate, brave and wise hero who sets out on an adventure to recover a deadly crystal that may be found by humans and/or other evil forces and used to dominate the world. Fungle is similar to a gnome or fairy and the humans have ceased to believe in him, thus burning his forests, and forcing his race to be near extinct. The adventure he has is sad, heart-tugging, chilling and humorous. I would give it A++

Daisy Gardener is 13 and lives in Alice Springs.

To Save an Elephant

Reviewed by Larry O'Loughlin

This book is subtitled 'The Undercover Investigation into the Illegal Ivory Trade' and it is a very readable and enthralling look at the campaign by the Environment Investigation Agency (EIA) to bring about a total ban on the trade in ivory.

The story starts with EIA, established by a group of disaffected Greenspace members, becoming convinced of the importance of ending ivory trade as the only means of saving the African elephant from extinction. The group then sets out to bring the story to the world, particularly using television footage which they shoot themselves, and then uses the ensuing public pressure to build the momentum for a ban at meetings of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

The coverage of the decision-making at the CITES meeting is enough in itself to make this book worthwhile, especially since it is written by obviously very committed people, and their stories and opinions of other environmental organisations, particularly the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) are very revealing of some interesting conflicts of attitudes.

Larry O'Loughlin likes reading and thinks retirement would suit him.

Women in development: a resource handbook

Australian International Development Assistance Bureau, 1992, 38 pages, $4.50.

ISBN 0 644 24578 6

The resources listed include books, films, videos, training material and other directories and checklists. Prices of materials are listed, where appropriate, as are telephone numbers of sources, including libraries.

Available from: AIDAB Shop, GPO Box 887, Canberra, ACT, 2601. Tel: 06-276 4707.

Greenfile: environmental information kit

Australian Conservation Foundation, 1992, 52 pages, $12 plus $2.50 post. (bulk discounts)

Each kit consists of 13 four page two colour leaflets on topics such as biodiversity, energy, genetic engineering, ozone depletion, rain forests and sustainable agriculture.

Each kit also contains complimentary information on the ACP.

Available from: ACP Information Service, 340 Gore St, Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065. Tel: 03-416 1455.

The GAP: the Global Action Pack


This A4-sized book takes a comprehensive look at the world's environmental problems and suggests a number of solutions. As Robyn Williams says in his preface, there 'are a number of ideas that will infuriate', but the book presents background information and references to more detailed material to back up the arguments.

The book provides useful discussion material on a range of topics including population (which it rates as a high priority problem), wilderness, land degradation, energy, economics and 'intangible' topics such as social values. It is written in a style suitable for the general reader, and it has a streak of optimism along with a sense of urgency.

Available from: Boobook Publications, tel: 02-349 5205; ACF Enterprises, 340 Gore St, Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065; tel: 03-332 5150.

Ecosystems: environmental solutions for the world and Australia


This A4-sized book takes a comprehensive look at the world's environmental problems and suggests a number of solutions. As Robyn Williams says in his preface, there 'are a number of ideas that will infuriate', but the book presents background information and references to more detailed material to back up the arguments.

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Resources

1991 Ecopolitics V Proceedings

Centre for Liberal and General Studies, University of New South Wales, 1992, 696 pages, $40$/45.

The Ecopolitics V proceedings, containing approximately 100 of the papers from the April 1991 conference, are now available. Some sessions are also available on video or audio tape.

Available from: Ecopolitics V, c/o Ronnie Harding, Centre for Liberal and General Studies, University of NSW, PO Box 1, Kensington, NSW, 2033, tel: 02-207 2433.

Australian Environment: issues and facts

Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1992, 354 pages, $35. ABS Catalogue No. 4140.0

This interesting reference work uses diagrams, maps, tables and figures to look at Australia's environment in detail, using chapters such as 'Foods and fauna', 'Atmosphere', 'Water', 'Land and Soil' and 'Human Settlements'. It also looks at future information needs in the environmental area, and who will collect that data if not the ABS.

Available from: Greenline on 08 813 939; Reply Paid 1, Marketing, Australian Bureau of Statistics, PO Box 10, Belconnen, ACT, 2616; Australian Government bookshops.

Number 67  47
The temperate forests of the northern and southern hemispheres are at crisis point. These forests, found mostly in the industrialised nations, have been ruthlessly exploited for centuries. Previously, much of the world’s attention on forest loss has focussed on the destruction of tropical rainforests in the developing and underdeveloped nations. This conference has been organised to foster cooperation between delegates from the many countries whose temperate forests are facing overcutting, uncontrolled clearing and environmental stress.

Running over two days, the conference will examine the threats to temperate forests and the need for an international action plan to combat the excesses of unsustainable production. Speakers will be asked to formulate options to deal with this global crisis.

Please register early as attendance is limited to 250 people.

Conference rates (includes lunches and conference papers):
- Non-Government organisations $100
- Others $300
- Unemployed/Student/Daily rates also available

Accommodation can be arranged for participants, ranging from backpacker’s style to elegant colonial.

For a registration form and conference program, please phone 003-622713 (10am-4pm) or write: Deloraine Environment Centre, 112 Emu Bay Road, Deloraine, Tasmania, 7304
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NATIONAL PEACE DEMONSTRATION

Organised by the PEace Action Collective SA (PeACe) in coalition with the Australian Anti Bases Campaign Coalition. PeACe, GPO Box 1025, Adelaide, SA 5001. Telephone (08) 410 1197