

GREEN ISSUE

NEWSLETTER OF



MARCH 1997

STOP PRESS

IRAQ

Senator Dee Margetts has announced plans to convene a group of Federal and State parliamentarians opposed to the use of military action against Iraq in the Gulf.

In Perth at the time of going to press a coalition of members of peace groups, churches and the Muslim Community of WA was meeting together on 24 February. For more information please call Dee's office on 9470 2688; toll free 1800 654 566.

"Many Australians remember the horrors of the last military action against Iraq in 1991 when thousands of Iraqis were killed. Back then we were promised a 'quick, clean war' but the reality, of course, is that there is no such thing. More than a million Iraqis, including over half a million children, have died as a result of military action and sanctions imposed on Iraq since 1991. There is no UN Security Council resolution that provides a mandate for the use of force against Iraq. For Australia, the US and the UK to use such force would be acting outside international law."

Senator Dee Margetts, 19.2.98. Dee's office has received many letters, faxes, phone calls and visits congratulating her on her immediate and strong response against this threat of war.

PEACE CAMP, IRAQ - There are plans for Australians to join a Peace Camp in the Middle East. Currently enquiries are going through Ian Cohen's office, MLC for the Greens (NSW). For more details or for sending donations towards the costs, please call Catherine in The Greens (WA) office - 08 9470 9227

DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of The Greens (WA).

DEADLINE : GREEN ISSUE March 20th.

Submissions welcome. Contact
Catherine 9470 9227
Karl 9472 1913

submissions on disk appreciated

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Ruth Watson
Henry Perry
Steve Mason
Ian Tucker
Anna Mills
Erin Wilson
Patrick Alford
Susan Hayes

WA'S OLD GROWTH FORESTS IN IMMINENT DANGER YOUR URGENT HELP IS NEEDED

Please write **urgent letters** to The Hon John Howard and Senator Robert Hill, Minister for the Environment, at Parliament House, Canberra 2600; and The Hon Cheryl Edwards, Minister for the Environment, Parliament House, Perth 6000. Remind them:

Only 1% of WA remains covered by forests WA's unique, priceless and irreplaceable old growth forests **MUST** be saved -

- 1 for their ecological and scientific value including the survival of endangered species dependent upon them
- 2 for economic value including tourism and the fine woodcraft industry
- 3 their aesthetic value - the breathtaking landscape in our SW which is quickly disappearing
- 4 their cultural value as they are part of the heritage and living environment of all Australians

The next 3 months are of vital importance for us to have our say. The recently released Regional Forest Agreement is a flawed process but does offer the public a review period for the next 4 weeks. Forest campaigners aim to deluge the Government with thousands of letters - WA MUST NOT LOSE ITS OLD GROWTH FORESTS.

If you are in Perth you are invited to visit the Forest Embassy, especially if you and/or your friends and neighbours would like more information.

The Forest Embassy is located at the Perth Cultural Centre 11 Feb to 8 March and offers more information about forest issues and has suggestions of more things to do. For enquiries or to register as an embassy volunteer please call Sheoaka on 041 9044 546 or Jessy on 9445 3846

**PLEASE WRITE THOSE LETTERS
THEY ARE EXTREMELY URGENT**

THE GREENS (W.A.) STATE CONFERENCE, DENMARK, 21-22 MARCH 1998

+++++++ Federal Campaign Workshop ++++++

- *Media training for candidates*
- *Managing local group finances during the campaign*
- *How to run a good campaign - acting locally thinking globally*

9:30am 4th April, Christian Centre for Social Action (the old East Victoria Park Post Office)
Cnr Canterbury St/ Albany Hwy Victoria Park

REGIONAL COUNCIL DIARY

Where to find us: Contacts, Meetings, Venues, Times etc

BRAND

A & B Goodale 9527 4289
1st Mon of month 7.30pm
Ocean Clipper Inn
Patterson Rd Rockingham

CANNING

Margo 9397 6209
1st Tuesday of month, 7.30pm
50 Valley View Rd Roleystone

CURTIN

Phil 041 904 2795
25 Waroonga Rd Nedlands

FORREST & BUNBURY

Paul Davis 08 97201 376

DENMARK

Paul Llewellyn
08 98482 015

FREMANTLE

Monique Keel
9431 7138
1st Thurs of month 7.30pm
Glyde In, 42 Glyde St
Fremantle

MOORE/COWAN

M Castillo 9305 1045
1st Mon of month 7.30pm
32 Hazel Ave Quinns Rocks

PERTH

Kayt 9345 5368
1st Thurs of month 7.30pm
9 Milton St, Mt Hawthorn

STIRLING

Ivan 9446 3277
Monday prior to Reps
phone for details

SWAN

L Lodge 9367 9226
1st Thurs of month GWA Office 439-
441 Albany Highway Victoria Park

WORKING GROUPS

Admin WG

Carole 9470 9227

Federal Election Campaign WG

Greens Office 6pm
every Wednesday
Karl 94721913

Parliamentary WG

339 Oxford Street Leederville
Miguel 93051045

Social Justice WG

GWA Office
Contact: Rob 08 9328 6963

CONTACTS

Policy:

Karl 9472 1913

Economics:

Brian 9328 7065

Education:

Andrew 9450 3423

Environment:

Nick 9361 7782

Peace & Disarmament

Brenda 9381 4870

OFFICE BEARERS

Co Convenors

Brenda 08 9381 4870
Robin 08 9221 5931

Secretary

Carole 9361 5335

Treasurer

Cliff 9478 3741

Parliamentarians Offices

Senator Dee Margetts

(Carole & Matt)
4 Salford St Victoria Park 6100
PO Box 739 Vic Park 6979
ph 9470 2688 fax 9470 4098

Jim Scott MLC

(Lynn & Mark)
19 Point Street
Fremantle 6160
ph 93361991 fax 9430 4778

Christine Sharp MLC

(Wendy & Margie)
Brockmans St Balingup 6253
ph 08 9764 1440
fax 08 9764 1426

Giz Watson MLC

(Carole & Robin)
339 Oxford St Leederville 6007
Ph 9201 0582 fax 9201 0583

The Greens (WA) Inc Office

(Catherine)
Suite 4, 439-441 Albany Highway
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Victoria Park WA 6979
Phone 08 9470 9227
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GreensWA@argo.net.au

homepage:

HTTP://argo.net.au/GreensWA



**ELECTION NOTICE
FEDERAL ELECTION 98/99
HOUSE OF
REPRESENTAIVES
Federal Election Campaign Committee**

NOMINATIONS are called for the preselection of candidates from persons committed to the principles of The Greens (WA) for the following House of Representative seats.

**Tangney
Brand
O'Connor**

Written nominations should show the full name and address of the person nominating. Please include a 200 word profile with the nomination.

**CLOSING DATE FOR
NOMINATIONS**

5.00pm 20th March 1998

ADDRESS FOR NOMINATIONS

PO Box 737, Victoria Park. 6979
For further information please contact the Returning Officer, Carole Perry, on 9470 9227

**ELECTION NOTICE
FEDERAL ELECTION 98/99
SENATE
Federal Election Campaign Committee**

NOMINATIONS are called for candidate preselection from persons committed to the principles of The Greens (WA) for

the 3rd and 4th position on The Greens(WA) Senate Ticket.

Written nominations should show the full name and address of the person nominating. Please include a 200 word profile with the nomination.

**CLOSING DATE FOR
NOMINATIONS**

5.00pm 20th March 1998

ADDRESS FOR NOMINATIONS

PO Box 737, Victoria Park. 6979
For further information please contact the Returning Officer, Carole Perry, on 9470 9227

Mirrarr in Perth

By Jo Vallentine

The visit of Yvonne Margarula (Senior Traditional Owner) and Jacqui Katona (Executive Officer of the Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation) is being organised in W.A. by the Jabiluka Action Group. It is part of a nationwide speaking tour. Perth is the last stop.

Yvonne and Jacqui speak for the Mirrar people, on whose land the Jabiluka Uranium mine lease is held by Energy Resources of Australia. The Federal Government has recently given the go-ahead to ERA to proceed with the mine despite the repeated rejection of the proposal by the Traditional Owners. What part of NO don't they understand?

The heat is on, with the Native Title Amendments coming before Federal Parliament again soon, and with the Reconciliation Council doing its best to achieve harmony with the indigenous people of this land, and with the Stolen Generation report encouraging non-Aboriginal Australians to apologise for past injustices. It is to their shame that neither the government, nor ERA want to listen to the considered opinion, plus the age-old wisdom of the Mirrar people, who have looked after their land for over forty thousand years.

Jacqui Katona is a powerful speaker, putting the Mirrar's case with wisdom and eloquence. Yvonne Margarula is a strong presence, deserving our utmost respect. Davis Bradbury's recent film, JABILUKA, will be launched in Perth during the visit. This will help draw attention to this crucial issue, which is of international significance. Kakadu, completely surrounding the Jabiluka lease, is one of the few places on earth which is World Heritage listed for both cultural and ecological values.

What happens at Jabiluka is also a precursor for the Coalition's open slather approach to uranium mining in this country. There are more than eighteen prospective mines in W.A. alone! And the ALP isn't much better - at their recent conference they agreed to honour existing mines, when they regain office. They did not, however, define an existing mine!

See flyer for details of opportunities to meet with Jacqui and Yvonne..... inspiring women.

Breaking The Barriers *enhancing your activist potential*

A weekend workshop in activism by the Environment Centre of WA
Friday 17- Sunday 19 April 1998
Cost \$40 unwaged or \$70 waged (incl tea/coffee, lunch, Friday dinner)
To book ring Karel on (08) 9225 4103

THE GREENS (W.A) STATE CONFERENCE, DENMARK, 21-22 MARCH 1998

Selling-out Our heritage

By Sharon Davies

The Reserve Protection Group Inc., was formed in December, 1996 after the discovery that various prime bush reserves in the Mundaring Shire were on an auction list. Originally, it was believed that only one local reserve was under threat but after much research it became apparent that every bit of unvested Crown Land in this state had been or is in the process of being transferred to the Minister for Public Works. This meant that of the 650 reserves in the Mundaring Shire, the majority had been transferred to the Minister for Works. In turn the properties were then deemed 'surplus to Government requirements' and transferred to 85 Government agencies for their inclusion into a four-year government property disposal programme. DOLA has broken up the property disposal into two regions: one from Geraldton south and the other region from Geraldton north. The other Government Agencies however do not necessarily have to direct their property sales through DOLA. Should you require information for your area you must keep these regional divisions in mind, while also remembering that this regional division only holds true for DOLA.

Our concern about this absorption of land was two-fold:

First, it is our understanding that once all property titles had been transferred to the Minister, this land was now deemed freehold. That means that Aboriginals will no longer have claim to any of these lands. As the Wik and MABO decisions stand at the moment, Aboriginals would still have a pretty good claim. However if Howard's Native Title Bill goes through without the amendments put forward by the Greens(WA), then Aboriginals will no longer have any claims in WA. We also have the feeling that this land grab (which at the moment as the law stands is probably illegal and in contempt of the MABO and Wik decisions) has probably taken place in other states. If true it would explain why Messrs. Fischer and Howard are so hot to get their Native Title Legislation through unamended.

Our second concern was for the bush reserves, first in our Shire and secondly throughout the state. Our group pamphleted approximately 7000 residences in the

Mundaring Shire in order to call their attention to the plight of our bush reserves. Initially we set up 'Friends of Reserves' groups where people could adopt a reserve and care for it and at the same time ask that their reserve be re-vested back to the Shire and rezoned for conservation and social purposes. While many of these groups have approached the Shire to our knowledge only one reserve has been recognised by the Shire. All other reserves have been denied re-vestment or re-zoning because of recalcitrance by the local Council and also because of the hedging by Government agencies.

The policy seems to be to negotiate with certain community groups to save a degraded reserve while selling off prime reserves, often below market value. With the passage of the new Lands Administration Act (1997) it will now be impossible to prove just how much land is sold for because the new Act stipulates that all such transactions are now deemed confidential.

In conjunction with these actions is the Mundaring Town Planning Scheme-3 (TPs 3) which seems to allow rezoning of bush reserves and rural areas so that subdivisions can take place. It seems to have been Local and State Government policy to rate farms so highly that they are forced to either sell or subdivide. Consequently, not only are we losing our bush reserves that serve as animal corridors, seed banks and catchment areas, but we are also losing the last of our arable land.

Current Government policy seems to hinge on development at all costs. In 1996 a sewerage plant was put into the Mundaring townsite with the argument that it was safer than the existing septic tanks. Currently, the plant is working at only 30 per cent capacity and the effluent disposal is deemed a failure by the Water Corporation because it cannot meet even the basic requirements of the local area. Because of the clay soils, the treated effluent flows directly into a feeder brook in winter. In spite of this the Local Government has planned another sewerage plant for each of the 10 townsites by the year 2010. As it stands, this means that each sewerage plant will have to feed into a brook - the argument being that this

effluent is cleaner than the current brooks' water. While it is true that the feeder brooks in the Mundaring Shire are currently polluted, they are retrievable with conscious effort on the part of the local Shire.

However, the current programmes in place ignore any responsible action to rectify the problem. The Integrated Catchment Management Programme that is currently being touted by State and Local Governments as the panacea for all the ills of years and years of abuse of environments is actually a public relations exercise that has refused to address the real problems facing our waterways. Instead they use local community groups to implement cosmetic methods that will probably culminate in no change for our rivers and streams. As a matter of fact our local group seems to have embrace greater subdivisions because there will be more people to pull weeds in the future!

What is happening is that the Hills will soon be a bedroom suburb with average 350 to 800 sq. metre blocks. There will no longer be any bush reserves and the brooks which eventually feed into the Swan River or which could have been used for catchment as potable water will be too polluted to do any good. Salinity will probably rise in direct proportion to the decimation of the bush as will phosphate levels from the increase of residential blocks and the lawns and lifestyles that accompany them. This means the end of the flora and fauna in this area.

This sort of 'development at all costs' mentality seems to be the driving force behind local and State (and perhaps Federal) policy. We are desperate that people see that this is a nationwide problem and that our backyard is not the only one threatened.

Until pressure is brought to bear on all governments any actions taken by the Friends of Reserves groups merely guarantee that such groups reclaim reserves and restore them to their original grandeur, only to see them sold, thus benefiting the developer by all their hard work. We are on the horns of a dilemma. Any suggestions?

Should you require further information on documentation regarding this matter, please notify the Reserve Protection Group Inc., on 9295 3146 and we will be happy to provide you with more information.

Globalisation and a GST

By BJ Fleay

Treasurer, Peter Costello, says the government plans a broadly based goods and services tax (GST) of about 10% with very few exemptions, plus some income tax cuts. He said health and education might be exempted. Everyone agrees that a GST will hit low income earners hardest.

What has this to do with a globalising economy?

Government revenues everywhere are shrinking while they grapple with unemployment, growing welfare and service costs. In Australia the tax share paid by companies, especially large ones, has been shrinking while the share from PAYE has been growing. And high income earners have many opportunities to minimise personal tax, particularly when working on contracts overseas.

There has been a massive shift of investment to Asia and Latin America since 1980. Production is now truly global. Two-thirds of world trade is conducted by 500 transnational companies whose subsidiaries' global sales have reached US\$7 trillion. One third of world trade is shipments between subsidiaries of the same transnational company.

Transnationals reduce tax by establishing their finance departments in countries with low tax rates. The CEO of Daimler-Benz has told parliamentary experts that by 2000 his company will no longer pay tax in Germany. "You won't be getting any more from us," he is reported to have said.

In Australia the tax office says it is losing billions of dollars in tax from transnational companies through such "transfer pricing". Japanese companies in the top 20 made an aggregate loss, despite sales of \$20 billion. An editorial in the London based magazine, *The Economist* (31/5/97), sums it up well. It says, "governments will eventually have to cut taxes on the most mobile factors of production, notably skilled workers, while taxes on less mobile unskilled workers will have to rise....taxes on [mobile] capital have already fallen sharply while those on labour have risen....the implication is that unskilled labour will have to bear a greater burden....to shift the tax base from income towards consumption and property ". A

goods and services tax!

Speculative financial trading has exploded. Once less than the value of world trade in goods and services, it is now 20 times greater and equals 10 times the world's gross domestic product. Daily trading is twice the foreign reserves of the world's central banks and syphons wealth in to the hands of the richest and most powerful. Governments and central banks everywhere are at the mercy of the money markets. Gambling on a grand scale.

But the greed merchants are still not satisfied.

OECD negotiators have just finalised a draft Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) to be presented to member states including Australia, for ratification this year. A deliberate cloak of secrecy has surrounded the negotiations. Few politicians know of it and even fewer of the public.

MAI would end virtually all constraints on international investment. An OECD controlled body could eventually override any form of local legislation penalising foreign corporations. They could seek redress from international bodies if local environmental constraints prevent them from investing - constraints that have been described as "expropriation" of the corporations right to operate. One senior US government official has even said that national tax regimes (excluded from MAI so far) could be considered as theft by national governments. The concept of "expropriation" is central to MAI.

MAI disputes resolution excludes citizenry, they are locked out. MAI will severely limit the power of lobby groups to influence corporate behaviour. Corporations could use an international body to enforce their rights - and they could sue governments. Some commentators say countries ratifying MAI would be committing "sovereign suicide". Others say MAI will spark a fractious examination of the relationship between corporations and the developed world's civil societies, as occurred in the 19th century when the legal basis of the modern corporation was forged.

The Asian financial crisis has put all these

issues, and more, sharply into focus. Calls for the regulation of the international financial system and its institutions are coming from everywhere. The Greens (WA) draft policy platform will oppose Costello's GST and present alternative tax reform strategies that also aim to mobilise opposition to MAI.

The information on MAI presented here is from two articles by David James in the 26 January 1998 issue of *Business Review Weekly*. The articles are a call for mobilisation against MAI. You should all get photocopies from your local library.

EAST METRO GROUP DIVISION

All members of the Perth, Swan, Canning and Pearce are invited to the next East Metro Group Division meeting to help the federal election campaign in the seats of Perth, Swan, Canning and Pearce

11am

Sunday the 1st of March
Christian Ctr for Social
Action

Cnr Albany Hwy and
Canterbury St. East Vic Pk

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ALL HOURS

On presentation of this ad 10% of the total service charge will be donated to the Greens(WA)

THE GREENS (W.A) STATE CONFERENCE, DENMARK, 21-22 MARCH 1998

**Federal Election
Campaign Working
Group Diary**

Meeting

6pm Every Wednesday
Greens Office

Workshops

Campaign Development
9:30am 4th April
CCSA Cnr Canterbury/ Albany
Hwy Victoria Park

1998 STATE CONFERENCE

SAT 21 AND SUN 22 MARCH, 1998

"THE COVE" DENMARK

Where the forests meet the ocean

ON THE AGENDA

**Aboriginal Land Rights, Tax
Regional Transport, The Republic, Recreation and Fun**
Hosted by the South West Greens
**Contact: Perth Greens - 08 9470 9227
Denmark Greens - 0898261015**

**** RELAXED AND POWERFUL ****

The 5th York Earthcare Festival
Sunday March 22nd 1998

Put it on your calendar of events to join us once again to encourage

EARTHCARE

A day of fun, education & entertainment for the whole family.

Free admission to all venues

Proceeds to Conservation Council for Threatened Species

More info contact

York Earthcare Festival Coordinator Yvonne Dols 08 96411541



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THE GREENS (W.A.) STATE CONFERENCE, DENMARK, 21-22 MARCH 1998