

**EFFECTIVE
ACTION
FOR SOCIAL
CHANGE**

*The campaign
to save the
Franklin River*

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'EFFECTIVE ACTION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE'

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This is a very limited edition designed to facilitate comment and feedback from fellow activists, and to put our work in a form which can be presented to commercial publishers.

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CONTENTS

Preface	v
Acknowledgements	vii
The Franklin Dam Dispute and the Protagonists	ix
Timelines	x
Maps	xii
1. INTRODUCTION	1
<u>PART I: ONE VOICE, ONE MIND, ONE PEOPLE?</u>	
2. Introduction	5
3. Logistics and Strategy: Building a Direct Action	9
4. Training: Preparing People for a Protest	17
5. Stopping Work?	23
6. Consensus: Resolving The Differences?	29
<u>PART II: CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE - THE STRENGTH OF THE BLOCKADE</u>	
7. Introduction	39
8. Civil Disobedience and the Courts	41
9. Understanding the Police: the Value of Diplomacy	51
10. The Jail Protest: Further Civil Disobedience	57
<u>PART III: THE WIDER CONFLICT</u>	
11. Introduction	63
12. Parliamentary Pressure and the Franklin Campaign	65
13. Events Into Images: Media Coverage of the Franklin Campaign	77
14. Local Allies	89
15. An Alliance with the Labour Movement?	93
16. CONCLUSION	101
References	105
Annotated Bibliography	111

PREFACE

This book was conceived by two of our group ~~the day after we left Strahan~~ having just been arrested for trespass on the banks of the Lower Gordon River. Our friends were all in jail. We had spent the previous two months immersed in the Franklin Blockade. We were among the dozens of Blockade organisers. Our job had been to run nonviolence training workshops.

Although exhausted, we were riding high on the excitement of the most successful environmental protest in Australia. We had learnt such a lot, and we felt we ought to write it all down so that others would not have to make the same mistakes. A pamphlet we thought, or perhaps a booklet. It would take us three or four months. We wanted to involve others in the project. Gill lived Canberra, Linda in Melbourne. Input from Tasmanians would be vital, and we would need others in Melbourne and Canberra.

Claire was in Canberra, looking for a project after the Blockade:

'The opportunity to participate presented itself, and an analysis of the Franklin Blockade had all the characteristics I sought. I was keen to try writing collectively, and the Franklin Campaign was a wonderful case study of intentional social change. Understanding the mechanisms of such action is my passion.'

In Melbourne John, too, was looking for a new project:

'After nearly two years of full-time work on the Franklin Campaign, I was beginning to feel the shock of its sudden absence. My activism had been motivated by the gut knowledge that the destruction of the South West, which I knew as a walker, was unthinkable. Before and during the Blockade I had been exposed to many exciting political ideas. Writing about it offered a way to stay in touch with the people and events which had so totally absorbed me. At that time I was not able to articulate my political directions, and so I followed my nose rather than consciously chose the book as my next major occupation.'

At our first meeting in April 1983, there were six of us. To varying degrees we had all been caught up in the wave of enthusiasm for nonviolent action which had swept Australian activist groups in the early 1980's. We had all been associated with 'Groundswell', a network of people promoting an American package of political ideas and campaign techniques. This package was bound together by a moral imperative to avoid violence in political struggle. It had been developed by the US-based Movement for a New Society (MNS), and included an analysis of nonviolent action and strategies for change based on the work of Gene Sharpe, George Lakey and others. The package also included techniques for working in groups. It articulated connections between the causes of social issues which concerned us, including the environment, women's and gay liberation, the Third World, and the distribution of wealth and power. The neat assembly of analysis - strategy - tactics - techniques seemed to be a revolutionary strategy with many answers.

When we first met, we assumed our 'booklet' would cover all the great things the Blockade had achieved, particularly the successes of nonviolence, consensus decision-making, training workshops, and our friendly relations with the police. As we talked of the most important things each of us had learnt it slowly became evident that things had not been as straightforward as we had thought. We began to look at the things we found confusing, like the legal system and the role of the police. At this stage, we never doubted that we would be singing the praises of nonviolent action and the MNS approach. That was three years ago.

Over the months which followed we looked at the training workshops, the Blockade decision-making system, and the approach to nonviolence we had championed at the Blockade. By now the group had shrunk to four: Gill, Claire, John and Linda. It began to dawn on us that despite the best possible intentions - self-determination for Blockaders, democracy, and full participation in decision making - our training workshops had functioned as a means of control. They made sure that all Blockaders conformed to the right image and behaviour. What we had done seemed suddenly to be the opposite of what we had set out to do. As this became clear we had cynical and hysterical sessions. We made up silly songs to help ease the discomfort. We spent hours whipping ourselves for our naivete and foolishness.

As we examined the MNS theories and strategies of nonviolent action in relation to our experience of these ideas in action, the foundations of our activism began to change. This was a difficult time for Linda particularly:

'After the Blockade two factors forced me to re-examine the foundations of my involvement in politics. I found myself the subject of bitter criticism from my 'Groundswell' comrades for participating in the 'counter-revolutionary' politics of the TWS 1983 Federal election campaign. Second, as I reflected on the Franklin Campaign, I saw the enormous amount of time, energy and money that was necessary to save the Franklin, a very minor short-term change seen in a global perspective.

'I had put aside my work on Victorian environmental issues because the Franklin had to be saved. If we couldn't win in Tasmania then we were unlikely to win other big environmental battles in Australia (NSW and the 'Rainforest Right' aside). A loss would demoralise the movement. We had to win!

'We did win, and the movement got the boost it needed, but that win brought, for me, despair. Despair because I could finally see the massive barriers to change, and the basis of my political analysis seemed hopelessly inadequate. All along I had known that the opposition was powerful, but after the Franklin, I was forced to acknowledge just how powerful. I began to wonder if it is impossible to run anything but 'reformist' campaigns in the present Australian social and political conditions. Despite all the work and time, we had changed few people's minds about the value of wilderness, and we certainly had not tackled Tasmania's reliance on hydro-industrialisation.

'Of course, my MNS colleagues argued that the causes of hydro-industrialisation were still intact because the TWS Campaign had not followed the MNS path. They said that TWS had failed because it was elitist, hierarchical, bureaucratic, and reformist. Many of their criticisms were valid, but they did not seem to offer any way forward. It is easy to have answers from the sidelines, the model strategy stays intact because it is never put to the test.'

We began to write ourselves out of our self-critical hole. Our pamphlet became a book. By the middle of 1984 we thought we were almost done. We had written a mountain of words: poured out our feelings and experiences of the Blockade, put together the recollections of others to reconstruct important events, and had ideas about why the Blockade was as it was and how it might have been different.

Harry joined us at this time, not as part of the group, but as a 'sub-contractor': an editor to dot the i's and cross the t's, and to help us to assemble the final product.

It soon became obvious that we were a long way from the end. We did not have a book, rather we had a structure which only just supported a mass of recollection and half-formed analysis. We were still too close to the event. At this time, July 1984, Gill withdrew from the group:

'It was a really hard decision. The guilt of leaving friends with a lot of work clashed with the gut knowledge that I couldn't be constructive in the group any longer. With hindsight I can see that a lot of the conceptual work had been done. What remained was to clearly communicate the ideas we'd formulated. But in 1984, in my impatience to finish I thought that each successive draft was the finish. I found the slow pace and frequent rewrites of the group writing process very distressing.

'Never one for half measures I couldn't still be involved in the book at the same time as I put my heart and soul into my work in the community arts field. In 1986, reading what is the final draft I am proud to have been involved in the project, and I respect the perseverance of the others in bringing the book to this level.'

With Harry's editing skills, and his perspective on the Blockade as a participant rather than an organiser, we began to refine our analysis. Harry became an author as we worked to make the Franklin Campaign comprehensible to outsiders. We had to decide which questions had answers, which we could speculate upon, and which were cosmic imponderables.

We have been driven on, these past three years, by the question: how can we tackle some of the causes of social problems while still making short-term gains? None of us would say we have found the answer, but we do believe we have identified some key weaknesses in the TWS Campaign, which could have been corrected, and which prevented TWS from tackling the problems of hydro-industrialisation. We believe that similar weaknesses exist in other environmental campaigns, and that the clues we offer can be adapted to work on other issues. We also believe that other social movements have much to learn from the strengths and weaknesses of the Franklin Campaign.

Although we are critical of aspects of the TWS Campaign, this does not mean we don't think it was an outstanding success. Throughout the Campaign TWS achieved a level of professional competence and sophistication that many Australian social change groups have yet to dream of. Indeed, the

Campaign's success is a compelling reason for developing a critique of it. Too often activists only develop critiques of campaigns which fail. This implies that successful campaigns use the best of all possible strategies and tactics, and that the reasons for success are clear to all onlookers. Even a quick look at the Franklin Campaign shows that it could have been better. A glance at the civil disobedience 'blockades' at Roxby Downs, Daintree and Errinundra, that followed in a spate after the Franklin, shows that few participants in those actions understood the model provided by the Franklin Blockade or by the Campaign of which the Blockade was part. Few people realise that inherent in a protest like the Franklin are long lead-times, and endless tasks, dilemmas, stress, and conflict. We hope this book will dispel some of the myths about the Franklin, and that it will assist organisers in other social change campaigns.

This book is a critique, and so it contains criticisms of those who took part in the Campaign, but we want the most positive and constructive things to come out of the Franklin battles and out of our work. We have not written to score points, to be nasty, or to dig up old hurts. We have written the book first to enable us to understand the Campaign of which we were part, and second to help others to learn from that Campaign. We are critical of others' actions, but, as you will find in Part I, we are no more critical of others than of ourselves.

We have written this book collectively, none of us could have produced our work without the others. Each has written, or rewritten, or re-written drafts of each chapter. Some chapters have been through ten or more drafts. Some of us have put more energy into one chapter or another, but overall the book is the work of five people.

Many would doubt the sanity of writing a book 'by committee', and there have been times when we have shared that view, but we couldn't and wouldn't have done it any other way. The process of working collectively has been rewarding, demanding, exhausting, frustrating, stimulating, and above all, necessary. We have been able to support each other through the changes in our individual political outlook that our analysis has provoked. We are very fortunate to have had such an environment in which to analyse, exercise, and build on our experiences of the Franklin Campaign.

Perhaps only one of us would consider himself a writer. The rest of us are activists, academics: ordinary people, certainly not 'writers'. The fact that we have written a book tells us something about our society's conception of a 'writer': a specially talented recluse with the power to command the Pen. After three years of sharing our skills, encouraging and believing in each other, we have all increased our command of pen, paper (and sticky tape). The 'writer' seldom has inherited talent. More often, 'writers' are people with perseverance, time, resources, and good friends who will support them.

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Thanks to the ANU staff who administered the Myer grant, and to Manning Clark, Claudio Alcorso and Diana Pittock for their help with our submission.

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As the book developed, a number of people have read the whole or parts and their constructive criticisms, practical information, and encouragement have been crucial. Among these were Karen Alexander, Margaret Blakers, Rob Blakers, Bob Brown, Penny Figgis, Leigh Holloway, Andrew Hopkins, Ian Watson, Pam Waud, and, very particularly, Bob Burton.

At different times a roof over our collective writing gatherings was provided by Linda Bradburn, Lesley Instone, Jim Falk, Alan & Audrey Runciman, Bridget Shaw, Mary Stone, and, very often, Hugh & Connie Barber.

For typing we must congratulate Liz Barber, Sue Penn-Tonkin, and ourselves. We must also make special mention of the wonderfully generous John Leach for use of his word processor.

For the support which has kept us going we must, individually and collectively, acknowledge Linda Bradburn, Claire's family, especially Colin, Gill Kerr, Neil Huybregts, Serena Everill, Colin Hocking, and each other.

THE FRANKLIN DAM DISPUTE AND THE PROTAGONISTS - A SUMMARY.

Tasmania is an island about the size of England which lies just off the south-east corner of the Australian mainland. Often cold and wet, its south-west corner is largely wilderness, a remnant of Gondwanaland and a relative of Fiordland in NZ and Patagonia in South America.

Rough terrain and a small European population have allowed the region to remain intact since the first whaling and convict settlements in Tasmania in the early 1800's, but pressures for exploitation have grown in the last twenty years. Mining, logging, and hydro-electric development are all threats.

Throughout Tasmania fast-flowing rivers have become an engineer's paradise of pipes and concrete, and in 1972, after a long fight, the first big hydro scheme in the South West drowned beautiful Lake Pedder. Given blank cheques by successive governments, Tasmania's government electricity authority, the Hydro-Electric Commission (HEC), planned dams for every free-flowing river in the state, including the Franklin and the Lower Gordon. These are magnificent rivers of rainforests and gorges. Virtually the entire catchment of the Franklin is wilderness.

Environmentalist opposition to these plans was chiefly voiced through the Tasmanian Wilderness Society (TWS). TWS became a cohesive and powerful pressure group as the possible flooding of the Franklin grew into an issue which polarised the Tasmanian community. TWS had several public identities in its ranks, including Bob Brown, who has since become a Tasmanian parliamentarian and has won the media tag of 'Australia's leading conservationist'.

At the time of the Franklin Blockade, a civil disobedience action on the banks of the Franklin and Gordon Rivers, the TWS Campaign was six years old, and it was over fifteen years since the first environmental battles in the South West.

TWS's major opponents were the HEC and the Tasmanian Government led by right-wing confrontationalist, Robin Gray. Gray's Liberal Party had been elected only seven months before the Blockade began. His rise to power followed the internal collapse of the Australian Labor Party in Tasmania. This collapse was partly due to divisions caused by the Franklin dispute.

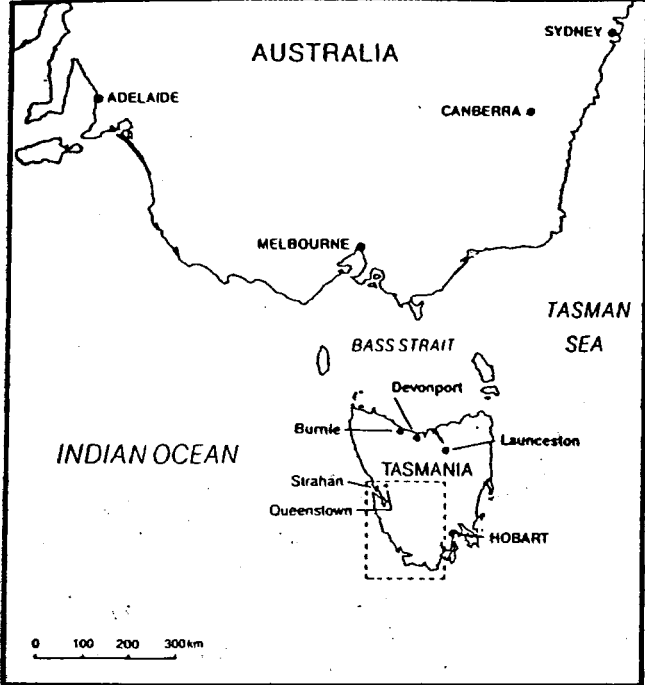
The Federal Government remained in the wings of the Franklin battle till its later stages because of the Australian federal system of government that gives the states power in most land-use planning decisions. Leadership in Canberra changed during the Franklin Campaign. For most of the time the Australian Prime Minister was the leader of the conservative Liberal - National Party coalition, Malcolm Fraser. At the time of the Blockade Fraser was replaced by the populist ALP leader, Bob Hawke, whose election was a fortunate coincidence with the climax of the TWS Franklin Campaign.

For readers unfamiliar with the political context of the Franklin dispute, the first half of Chapter 12, 'Parliamentary Pressure and the Franklin Campaign', will provide the necessary background.

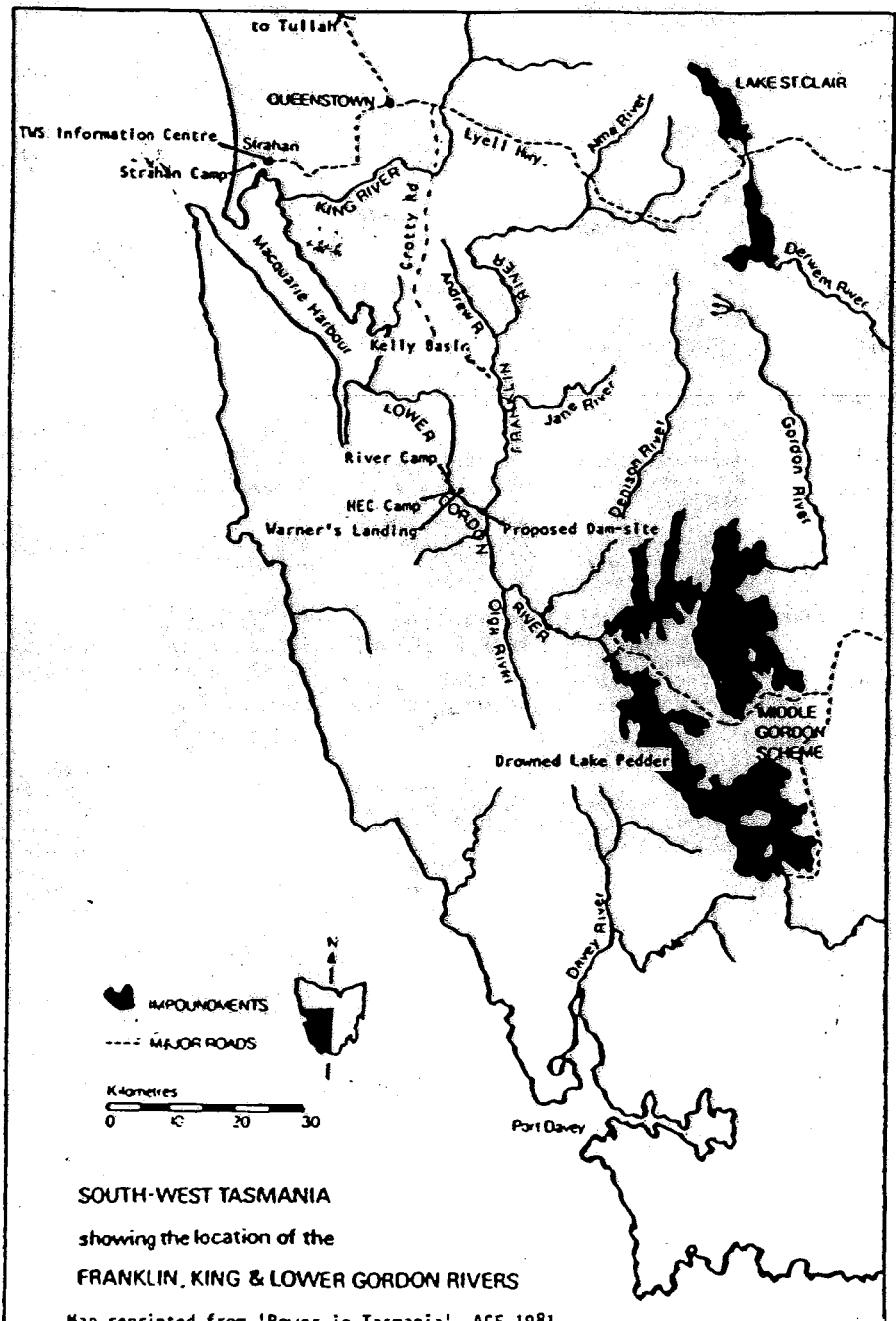
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRANKLIN CAMPAIGN: 1967 - 1981

YEAR	TWS	HEC	FEDERAL PARLIAMENT	TASMANIAN PARLIAMENT	OTHER EVENTS
1967		Plan to flood Lake Pedder.			Save Lake Pedder Committee formed.
1971					Lake Pedder Action C'tee formed.
1972			Liberal PM McMahon asked to intervene. Dec: ALP election victory.	April: ALP wins election, UTG fails.	Mar: United Tas. Group formed.
1973		Pedder flooded.	ALP refuses to intervene.		
1974					SWTAC formed.
1975			Nov: Fraser heads Lib-NP government.		
1976	TWS set up.				
1977		Jun: Plan to flood Lower Gordon.			Diablo Canyon & Seabrook, US anti-nuclear direct actions.
1978					Direct action at Wagerup, W.A., against Alcoa. Workers Env't Action Group & Tas EFFE formed.
1979		Oct: \$1.2 billion Western rivers dam project unveiled.			
1980	NZ MNS activists run 'training' workshops.	Hydro Employees Action Team formed.		Cabinet proposes Gordon-above-Olga dam. Lower House votes for Olga dam. Upper House blocks Olga option.	Tas. Nat. Parks Service recommends Wild Rivers park. National Heritage Listing for SW.
1981	Blockade planning group established. TWS Melb. begins to lobby Fed. MPs.		Democrats init- iate Senate C'tee on power develop- ment in SW.	Wild Rivers Nat. Park proclaimed. Nov: Lowe puts up World Her- itage nomination to Fraser. Nov: Lowe defeated in Caucus. Dec: referendum with 2 dam options.	Business Ass. for Economic Power report.

	TWS	HEC	TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT & POLICE	FEDERAL PARLIAMENT	OTHER EVENTS
1982 Feb			Lowe, Willey & Sanders vote against dam bills. Gov't falls.		
Mar				Sydney by-election: 12% 'no dams' write-on. Canberra by-	
May	Start observations of Kelly Basin Rd.	Gray premier.	Elections: election: 40% 'no dams write-on. Dam bills passed.		
Jun	High Court challenge to HEC borrowing rights.	Decision to build access road along Gordon River.			
Jul	17: start air surveillance. 26: Blockade plans announced. Police liaison begins.	Bulldozers start on Crotty Rd. 28: 'Protest could result in bloodshed.' - Gray.		ALP Conference opposes dams.	
Aug	Market research favours emphasis on World Heritage.				
Sep	2: National Park re-declared. River Camp established.	3: First barge to Gordon River.	2: Wild Rivers Nat. Park revoked & vested in HEC.		
Oct		18: \$60,000 ad. campaign begins. 30: announce 15% power cost rise.			
Nov	13: 15,000 march in Melbourne. Nightcap Action Group arrives in Hobart.		24: Trespass made an arrestable offence. 26: Braid's \$500 fine defeated. 14: 53 blockaders arrested, 46 go to Risdon.	22: Senate C'tee says 'no dam needed for 3 years'.	28: OTD formed.
Dec	6: Info. Centre & Strahan Camp set up. 11: on-site training begins. 12: Nat. SW Coalition formed. 14: Blockade opens. 17: Christmas moratorium decision made public. 22: moratorium begins. 31: Policy and tactics meeting - 200 people in Strahan.	(This month 202 are arrested, 167 jailed.) 22: Workers go on holiday.		4: Flinders by-election: 40% 'no dams' write-on. 8: Fraser decides not to intervene. 14: Democrats Bill voted on.	13: OTD rally in Queenstown. 14: SW listed as World Heritage.
1983 Jan	5: Blockade re-opens. 10: Melbourne becomes Campaign HQ. 14: River blockades begin. Political support for 'no dams' parties announced.	13: First bulldozer up-river. 19: Second bulldozer leaves Strahan. 27: Attempt to	5: 'obstruction' arrests start. 12: Police get bulldozer through Strahan. 25: New Police Minister. impose police bail. 16: Police sink rafts and make arrests on river. 25: 77 people evicted from Nat. Park on Gordon. 1: 231 arrests.	10: Anthony visits Shell coalfields. 19: Fraser offers Gray \$500 million. 3: Fraser calls election & Hawke becomes leader of ALP.	8: Shell 'discovers' Mt. Nicholas coalfields.
Feb	4: Fed. marginal seats campaign announced. Work begins on 'jobs package'.	16: Motorised barge starts work. 23: Plans for 20 new dams revealed.			
Mar	1: 'Green' day. 3: J-Lee-M's last trip. 13: Semi-trailer removes TWS equipment from Strahan.	19: Gray announces Henty-Anthony dam. TOTAL ARRESTS: 1,272. PRISON: 447.		5: ALP elected. Hawke promises to stop dam. 26: Strahan Council elections. 31: World Heritage (Western Tas. Wilderness) Regulations proclaimed.	
Apr			11: Police drop all Kelly Basin Rd charges. 13: All other charged dropped.		
May				21: World Heritage Act introduced. 8: Wor. Herit. Act passed. 31: High Court sits.	
Jun			10: High Court		
Jul		4: Barge starts to bring gear back to Strahan.		rises. 1: High Court decision. 22: Last people leave Vigil Camp.	



Location of South-West Tasmania. Map reprinted from 'Mountains of Paradise' by Les Southwell.



SOUTH-WEST TASMANIA
 showing the location of the
FRANKLIN, KING & LOWER GORDON RIVERS

Map reprinted from 'Power in Tasmania', ACF 1981.

INTRODUCTION - EFFECTIVE ACTION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

This book is written for people who have a passion for social change. The passion for change has many sources: at times people will want to defend their freedom or their rights, at times it will come from the desire for closeness and strong community, at times the motivation will be outrage and disgust at the activities of humankind, at times it may come from a fear of annihilation or be an expression of the joy of life.

Passion has been the catalyst for many social change campaigns, and it provides the determination to fight drawn out battles. But activists who rely on passion alone find they cannot understand why they win sometimes and lose at others, the inexplicable defeats and infrequent victories turn their passion to cynicism and disillusion. On the other hand, activists who inform their passion with political understanding find victories are more frequent, find they can understand the reason for defeats, and can carry their passion from campaign to campaign.

Change does not arrive mysteriously, nor is action for social change a magic rite. It is a skill to be learnt; the mechanisms can be understood and planned for. With this understanding campaigns have grown from a few individuals into powerful groups which have achieved long-term and far-reaching changes, challenging the complacent view that individuals are powerless to alter society.

One characteristic of these successful groups is the activists' sense of their own personal and collective power. An effective group will empower its members by creating an environment which assumes people have the right to take political action, and that this action can be effective. This attitude will be reinforced as members are trained in skills of political action. An effective group will develop cooperation and unity, which will draw the members together and bring in new people.

Successful activists understand the political framework their campaign will enter. Society is a commotion of interest groups in conflict. These groups struggle to gain resources so they can achieve their goals. The interest groups with access to resources like capital, labour, legislation and information are very powerful. The interest groups, both the powerful and less-powerful, clash with each other as they struggle towards their goals. As they enter into and resolve their conflicts, change occurs. To a certain extent, power groups rely on the acquiescence of the less-powerful. Businesses and corporations rely on a workforce which will sell its labour at a price which allows a profit, governments rely on the governed to obey laws and pay taxes. But workers can withdraw their labour and voters can disobey laws. This makes the power groups vulnerable to the less powerful if the power group is in conflict with a group on which it depends and if that group is prepared to take collective political action.

Powerful groups are not often challenged because their interests are supported by a complex set of forces including the legal system, the media, language and tradition. Along with their language, people absorb the ideas and assumptions of their society; a code of personal behaviour or a particular political or economic system is assumed to be human nature. Because the shape of society is rarely questioned, the institutions and inequalities of the society are perpetuated. This world view can be called the dominant ideology. The dominant ideology is accepted because it is believable and, to some extent, accurately represents reality but it presents only one of the possible interpretations of the world, and chokes off alternative interpretations.

Not surprisingly the dominant ideology of a society serves the interests of the most powerful groups in a society. It is not in the interest of powerful groups, who enjoy the benefits of the way-things-are, to suggest another sort of reality. Cora Baldock puts it neatly:

'People are taught to protect themselves against the dangers of pollution or food poisoning or to protect their children from being killed in car accidents. They are not taught and do not usually become aware that pollution, canned food and car accidents are all part of one kind of reality which can be changed.'⁽¹⁾

The shape of reality is not so much determined by decisions influenced by the powerful, but by the prevention of some issues being raised for discussion. Social change groups have to decide whether to present their goals in ways which are harmonious with part of the dominant ideology, or whether to challenge assumptions of the dominant ideology, raise new issues for discussion and attempt to establish alternative interpretations of the social world.

Either way a group will need to engage in ideological struggle with their opponents. Each group in the conflict will try to limit access to information which undermines their view while acquiring and disseminating information which supports their ideology. Both sides will present an image of working in the interests of the majority, and will try and associate community values with their goals. Those fighting to maintain the status quo will present the situation as not perfect, possibly unfortunate, but inevitable. Those fighting for change will attempt to show that an alternative is possible, that the situation is not merely unfortunate but unacceptable and that it is not inevitable but changeable.

If the power of ideology is recognised, the conflicting power groups are identified and the context of conflict is understood, then a social-change group will be able to plan an effective campaign and, during the ensuing struggle, will be able to interpret their opponents' reactions and respond accordingly.

An effective campaign will need a core of activists with highly-developed political skills: any group which fears sophistication will remain powerless. Skills must be fostered and political talent encouraged. Essential skills include: research into both sides of the issue and into public opinion, communication with a range of people, lobbying and negotiating, building alliances and coalitions, dealing with the media, fundraising and developing strategy. Ability in one area does not necessarily mean an activist has skill in another; it is dangerous to assume that a researcher will make the best decisions about an election strategy, or that an inspiring public speaker will be a tough negotiator. Effort should be made to train activists in the skills the campaign lacks and to ensure that all activists understand the nature of each other's specialisation.

An effective social change group will build on their sense of personal and collective power by combining their understanding of social change with skillful political confrontation.

The Franklin

The Franklin Blockade was a prominent part of the TWS Campaign which stopped a one-billion-dollar dam against strong opposition from the Tasmanian Government and its statutory authority, the HEC. To achieve this victory the protest was planned on an unprecedented scale: the three-month Blockade was the biggest event in the history of the Australian environmental protest.

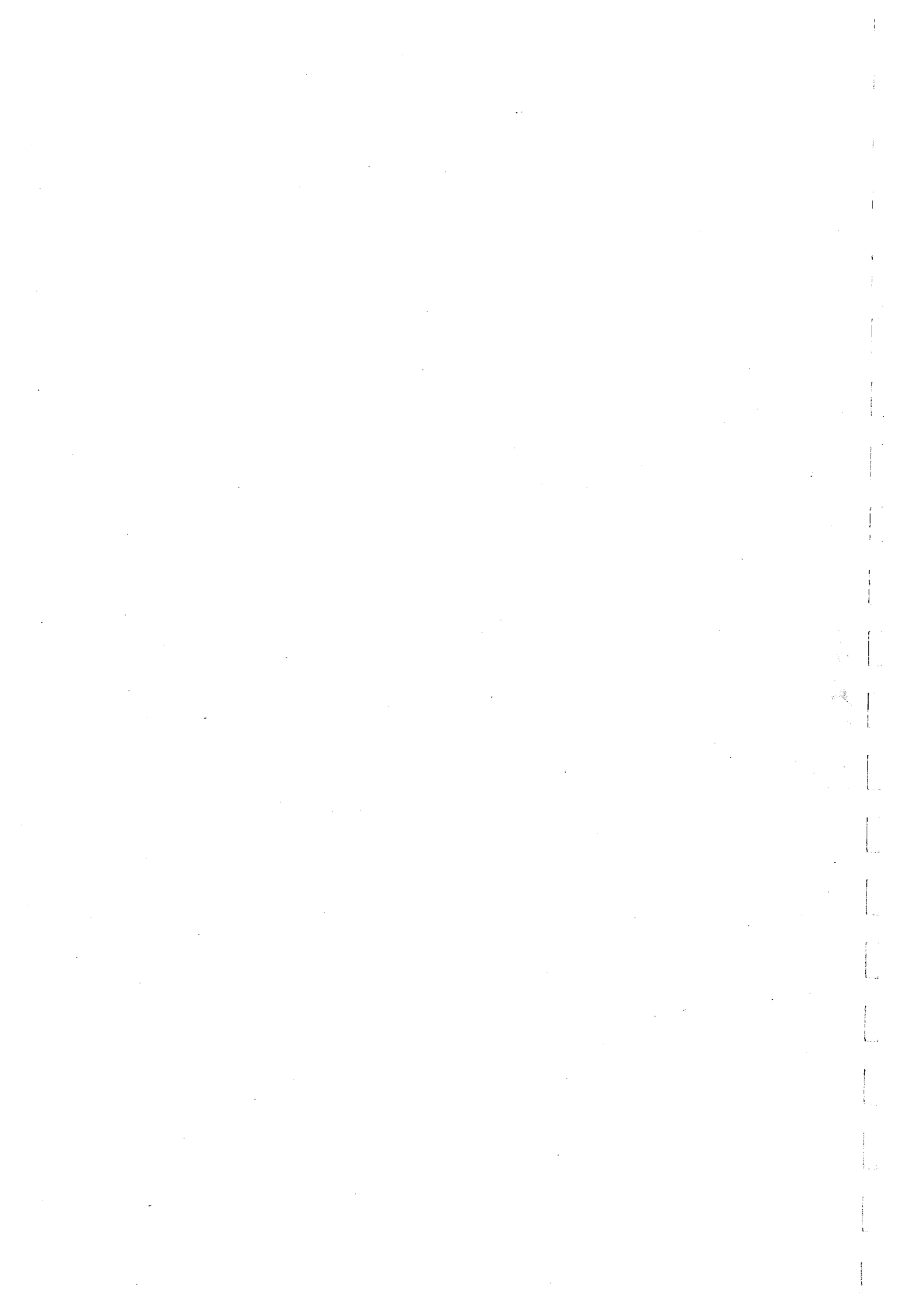
Because it was so successful it produced a crop of blockades which imitated the outward form; protest based on direct intervention became a magic bullet for groups wanting to challenge the status quo. Many were not as successful as the Franklin Blockade. Our analysis looks behind the outward forms in order to reveal the mechanisms of the protest and draw out elements which can be recycled by other activists.

The analysis pulls the protest apart and, in each chapter, looks at one aspect of the Blockade. Our dissection makes it possible for the reader to dip in to chapters that hold particular interest; each chapter is, to some extent, an independent essay. But this separation of incidents to illustrate our arguments gives a false impression of simplicity. It is up to the reader to bear in mind that the incidents in the separate chapters happened simultaneously; momentous and ephemeral decisions were made together.

We aim to introduce both conceptual tools to explain social change and some of the principles of political activism. Few people can apply conceptual tools and principles unless the theories have been presented in a vivid context, and examples presented without a theoretical framework are even more difficult to learn from. We believe our combination of theory and anecdote will empower activists in the battles they face today and will provide a model for the evaluation of future campaigns. For readers who want more of either theory or practical example we have included an annotated bibliography. At the end of each chapter are notes which add comments on specific

points. The numbered footnotes give references to our sources and these are listed at the end of the book.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part looks at the groups that had power and responsibility for different parts of the Blockade structure and how the groups struggled with each other and tried to make the Blockade reflect their assumptions about change. Although it was called a Blockade and although there was a big effort to stop construction work, the strength of the Blockade was civil disobedience; the second part looks at the clash between the Blockade and the legal system. The third part puts the Blockade in the context of the Campaign's strategy for social change and the ideological struggle with its opponents; the tentative alliances TWS entered into indicate possible future directions for activists.



CHAPTER TWO

INTRODUCTION TO PART ONE - ONE VOICE, ONE MIND, ONE PEOPLE?

To the world that watched the Franklin Blockade the protesters spoke with one voice and thought with one mind: they were one people. The inside view was somewhat different. Protesters came from a wide variety of backgrounds: some were total novices and some were political activists with long and honourable campaign records. There were individualists and anarcho-syndicalists; some were meticulous organisers others far-out-let-it-flow-ers. This combination of different political perspectives, backgrounds and motivations decided the shape of the Franklin Blockade.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE BLOCKADE

Blockaders

Most participants stayed at the Blockade for less than a fortnight. In that time they went to a nonviolence training workshop, participated in an action and then returned to Hobart under escort or under bail conditions. These people, who we will call Blockaders, did not stay long enough to influence the thrust of the Blockade.

Organisers

The organisers stayed up to four months, working as bush guides, boat drivers, nonviolence trainers, police or media contacts, transport co-ordinators, and so on. Three main groups of organisers established themselves, and although they were inter-dependent, each had responsibility for a distinct area of Blockade organisation and was based in a different geographical location. In the centre of Strahan township was the Information Centre where organisers directed the logistics of the Blockade. Three kilometres out of the township, at Strahan Camp, trainers ran nonviolence workshops. Sixty-five kilometres away, across Macquarie Harbour and up the Lower Gordon River, people at the River Camp organised the actions in the area of the damsite.

The geographical separation of these groups brought into stark relief the different backgrounds, assumptions and motivations of each group and their different ideas on how the Blockade should be run, which aspects of it were important, what was meant by nonviolence, what the aim of the protest was and how that aim would be achieved. The eventual structure of the Blockade was a result of a struggle between these groups as each tried to establish control and shape the Blockade in their way.

INFORMATION CENTRE ORGANISERS

The Blockade for this group can be symbolised by the ringing of the telephone. The Information Centre was the organisational hub of the Blockade and the base for most centralised logistical tasks. The decisions taken here in media liaison, police liaison, transport co-ordination and information dissemination shaped the strategy of the Blockade.

Background

The Information Centre was run by senior TWS activists. These workers shared a deep commitment to the Campaign. Some had a strong but unspoken emotional association with the South-West wilderness. Others were committed to political action and social change, though this was submerged by the style of campaign adopted by TWS. Many shared an intense anger. The Tasmanian Cabal: the HEC, the politicians and the bureaucrats, who had been responsible for the flooding of Lake Pedder and other environmental atrocities, now had their eyes on the Franklin and Lower Gordon Rivers. This anger produced the determination to fight on even when things looked bleak.

These diverse motivations were united by the close friendship contact between TWS activists from Hobart, many of whom shared houses, and had socialised and worked together over a long period. Chris Harris, a Hobart activist, said: 'there was an intense commitment to the other TWS people which sprang out of a feeling of family. This was much stronger than many people realise.'(1)

At the Blockade

All senior levels of TWS, and this included the Blockade organisers, felt that the Blockade was a big risk and that its failure would undo years of dedicated work. In their eyes the success or failure of the Campaign, of which the Blockade was only one part, depended on its acceptance or rejection by middle Australia and Federal politicians. Everything was subordinate to the aim of capturing the support of this group. This meant that TWS people felt that they should keep the Blockade on a tight rein and retain control of the overall framework.

An undisciplined protest would destroy the carefully cultivated middle-class image and so Information Centre Organisers emphasised good logistical planning. Actions had to avoid violence and so TWS adopted nonviolence for the Blockade, not as an article of faith, but a means to save the rivers. The Information Centre organisers were not dictators, they believed protesters should have control of their own involvement in the Blockade but they weren't willing to have people question the framework that they had established. They also felt that to involve large numbers in policy and strategy decision-making would be inefficient and would threaten the success of their plan. Both trainers and River Camp organisers regarded the Information Centre workers as excessively pragmatic and overly protective of their domain.

TRAINERS

The symbol of the Blockade for trainers at Strahan Camp was meetings, meetings, meetings. Strahan Camp was the centre for compulsory pre-action training sessions involving up to twenty trainers in the busiest periods. The discipline established here laid the foundation for the successful civil disobedience actions up-river.

Background

Some trainers had been associated with TWS for a long time before the Blockade. Others had had little contact with the Campaign before their arrival in Strahan. But all shared a commitment to nonviolence. Many had been influenced by the American organisation 'Movement for a New Society' (MNS) and some had been associated with an Australia-wide network of nonviolence trainers known as Groundswell. All stressed the importance of collective decision-making and understanding the emotional undercurrents of groups. This shared philosophy and experience gave them cohesion.

At the Blockade

Trainers, like River Camp organisers and a few TWS people, openly viewed the Franklin Campaign as a microcosm of a much wider struggle for social change. But unlike the other groups, some trainers took this to the point of saying that the Franklin might have to be sacrificed in order to achieve long-term goals.

One of their long-term aims was the empowerment of individuals. Trainers encouraged all protesters to do more than just turn up and be arrested. They wanted everyone to participate in all decisions which affected them. They had a wide definition of what things affected protesters and this caused conflict right from the start.

Trainers tried to establish a formal decision-making structure for the whole Blockade but their system infuriated the let-it-flow people at the River Camp who despised structure. The Information Centre people, chased by media deadlines, became frustrated waiting on the outcome of an endless procession of meetings.

An important part of the nonviolence approach was a theory of how a nonviolent protest worked. The trainers argued that the political effect of the Blockade would be determined by how the protest responded to a series of inevitable moves the State would take in reaction to it. Trainers argued that plans should be altered, according to the dynamics of nonviolence, to maintain the political advantage. But few trainers had experience of direct actions and could not always translate their theory into language that others could understand.

RIVER CAMP ORGANISERS

The howl of chainsaws and the ever-increasing destruction of the forest was the symbol of the Blockade for the people who worked at the River Camp. They took on the management of the camp and the co-ordination of the land and river-based actions in the area.

Background

The River Camp organisers came from a variety of places and campaigns. There was a contingent from recent direct actions in the Terania Creek and Mt. Nardi forests of northern NSW, and a group from the Deloraine area of northern Tasmania. They were joined by others, many of whom were also from alternative life-style backgrounds and were accustomed to a type of communal living. They shared a decision-making style that rejected formal decision-making structures and procedures in order to allow a 'smoother flowing of discussion and a clearer reaching of consensus.'⁽²⁾

At the Blockade

The motivations of the River Camp organisers were predominantly spiritual, moral and ethical. Essentially refugees from cities and critics of industrial society, they revered the forest as a symbol of their concerns and looked upon it as a source of wisdom and a guide to action. While Information Centre organisers and trainers shared many of these ideas and values they disagreed that they were tools for political action.

River Camp organisers felt a moral imperative to 'act according to the truth'. Their slogan 'think globally, act locally' meant that they should stand up for the values they thought important. They felt it was necessary to express their concern in an appropriate manner. Nonviolence was not a costume to be put on for the duration of the Blockade or a set of political skills but 'an attitude, a way of life and state of heart, it is something we live and feel.'⁽³⁾

Alice Hungerford, one of the River Camp organisers said: 'Our aims were to stop the destruction by whatever means possible. If this meant presenting a particular image which would sway the political minds of middle Australia then that's what we would do.'⁽⁴⁾

But not all River Camp organisers were prepared to mould their behaviour to an image consistent with the impression TWS wanted the Blockade to make. Some of the more intensely individualistic members of this group resented being asked to wear shoes, or don a hat to hide unconventional hairstyles, and they steadfastly refused to do so. As time went by and the destruction of the rainforest became more widespread, and it appeared the TWS strategy was not working, this group was driven by their sense of moral outrage to plan minor sabotage of HEC equipment.

Alice Hungerford spoke for many River Camp organisers:

'The approach at the River Camp differed greatly from that in Strahan and Hobart. There, at the site of destruction, we were in an advantageous position where the ancient wisdom contained in the forest and the River could help us see our position more clearly. The logistical organisation and nonviolence training being run from Strahan lacked this very powerful first-hand influence of the wilderness, and hence at times facets of the programme stagnated and refused to flow - hindering rather than enhancing people's perceptions of the wilderness and the action.

'Watching the destruction each day of the wilderness, feeling the terror of the ancient myrtle trees, our purpose was clear. But the folk at Strahan failed to see this, and were often regarded as being at cross-purposes with those on the River. At the River Camp we saw our position as the 'front-line' - the place where the war between wilderness and destruction was being waged. We were aware of the political manoeuvres which were taking place in Canberra and Hobart, but we knew our position on the River was the focal point for all these other actions to continue and be effective.'⁽⁵⁾

Information Centre organisers and trainers feared that maverick action by River Camp organisers would destroy the image of the Blockade and so tried to neutralise the power the other group had. The overt spirituality of those up-river served to aggravate the mutual distrust.

IMPACT OF THESE DIFFERENCES ON THE BLOCKADE

Before long, each group withdrew into its own area of responsibility and ran its own operations in a way that expressed their assumptions and attitudes while at the same time trying to bend the Blockade in the direction they wanted it to go.

Protesters passed through the spheres of influence of each of the groups in turn aligning themselves with one group or another and sometimes staying on to work as organisers themselves. Others passed through oblivious and thought it was all terrific or terrible and in some ways it was both.

Almost as much effort went into fighting the unhealthy influence of the other two groups as into battling the dam builders. The protest began without everyone being clear about its purpose and intended mechanism. Not only was the strategic thrust unclear and not universally agreed on but the groups had not established a decision-making system that would have allowed them to formulate new policies or strategies during the protest. Because no single group was able to achieve overall strategic control, and because the tension and differences between the three powerful groups remained unresolved the Blockade was unable to respond easily to changing circumstances.

The next three chapters look at each area of responsibility: logistics and strategy, the training sessions and actions. Chapter Six discusses the unsuccessful attempts to find a decision-making system for the Blockade.

CHAPTER THREE

LOGISTICS AND STRATEGY : BUILDING A DIRECT ACTION

INTRODUCTION

TWS began to gather resources in preparation for a blockade a year and a half before the first arrests. Without the massive resources they prepared there would have been no Blockade.

Their ownership of resources allowed TWS control over three aspects of the protest. Once the basic work was done TWS could choose to escalate the political confrontation by starting a blockade if it became advantageous. Their control over transportation, shelter and food gave them the power to decide the location and size of protest actions. They also had the power to stop the protest when they felt it was no longer appropriate.

This ownership of resources could have given TWS complete control over the Blockade but their power was limited. TWS's informal decision-making structure and the isolation of the Blockade logistics group within TWS worked to their disadvantage. TWS tended to respond to circumstance rather than use tactical initiatives to steer the Blockade and so they decided neither the precise location of the protest actions nor how their resources would be used.

The Franklin Blockade was effective, but this was because of its size and scope and the consistent image which TWS presented to the outside world, rather than because of its internal cohesion or tactical flexibility.

This chapter looks at how the building blocks of the Blockade were gathered and then assembled, it discusses TWS success in the first area and their difficulties with the second.

INEXPERIENCE, SECRECY AND DOUBT

In early 1981 when it became apparent that lobbying and persuasive arguments might prove insufficient, strategists in TWS began to consider new tactics to stop the bulldozers. There was concern that a direct confrontation could destroy the Campaign which had been carefully built up over many years. People feared that it would 'adversely affect things like the State elections if the world knew we were planning something illegal'.(1)

Anxiety and determination combined to produce the decision to begin secret planning of 'the biggest and best organised direct action this country has seen'.(2) TWS hoped to prepare a stage on which only the performances they desired would be possible.

By August 81 a group of ten TWS people, two full-time, were exploring what would be involved in direct confrontation in the isolated South West. Some of these people formed a logistics group. 'One of the most difficult...factors to overcome', Ian Skinner said later, 'was that none of us had done anything like this before...a lot depended on how many i's were dotted and t's crossed beforehand'.(3)

The secrecy, while politically beneficial, created problems. The atmosphere of conspiracy - files taken home, meetings in 'safe' houses - meant that few other TWS activists understood the shape the preparations were taking and the isolated logistics team developed the habit of doing everything themselves.

There was an atmosphere of uncertainty surrounding the project. The logistics group were dependent on senior decision-makers in TWS for overall direction. Although the decision to begin preparations had been taken, it was never decided whether the Blockade would ever actually occur. The need to preserve tactical flexibility prevented this second decision being made until the last minute. There was another source of indecision. The idea of a direct action did not have unanimous support inside TWS. Some people working in other parts of the campaign felt that the money and time could have been better spent on continued lobbying. A

definite start for the Blockade was chosen, then cancelled in favour of another letter-writing effort. In the atmosphere of uncertainty it was hard to plan the event in detail. At every step another unknown appeared: When would it be? Where would the HEC be working then? How many people would come? What would people do when they got there?

These unknowns deterred the logistics group from formulating a clear strategy.

GATHERING THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE DIRECT ACTION

Despite the many doubts, it was clear to everyone that 'the biggest and best' would need massive resources. The logistics group set about gathering the building blocks of the blockade.

The work of the logistics group from February 81 to December 82 can be divided into two areas:(4)

- I. The material requirements of a large-scale protest.
- II. Recruitment and liaison.

I. The material requirements

Reconnaissance and Surveillance.

While people already had first-hand knowledge of the area, it was now necessary to look at possible sites for a direct action. It was also important for TWS to find out what the HEC were doing and where. Occasional surveillance flights were taken over the South West, and in the last four months these flights were made weekly. The Kelly Basin, Crotty Road and the Lower Gordon River were surveyed by boat and on foot. All walking tracks were checked for access to possible action sites, and a new track was marked to the King River bridge from the Lyell Hwy. The King River was rafted and potential campsites on the King, Bird and Gordon Rivers were investigated. A vigil camp on the Gordon was established in September 1982.

Equipment.

The logistics group gathered an enormous amount of equipment. What could not be borrowed from supporters was bought from TWS funds. Gear was needed for the camps: cooking, hygiene, and maintenance equipment. For the actions, things like high tensile chain, banner materials, rope, large amounts of rafting gear, and runabouts were required. A large cache of equipment was placed near the King River bridge.

Finance

TWS campaign funds provided the bulk of the finance. Even so the logistics group spent some time fund raising. Supporters were asked to sponsor the protest. Concerts, film nights, and many 'plugs' on radio were arranged. The money raised in these ways supplemented TWS funds. (\$20,000 was spent prior to the actions, and from \$8,000 to \$10,000 weekly, thereafter. The total cost of the Blockade was \$180,000.)

Transport.

Plans were made to transport people, food and equipment between Strahan and other Tasmanian centres using hired buses and private cars. A transport system had to be established to connect the Information Centre with the courts in Queenstown, the camp, the airport, the Crotty Rd. and the Strahan wharf. River transport was provided by the semi-retired cruise boat the 'J-Lee-M': the boat, which could carry sixty people at a time, and the services of its skipper were donated by the owners. Light aircraft were available for celebrities, TWS organisers and the media. Plans were made for air drops to isolated action sites.

Radio Communication

The job of setting up a radio communication network proved to be technically complex and time consuming. It was hindered by lack of finance, difficult terrain, changes in plans, and the time it took for people to learn to use the equipment. A large truck was fitted out as a communication centre to link the Crotty Road with Strahan. When the focus of the

protest changed to the Gordon River, the communication centre was moved to a large tin shed on a barge. This system, which required the establishment of a relay station in thick bush, became operational during January 1983.

(The radio was useful at times. But the equipment was unreliable, despite the effort put into establishing the system. Also, at times, messages became confused when filtered through several intermediaries.)

Accommodation

A camp site in the town caravan park was negotiated. TWS bought a building for their base - the Information Centre. A house was donated, and this was used for meetings, storage and as a sick bay.

Recording

For the media, for promotional purposes, and as a historical record, it was planned to record the event in as many modes as possible. Video equipment was acquired and film crews were contacted. (Large numbers of photos, good quality film and video footage and written accounts were later collated in Hobart.)

II. Recruitment and Liaison

Recruitment of Participants

The logistics group ran an extensive recruitment drive. This included production of two leaflets, a poster, radio advertisements, interviews, press conferences, mail-outs, and a special edition of the TWS newsletter. The logistics group made direct approaches to celebrities. Once people were attracted to the Blockade, planners provided them with detailed information in a handbook they had produced, and in weekly information bulletins.

Recruitment of Organisers

People were found within each of the six largest TWS branches around the country to organise equipment, local recruitment, fund raising, nonviolence training, and publicity. In Hobart, the planners found people to carry on support work after the Information Centre opened in Strahan.

Legal Preparation

Professional legal advice was sought during the planning stages and a legal support group was established.

Media

To compensate for Strahan's isolation and lack of facilities and to guarantee that TWS was firmly in control of media liaison the logistics group set up phones and a telex in the Information Centre. They also made sure local boats and charter planes were available to the press.

Liaison

To enlist support in Strahan, the logistics group met local councillors, traders and residents. To determine how government regulations might affect the protest, they contacted local authorities: the fire department, child welfare and the National Parks Service. In Hobart they met senior police officers and the Tasmanian Police Association. They invited police and the media to observe training workshops. Limited contact was made with unions and an unsuccessful attempt was made to discuss the Blockade with the Hydro Electricity Commission.

UNCERTAINTY ABOUT WHERE TO PUT THE BUILDING BLOCKS

Nobody in TWS had clear responsibility to consider possible Blockade strategies and their implications. This meant that while resources were prepared meticulously, strategies remained broad and were based on unexamined assumptions. Because it was assumed that actions would be based around obstructing work, the logistics group felt they had to wait until they

knew where the bulldozers would be before they could decide on the location of the protest. It was expected that people would sit in front of bulldozers but the implications of this were not carefully explored.

Initially the logistics group focused their attention on the bridge over the King River. This bridge was the first transport bottleneck on the new road to the dam site. A base could have been established: there was access to the Lyell Highway and there was a possible campsite on public land nearby. But it wasn't very photogenic and a bridge is not necessary for a bulldozer, as Cathy Plowman said later: 'if we had used that plan we would have been sitting on the bridge...and when they took their first bulldozer in they would have forded straight around us. They forded the King River below the bridge and then ploughed through the Huon Pine Reserve there, right where we would have been camped'.(5)

Attention turned to Macquarie Harbour and the Gordon River and work began to establish transport and communication to this area. At this time the strategy was to have two action camps, one on the Gordon River and one on the Bird River near the Kelly Basin Road, both coordinated from the base camp at Strahan. The idea was that two or three affinity groups, who had developed their tactics in Strahan, would leave for action at a particular HEC worksite as a mobile group. It was planned that people would not stay in the action camps for more than a week before being arrested or returning to Strahan. This rotation was meant to simplify communication and decision making. TWS assumed that, out of respect for the area, protesters would pass through but would not want to live in the wilderness. This 'bushwalkers' view of the wilderness made it logical to plan for regular returns to Strahan.

The action camps were to be places for gear storage, arrival points for new blockaders, and communications links to mobile groups. They were not planned to have permanent residents. The logistics group also assumed that the number of blockaders would be small enough to allow them time to form new arrivals into mobile groups and then direct and co-ordinate these mobile groups in the bush.

Towards the end of 1982, it became possible to establish transport and communication links across Macquarie Harbour. The logistics group had negotiated the use of the J-Lee-M, and had organised a potential radio link. It was also clear that HEC work would take place on the banks of the Gordon at Warners Landing. Now the protest could be located on the river itself, where its impact on the public would be great.

THE STRATEGY GAP

In November TWS took the decision to start the Blockade, for the logistics group the time for preparation was over and in early December 82 they moved their base from Hobart to the Information Centre in Strahan. The focus of the Campaign shifted from lobbying to the direct action and for a short time the senior decision-makers also moved to Strahan. Now there was no doubt about dates and places, no uncertainties about whether it would happen at all, the Blockade was underway and with both the logistics group and the senior decision-makers together in Strahan TWS could have made the strategy decisions that they had deferred.

In the build-up to the Blockade each group had pursued the jobs they knew they had to do. The senior decision-makers had concentrated on questions like When to start the Blockade? The logistics group had gathered the rubber boats, tarpaulins and sacks of lentils. But between these two necessary tasks lay questions like; How do we make the Blockade achieve our political purpose? What do we want people to do? What do they want to do? How do we resolve differences? What are the implications of the trespass law? What will the effect of mass arrests be? - to stop work? -to cost the state money? -or will they simply create public awareness? How does getting arrested lead to the political result we want? Should people go to jail?

There were further questions that lay beneath these overall considerations: Where should we be arrested? -only in sight of the media? -at all work sites? -at a symbolic work site? How will the police act?

And there were the finer points to consider: Are the mobile groups the best way to achieve our aims? How do we get people to agree to a mobile-groups strategy? What if mobile groups don't work?

It was these deferred questions that now forced themselves on TWS. But, though some were discussed, none were clearly resolved.

TWS had stored up trouble for themselves with their loosely defined decision-making structure. Neither the senior decision-makers nor the logistics group were clear who was to make strategy decisions or where the responsibility for strategy rested. The senior decision makers had never made strategy their business. They lacked an understanding of the logistic possibilities provided by the resources at their disposal and they kept their attention firmly on the political direction of the overall Campaign. When the focus of the Campaign shifted to the coming Federal election the senior decision-makers left Strahan for Melbourne. This left the logistics group with the unresolved strategy decisions but without the influence of the senior figures to help implement any strategy that might be decided.

Expansion from the core group

As well as deferring strategy decisions, the logistics group had also deferred planning a system for transferring their knowledge and responsibilities onto the larger logistics team that would be needed to run a Blockade. The decision to go ahead with a direct action clarified some of their uncertainties. But the move to Strahan, coinciding as it did with the arrival of all the protesters that they had so successfully recruited, left the group with no time to consider what their own most useful role might now be. In a short time they were immersed in the relentless routine of the Blockade handling the comings and goings of people and things: using the skills they had developed in the preparation phase. Unfortunately they had not developed the skill of delegating in the earlier atmosphere of secrecy and they still felt that responsibility for success rested on their shoulders alone.

Their most useful role would have been as delegators and negotiators. If they had been able to devolve day-to-day responsibilities onto other protesters and had freed themselves from the routine tasks of organising accommodation, transport, and food they would have been able to use their understanding of the Blockade to develop and, through negotiation, to implement clear and effective strategies.

Looking back it is clear that the meetings between the logistics group and senior decision-makers in Strahan were too late. With Blockaders arriving every minute and wanting to join in the decision making there was no time to inform the senior decision-makers of the possibilities and limitations of the Blockade. Nor was there time to establish a system to give responsibility to the new arrivals that would allow the logistics group time to shape the available resources to the political purpose of the protest.

The Blockade began, continued and ended without a clear strategy. Strategies emerged but not ones that TWS had chosen nor ones that were generally agreed on. Because the Blockade lacked a clear strategy it could never be steered in response to changing circumstance.

CIRCUMSTANCES SHAPE THE BLOCKADE

TWS set up the Information Centre expecting to make it the hub for all aspects of Blockade organisation and planning.

At the same time a group from New South Wales arrived in Strahan and passed straight on to the Gordon River vigil camp which had been set up to allow surveillance of the HEC work. To the veterans of the Nightcap and Terania Creek protests there was never any doubt that the Gordon River was the sole focus of this protest. They wanted to be at the front line and this meant living in the forest, unlike TWS, they assumed there would be a permanent camp.

TWS organisers were members of the mobile groups which joined the Nightcap frontliners at the River Camp. Initially, decisions at the River Camp reflected TWS assumptions about the direct action because the TWS organisers there contributed to the formulation of tactics. But within days most members of the mobile groups had been arrested and there were no longer any TWS organisers in the River Camp. This left the formulation of tactics up-river in the hands of those prepared to spend long periods in the forest. These River Camp organisers were also left with control of the equipment TWS sent up-river and this gave them the power to implement their own tactics without consulting TWS. In a short time the differing assumptions of the two groups developed into serious conflict.

If it had been possible for TWS to negotiate a temporary alliance with organisers outside the TWS 'family', then the control of resources by another group would not have been a problem. But the River Camp organisers made no attempt to develop this. Neither group attempted to discuss their potentially conflicting assumptions about the relative importance of the dam-site over other action sites or about the position of the Blockade in TWS' South West Campaign generally. On the other hand the decision-making system of TWS, open only to the 'family', made it hard even for the most determined newcomer to be accepted and enfranchised.

TWS GOES WITH THE FLOW

TWS had neither planned to have a permanent River Camp nor had they decided that it was the best strategic option. But when it evolved they went along with it.

There were good reasons why TWS let go of its plan for mobile groups. TWS had assumed people would be self-sufficient. Instead large numbers of ill-equipped and inexperienced protesters arrived, unfamiliar with life in the wilderness but determined to go up-river. A permanent river camp provided these protesters with many comforts: showers, hygienic toilets and hot meals after a day in the rain out in a leaky boat. A single camp also centralised collection and transportation of arrestees' gear thus making TWS's job easier.

As time went on and large numbers continued to arrive, the hard-pressed logistics group allowed a routine to develop which minimised daily changes of plan. The eight hour round trip to the River Camp made detours to other potential action camps inconvenient, and since the River Camp organisers continually clamoured for more Blockaders it was easier to send all new arrivals to the River camp.

But, good reasons or not, TWS no longer had complete command of the huge resources that its skilled logistics team had assembled. They had allowed strategic decisions to be dictated by circumstance and a group with different aims and assumptions to TWS was able to build a power base using TWS resources.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE INDEPENDENT CAMP: LOSS OF CONTROL

The presence of an independent River Camp limited the Blockade's tactical flexibility. The option of establishing a camp on the Bird River and opening up new action sites on the Kelly Basin Road was not available because all the gear was in the River Camp and the River Camp organisers thought that the Lower Gordon was by far the most important place to confront the HEC. The independent River Camp was also able to take tactical initiatives which didn't have the support of those in Strahan. For example, isolated acts of sabotage on HEC equipment began in late January.

The Blockade was able to accommodate most of these differences and still be appropriate in the prevailing political context as TWS's logistic preparation had insured them, to some extent, against the loss of control which enabled the sabotage to occur. One form of insurance was their monopoly of contact with the media and of the content of press releases. This meant that TWS was able to ignore, deny or disown such acts and so maintain their image. But if the political context had changed, impelling TWS to change or modify its strategy, and the River Camp organisers had opposed these changes, TWS would have been in a difficult position. Because they did not control all the resources they would have been forced to relinquish their new plan or destroy the fragile unity of the protest.

Despite these limitations, TWS never lost the power of veto. They used this power dramatically to close the Blockade against the will of River Camp organisers. After the election several large trucks removed most of the communal equipment from Strahan Camp and the entire contents of the Information Centre. Some Blockaders stayed on, built their own boat of 44-gallon drums and sailed across Macquarie Harbour, but it was not possible to continue actions on anything like the same scale. The TWS decision to withdraw its resources spelled the end of the Blockade.

CONCLUSION

No protest can be more than its preparation and resources permit. TWS prepared for the biggest protest in Australia and when thousands of people arrived, the infrastructure was ready for them.

But, to direct a protest, organisers need two things: an understanding of how the resources that are available define limits for the protest, and a grasp of the political purpose of the direct action within the wider campaign. While the latter will define the goals of the action, the strategies chosen to achieve these goals will reflect the resources available to protesters. Senior TWS decision-makers had a grasp of the political purpose of the Blockade and the logistics group knew the capabilities of the machine they had built, but these two interdependent faculties were never combined. The necessary decisions might have been made by either group acting independently. But the senior decision makers had an incomplete grasp of the options and the logistics group had never been enfranchised to make strategic decisions. Furthermore they had had no practice at integrating their resource preparations with the political purpose of the Blockade. This situation discouraged both groups from tackling difficult questions and, unless circumstance twisted their arms firmly behind their backs, strategy decisions were postponed.

TWS's subservience to circumstance and the hardly surprising lack of subservience from some of their allies left the Blockade with little tactical manoeuvrability.

The protest was the 'biggest and best' but it was extremely vulnerable to being out flanked by the Tasmanian Government and its allies. In retrospect it is surprising to see how, after the careful accumulation of massive resources, TWS risked so much by their inattention to strategy. Their comprehensive preparation gave them the ability to swing a big punch but they did little to ensure its accurate delivery. Other groups with more limited resources will have to rely more on fancy footwork, considering carefully the strategic deployment of resources and the process of arriving at strategy decisions, if they are to succeed.

CHAPTER FOUR

TRAINING - PREPARING PEOPLE FOR A PROTEST.

INTRODUCTION

TWS recognised the need to train protesters for the Blockade but rather than do it themselves they sub-contracted the job to nonviolent social-change activists: the trainers. During the Blockade the power of the Information Centre organisers, the 'producers' and 'directors' of the protest, came from their control of logistics and resources. The trainers were also a powerful group because they schooled the 'actors' and wrote the 'script' of the Blockade.

Protesters at the Franklin Blockade had to participate in compulsory group 'training' sessions lasting two or three days. These sessions followed an agenda which mixed a philosophy of nonviolence with information, roleplays and discussion about the Campaign. The trainers prepared about one and a half thousand people for arrest, establishing a discipline of nonviolence and a commitment to unity that lasted for the duration of the Blockade. The image this training produced was one of the cornerstones of TWS's successful campaign.

The trainers' influence over both Blockaders and the shape of the protest brought them into conflict with organisers who didn't share their aims. Others criticised the training as dogmatic, invasive and inappropriate.

This chapter looks at the type of training adopted, at the benefits it brought to the protest, and at the shortcomings of the training sessions as preparation for the civil disobedience actions at the Franklin.

THE POTENTIAL PROTESTER

People do not walk straight from their everyday lives into an event like the Franklin Blockade. There are many steps between the first impetus to be involved and active participation. The potential protester must resolve a series of doubts, fears and questions. Too much uncertainty or confusion over any one of the steps in this series could be the difference between someone coming or staying at home. A potential protester faces questions about the organisers and the issue: Do they have a campaign which is exciting and likely to succeed? Do I agree with their strategy? Will my ideas be listened to? The potential protester then faces practical difficulties: Do I bring my own food? My own sleeping bag? Does a conviction mean I can't get a passport? Who will feed the cat? And personal fears: What if the police are violent? Will I get on with the other protesters? Organisers wishing to recruit people and weld them into a team must help them resolve these questions.

There are four components of comprehensive preparation. The first can be called travel preparations: legal briefings, descriptions of local geography and practical details of the equipment required for the protest. Second, organisers need to explain the background to the action: their understanding of the big picture of power, politics and strategy. Third, is the emotional and social preparation: participants need to explore the risks and fears they feel and establish ways maintaining a calm, thoughtful and determined protest. Finally, there must be an explanation and discussion of how participants can become involved in the protest - the decision-making procedures and the jobs to be done: cooking, shit disposal, banner-making, and getting arrested in front of the TV cameras.

But organising training sessions is not as simple as putting together equal proportions of the four components. Organisers will need to take into account the needs of particular individuals who will want more or less emphasis on different aspects depending on which obstacles to participation are uppermost in their minds. They will also need to adapt to the different stages of development of the protest. In the early stages of preparation for a direct action organisers will try and recruit people who can help them build the protest. At this time organisers will be training themselves as much as the new recruits. Later on when the protest

has taken shape, the training sessions will become more descriptive of the shape that has emerged. Once the protest is underway, if new recruits are still being brought in, the agenda of training sessions will need to change again to include analysis and responses to the latest events.

TWS THINKS ABOUT PEOPLE PREPARATIONS

The MNS Connection: an unnegotiated alliance

TWS organisers understood that a Blockade required their supporters to suffer physical discomfort and possibly face being roughed up. They also feared that sabotage and violence would crack the image they had built for their Campaign. From their fear for the safety of protesters and their desire for some control over participants, the idea of formal training emerged.

As it happened, TWS had rubbed shoulders with a group who called themselves 'nonviolent action trainers' in the interlocking circles of the alternative political scene. When TWS began to talk about training, those most interested in nonviolence set out to learn from this group, to bring their skills and ideas into the Franklin campaign. As well as the attraction to nonviolence, to some in TWS it seemed that the nonviolence group had just the political tools they were looking for. The Movement for a New Society (MNS) in the United States, the inspiration for the training group, had been instrumental in producing huge direct actions that had thrown a spanner in the works of the US nuclear power industry.[*] The nonviolence group were not interested in environmental issues alone, their methods had been used to prepare protesters for the occupations of Alcoa's Wagerup alumina refinery site in Western Australia, for the women's Anzac Day actions in Canberra, and other protests throughout the country. To the nonviolence training group many issues had the same basis and the Franklin was just one more example of a wider struggle for social change. It was on the basis of this commitment to nonviolent social change that they offered their help to TWS.

With both nonviolence and successful protests behind them, there were grounds for building close contact between Blockade planners and MNS proponents, but it was with some doubts that TWS opened their campaign to enthusiasts of the nonviolence package. Although the philosophies of MNS may have been attractive, even inspiring, to some there had been a history of mutual suspicion between the two groups. In 1980, when TWS had first considered direct action, MNS-style activists were invited to Hobart to share their experiences of opposition to the Springbok tour of New Zealand and ran workshops based on the MNS package. These workshops brought into the open the internal conflicts of TWS, conflicts over democratic decision-making, the hierarchy, sexism and the need to look at the connection between the Franklin dam and other social problems. 'There was a strong feeling of outsiders imposing a campaign style and ideology', one TWS activist said afterwards.(1) The tension and arguments that resulted diverted both groups from the business of the protest. By sub-contracting the training to MNS adherents without any negotiation TWS found that they had given control over an important area of the Blockade to a group with different aims.

Training Begins

After the workshops with the New Zealanders, a small group formed in Hobart under the MNS label to explore the MNS package. This group provided a haven for people unhappy with the TWS style, many of whom were involved in the secret preparations for the blockade. The MNS tag was used by the Blockade planning group to keep the then-secret blockade separate from TWS. As preparation became more advanced and areas of responsibility more defined two groups of planners emerged: the logistics group and trainers.

In the months before the Blockade TWS activists in Melbourne and Hobart in conjunction with the Melbourne nonviolence group developed the standard text for weekend training workshops. Training in other states, although not exactly the same, was based on the same ideas.

The emphasis in workshops was on building affinity groups. Over the two days of live-in training most aspects of the MNS package were covered through role-plays and guided discussions. People were led through the arguments for consensus and an analysis of the power

of nonviolent protest. Participants were encouraged to learn the skills required to improve group cohesion. As far as possible the examples used in the workshops were drawn from the TWS campaign : groups studied maps and photos of the South West, discussed TWS preparations, HEC activity and events in the wider campaign. Groups that had been formed in the atmosphere of trust and common purpose at these retreats were encouraged to keep meeting and to take on some area of campaign work. This program allowed the potential protesters to consider each of the four components of preparation and allowed time for the development of enthusiasm and commitment to the direct action, not to mention the MNS philosophies promoted by trainers.

The group organising training in Melbourne formulated a list of aims:

1. To get across the aims of the Blockade and the need and value of peaceful direct action.
2. To get across the aims of TWS and show how the Blockade fits in.
3. To train people in the principles of nonviolent action.
4. To show that nonviolence is an active, peaceful and powerful way of protest.
5. To provoke people to think about nonviolence, to evaluate it and to encourage commitment to it for this campaign (and hopefully its incorporation as a personal philosophy).
6. To thrash out some of the advantages and disadvantages of various strategies, particularly nonviolence rather than violence.
7. To develop skills and techniques for working in groups - especially consensus decision-making and group maintenance.
8. To develop mutual support, trust and a commonly understood commitment to the aims of the blockade, as well as affirming the rights of the individual.(2)

These aims show how much trainers intentions went beyond what TWS had in mind.

Training becomes compulsory

Eventually TWS made the decision that attendance at a training workshop would be compulsory. They were able to enforce this through their control of the boat and therefore control over who had access to the action site up-river. This avoided difficult decisions about who didn't need to be trained and instituted the trainers as a distinct and powerful group in the Campaign. While almost all TWS organisers agreed that formal preparation was a good idea they had different reasons for supporting it. Some thought that it would guarantee a peaceful protest or be an opportunity to screen out nutcases. Other TWS organisers shared the MNS people's view of training.

The differences between the two groups, for example the trainers' uneasiness with the TWS decision-making process and TWS discomfort with the trainers' revolutionary zeal, were ignored. These differences came to the surface from time to time, for example an argument over whether the protest should be called a Peaceful Direct Action or a Nonviolent Action disguised a battle over the nature of the protest.(3) When the Blockade began, the conflict between TWS and the trainers over decision-making and the rights of Blockaders to participate erupted. Trainers taught Blockaders about the system of consensus decision-making and tried to force TWS to institute this system. While they lacked the power to achieve their goal, their control over the vital area of Blockade training allowed them to persist in their efforts.

THE BLOCKADE IN PROGRESS - WEAKNESSES IN THE PREPARATION PROGRAM

The training at the Franklin was loudly and fiercely criticised at the time, and in retrospect, even some of the trainers felt they had made some ghastly mistakes.

One day training workshops

At the beginning of the Blockade it was decided that on-site training in Strahan would last one day. The logistics group feared a small turn-out and so wanted people available for actions as soon as possible, but they also wanted a screening process to ensure the safety of the Campaign image. Each part of the MNS package was weighed by the trainers, but they decided that to remove any one of the foundations would collapse the interlocking system of political theory, decision-making, and group support, and without a complete theoretical base the

Blockade would be weakened. This meant that instead of deciding which parts of a the pre-blockade agenda were appropriate to shorter on-site preparation sessions, trainers crammed the whole lot into one day.

The continuing presence of superfluous sessions, for example those on Gene Sharpe's theory of nonviolent action, made more work for the trainers, meant that other topics were covered inadequately, and brought criticism from Blockaders and organisers. Already bitter about TWS's lack of commitment to the MNS package, trainers took these criticisms not as constructive questions and suggestions, but as demonstrations of people's ignorance.

Too far too fast

In the first days of action many people arriving in Strahan on a particular day, would have trained, travelled up river, been arrested and brought back by boat and bus to Queenstown Courthouse, and then transported to Risdon Jail by the early hours of the morning only three day later. All organisers agreed that this was going too far too fast. Alternatives to this coach-tour style of protest were canvassed. River Camp organisers wanted more time for people to explore the forest that they had come to defend. Information Centre workers saw the need to ease logistic pressures with a longer lead-time between arriving in Strahan and leaving to go up-river. Trainers wanted more time building affinity groups and making sure Blockaders went into action with a satisfactory theoretical understanding. Over the Christmas break trainers proposed a three-day program in Strahan for people who had had no contact with Blockade preparation and shorter tracks for others. This was adopted with the support of the Information Centre organisers.

Once the pattern of trespass and arrest had emerged, trainers had the chance to design a program with an appropriate balance of the four components of preparation. But the trainers, relieved that, with a three day program, they could once again fit everything in, reinstated the pre-Blockade agenda, aims and timetable. Throughout January and February, the sound of the MNS tub being thumped could be heard once more in the training workshops.

Information and Experience

On top of the exaggerated emphasis on inappropriate aspects of the nonviolence package in the midst of the battle, the training workshops lacked information needed by protesters. While the trainers were experienced in other areas of activism and understood the theories of nonviolence, they lacked experience of direct actions and in particular of the events of the Franklin Blockade. While some trainers had spent time in the River Camp, most had only secondhand information or had formed their impressions in the hour it took the boat to unload and turn around. They still could not answer questions like: What was happening up-river? Could you get to the dam-site undetected? What were the police really like? This information gap could have been filled by returning arrestees, or by more Strahan trainers going through the arrest process. Although some arrested protesters did return to Strahan and assist in the workshops, these people often could not speak the MNS jargon or had little experience in leading groups. Trainers filled the information gap with Gandhi and guesses.

To make matters worse the pressure of leading group after group took its toll of experienced trainers and inexperienced replacements were pushed in at the deep end. Panicked, the new trainers could be seen reading the tomes of Gene Sharpe by flickering candlelight. Undigested lumps of nonviolence theory were then served up to bemused protesters the next day. Roleplays became absurd: some people were asked to play the part of a tree being felled in order to understand its feelings!

Weaknesses

The lack of hard information and the inexperience of some trainers were serious flaws in the training program, and these problems were partly responsible for the tactical sluggishness of the protest. But the major failing of the training was the inflexible agenda. Trainers failed to recognise the need to adapt the training agenda to the new circumstances: to emphasise 'travel preparations' and group support, while glossing over the big picture of politics and strategy. It is possible that in two weeks or two months, if the Blockade had continued, trainers who had stepped aside and weighed up the purpose and effectiveness of the workshops might have returned with a more appropriate mix of the four components of preparation.

Alternatively a new strategic initiative may have prompted trainers to re-evaluate and revise the agenda. But over the ten weeks of the Blockade there were no substantial changes in the workshops.

The inflexible program was a reflection of the determination of the trainers to push for wider nonviolent social change and maintain the nonviolent discipline of the protest. They felt they could not afford to let protesters to go up-river without a full dose of the nonviolence medicine.

THE BENEFITS OF TRAINING : UNITY

Despite its weaknesses, the training program was vital to the success of the Blockade; it provided the glue which stuck the protest together. The training site at Strahan Camp, half-an-hour's walk from the township, forced protesters to take time to consider the aims of the Blockade and how their own act of protest fitted in and stopped them leaping thoughtlessly into the hurly-burly of the action sites. Blockaders gained three important benefits from training. By the end of the three-day sessions most agreed on the aims of the protest, on the method and discipline of nonviolent action and had become part of an affinity group.

The workshops persuaded most protesters that the Blockade was intended to convince others that the dam shouldn't be built and demonstrate to politicians that there was mass support for TWS' objectives. Trainers argued that only nonviolent methods of protest would achieve TWS's aims. They explained the effectiveness of civil disobedience and argued that it was impossible to stop the HEC work. Guided discussions showed up weaknesses in strategies like trying to bankrupt the Government or sabotage equipment. Some of the trainers' ethos stayed with the protesters who went up-river. This frustrated many River Camp people who argued that training limited the range of tactical options Blockaders were prepared to consider. For example, most protesters were not willing to support the program of minor sabotage that some at the River Camp were working towards. In this way the trainers determined the style of protest by establishing their aims and methods in the minds of new arrivals.

The second important benefit of training was that it established a discipline which diffused potential violent confrontation. Training discouraged Blockaders from thinking that HEC workers or police were the 'enemy'. Protesters role-played the parts of HEC workers, police and journalists during a confrontation. As Kerry Heatley wrote: 'I must admit that before the Blockade I thought of HEC workers as yobbos who liked cutting down trees. However I soon came to realise that they were just people earning a living.'⁽⁴⁾

The groups of trainees, sitting in circles discussing the action they would take, built up an impression of a determined and considered protest. The consistent nonviolent behaviour of Blockaders in action reinforced this image. This discipline was important for a protest so dependent on impressions created through the media.

Trainers put everyone into an affinity group. The closeness and support of the affinity groups during training gave people the confidence to express and overcome their fears. Gill Shaw describes this process: 'I was terrified of getting squashed by a bulldozer. The only way I could control my fear was to get my affinity group to roleplay sitting in front of a bulldozer so I could figure out exactly what I would do.'⁽⁵⁾ People who had trained together were encouraged to stay together for the rest of their time at the Franklin. When affinity groups worked they provided support during actions and simplified decision making. The protest at Roxby Downs in 1983 implemented this concept even more successfully as affinity groups were mostly formed from groups of friends, whereas at the Franklin people were thrown together with those who had arrived in Strahan at the same time.

The unity developed through training was vital for the individual protesters. All protesters were under pressure from the opponents of the Blockade who wanted to provoke violence or see the Blockade disintegrate.

CONCLUSION

The trainers thought that it was impossible to achieve the goals of the Blockade without training people in all aspects of the nonviolence package. They could not imagine preparation for a direct action separate from these theories. On the other hand TWS thought that the trainers could train people to protest peacefully without becoming involved in questions of decision-making and the need for fundamental social change. Neither group saw the incompleteness of their picture of training, or the need to negotiate an adaptable and comprehensive training program. The unresolved conflict over the aims stressed the internal unity of the Blockade.

The nonviolence package, unadapted for the particular situation, was taught enthusiastically and unselectively. The workshops were at times impractical, inaccessible and heavy with superfluous theory. Noone recognised that ideas that could be developed in the reflective atmosphere of pre-Blockade workshops could not be force fed to Blockaders who were going to be arrested the next day. The training agenda did not evolve with the protest, the quality even deteriorated as inexperienced trainers took the helm. But it would be wrong to discard careful preparation because of a distaste for the MNS style and ideology, nonviolence can offer some useful tools and insights. There must be preparation to match training and preparation of the opposition and to produce the unity necessary for success. Despite the shortcomings, the workshops did produce informed, disciplined and confident protesters and a unified protest.

NOTE [*].

The recent history of direct actions in the USA can be traced back through the anti-nuclear movement, through resistance to the Vietnam War to the Black Civil Rights campaigns. As the sit-ins, boycotts and Freedom Rides of the civil rights activists were met with baton charges, water cannon and police dogs, the activists were forced to develop ways of maintaining their nonviolent discipline. One group, CORE, ran three-week courses in nonviolent resistance. During the anti-Vietnam actions nonviolent activists trained marshalls and stewards to cope not only with violent opposition but also with those activists who marched under the same banners but who preferred to confront violence with violence.

Some actviists used the time after the end of the Vietnam war to study the principles of nonviolent resistance and to look at goals and strategies for a nonviolent revolution. Drawing on Quaker principles, which included the consensus decision-making process, they developed a seemingly comprehensive strategy of social change through nonviolence. They developed a consensus style which contrasts with Gandhi's methods of training which produced nonviolent armies with a strict hierarchy.

This package of personal beliefs and political tactics, written up by the Movement for a New Society in the aptly named Monster Manual, re-entered the political arena as part of the growing opposition to nuclear power.

CHAPTER FIVE

STOPPING WORK?

INTRODUCTION

When construction work began in the South West, TWS decided to support their Campaign with a direct action. But they were unclear about the best strategy for the protest. They called the direct action a 'blockade' and began to talk about stopping work. Some planners thought it would be possible to halt construction work and that this would force the government to abandon the dam.

The organisers of the River Camp shared this view, they were able to influence the type of actions that were carried out as most of the protesters were keen to be arrested up-river. Protesters put a lot of effort into trying to stop work, but the effect of their actions was not to halt the construction, the trespass law prevented that, instead, the symbolic river barriers and acts of civil disobedience brought pressure to bear on Federal politicians who were able to pressure Gray.

Protesters did not recognise that civil disobedience could exert all the political pressure that was required and they were not able to design new actions that could maintain or escalate the political pressure they had applied in first few days of the Blockade.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGY

On 2 September 1982 the Tasmanian Government re-drew the boundaries of the Wild Rivers National Park and gave control of the land to the HEC. TWS responded by "re-declaring" the park, and to show they were serious about their threat of intervention set up a camp in the forest. This camp became the base for the reconnaissance and preparation of the direct action. This symbolic protest was the precursor of the Blockade.

At the same time, planners were discussing tactics for the real protest to come. There was agreement that the purpose of the Blockade was to build political support: to inspire others in the community to join the Campaign and pressure the Federal Government to intervene. But, there were disagreements about Blockade strategy. Some planned to stop work, others argued that the presence of protesters would not stop the destruction.

There was a group within TWS who were planning to surround construction machinery in order to stop work on the dam. Their thoughts were strongly influenced by the Terania Creek protest, a successful campaign to stop logging in the rainforests of northern NSW. They gained the impression from the exciting film, Give Trees a Chance, that the strength of the Terania protest was direct personal intervention: standing in front of bulldozers. The logo chosen for the Blockade was a bulldozer brought to a halt by a giant hand. This group's growing sense of desperation about the Franklin Campaign became intertwined with a sense of duty. One contributor to a TWS discussion paper on tactics said: 'it is our moral responsibility to prevent damage to the wilderness through physically intervening'.(1)

For similar reasons a group who had fought the bulldozers in NSW came to Tasmania to continue the fight. For them the moral imperative was the most important reason for a protest. Mac Nicholson, one of this group, has written of direct action: 'the prime object ...[is]...to act according to truth and accept such things as publicity and media coverage as a bonus. If you wish to stop the work you aim to do just that. If you do not manage to do so, however, there is no reason to see the action as a failure. You have expressed your sincerity and your care for life and your action will not be lost'.(2)

Together with others of like mind this group became the River Camp organisers. Remember how Alice Hungerford described their attitude in Chapter Two: 'The folk at the River Camp saw their position as being the 'front line' - the place where the war between wilderness and destruction

was being waged. We were aware of the political manoeuvres which were taking place in Canberra and Hobart, but knew our position on the river was the focal point for all these other actions to continue and be effective'. (3)

Some who supported the emphasis on stopping work argued their case by saying that even if protesters could not always stop individual machines, they could force the cost of the project so high that the dam would have to be abandoned. Jack Lomax questioned this theory: 'To make the continuing destruction economically non-viable by means of a nonviolent blockade of works is merely a dream'.(4) Jack argued that the Tasmanian Government was not paying cash for the dam. As the dam was being financed by international loans, a Blockade would not exert any short-term economic pressures on the State or Federal Governments. Even if the Blockade could add \$500 million to the cost of the works, he argued, those who were providing the finance would be quite happy to extend their Government-secured, high-interest loans.

There was another argument against the adoption of stopping work as a strategy. Once protesters adopted nonviolence, how could they actually check the advance of the bulldozers? If the destruction continued despite the protest, frustration and anger could lead to retaliation and violence.

The ideas of Alan Cummings were used by those wanting to debunk the stop-work argument. He wrote: 'Nonviolent intervention is a way of dramatising the issue. We may delay work or make it more expensive, or we may make it politically unacceptable to continue because of the hundreds or thousands of "normal, law-abiding citizens" in jail. But ultimately, we are using the intervention to bring the issue into the eyes of those uninvolved, the media, the public, in a way they cannot ignore. Blockades and occupations are a dramatic way of getting people into jail with lots of good media coverage, and any delay in work (should be seen as) a bonus, not as the primary purpose of the action'(5)

An attempt was made to find a strategy that was acceptable to those wanting intervention and those who saw problems with 'stop work'. A position paper setting out an agreed strategy was published, saying that while the primary aim of the Blockade was to catalyse Federal political action, stopping or delaying work was an important part of attracting the media coverage necessary to inspire others to join the Campaign.(6) This position paper didn't show how the Blockade could be a success if work continued.

Shortly before the Blockade began the Tasmanian Government changed the Police Offences Act making trespass an arrestable offence. Protesters could now be arrested as soon as they stepped onto 'HEC land' and so would be unable to stop work. But the implications of the new law went unrecognised in the debate over strategy, and the Blockade began with some protesters keen to stop work and others doubting the wisdom of this strategy but unable to propose a better one.

THE DIFFERENT ACTIONS

Civil disobedience & the media circus

TWS decision makers had agreed that the first actions should take place on the Lower Gordon river. Affinity groups in the river camp made detailed plans. Some prepared to trespass while others organised colourful flotillas of rubber rafts. Michael Lockwood describes the purpose of trespassing: 'It was the "no lose" situation so classic in nonviolent actions - if we don't get arrested, we have reclaimed the area as National Park; if we are, the ensuing publicity will be of massive benefit to the Campaign.'(7)

14 December was chosen as the day to start the protest as this coincided with the World Heritage listing of the South West. In the first four days of the protest 206 people were arrested for trespassing on HEC land. The Blockade made headlines across the world: the arrests, the multitudes of police, Gray's predictions of violence, the novelty of the protest and the way it was organised combined to make the Blockade newsworthy. One journalist said: 'all it needed was a Hollywood producer and a symphony orchestra (and it could have been marketed as a sequel to 'Ben Hur'...Sam Goldwyn would have known what to do with the cast of hundreds and the media circus'.(8)

New tactics

Not everyone saw the first few days as a complete success. There was dissatisfaction among some protesters because Blockaders had rushed like lemmings to be arrested, while chainsaws and axes were making the first scars in the forest. The Launceston Examiner said in an editorial: 'as a blockade designed to obstruct and delay HEC work...it was no big deal ...it is expected that by the end of today...the blockade will deflate...into a token operation.'(9) Many protesters agreed that unless the Blockade tackled the HEC directly it would become irrelevant.

In the New Year the HEC planned to really get stuck into it. Bulldozers were going to start carving up the forest and this added weight to the stop work arguments. Protesters began to talk about new tactics to achieve the stop-work aim and phrases like 'hit and run' and 'guerilla tactics' started to appear in the press. Over the Christmas break, TWS set out the strategy for actions in January. A paper distributed to new blockaders said:

'The focus of the Blockade should be towards slowing down the destruction of the wilderness, alongside larger "media events" which depend on numbers. Mass arrests may no longer be a viable tactic given that the judicial process has effectively removed 206 blockaders from direct action for 6 months. It may be that mass arrests do happen (depending on numbers) but this should be tempered by a long-term overview of the objectives of the Blockade.'(10)

Fearing that few new protesters would join the Blockade, organisers advocated hit-and-run tactics: Blockaders would come out of the bush, obstruct work until police arrived, and then melt back into the forest to avoid arrest. Some organisers were concerned that the desire to stop work would lead to frustration and hit-and-run tactics could lead to charges of resisting arrest, which would undermine the image of the Blockade. They argued that trespass and arrest were still a useful tactic and that civil disobedience should be encouraged. But they failed to convince the 'stop work' advocates that civil disobedience was a better strategy: 'stop work' prevailed.

Stop-work actions on HEC Land

In January the serious business of stopping HEC work began. One affinity group hid themselves near dam works. Two of them emerged and workers stopped until the police arrived to arrest the protesters. When the police had gone, another two Blockaders emerged and the police had to return to fetch them. This was kept up all day and work was substantially disrupted. Police were quick to pick up on this tactic. Norm Barnwell describes what happened to his group a few days later: 'We set out to stop work on the tunnel at the dam site...We were all hiding... Every now and then we caught sight of Russell at the entrance of the tunnel as he waited for the workers to arrive. When they arrived they ignored Russell and worked on. He was arrested only much later, when the media arrived to record the arrest of the ex-Minister for National Parks.'(11) It was apparent that workers were not going to stop simply because a protester walked out of the forest. Norm concludes: 'a policeman had been stationed at the end of the tunnel to arrest any other greenies. In fact we were stymied.'(12)

To stop work on HEC land, protesters now had to distract the police guards stationed at work-sites. This soon became an end in itself. Ian Cohen, a River Camp organiser describes the strategy:

'Our most effective tactics were coinciding affinity group actions. We were able to move people across areas presumed inaccessible...Police resources were stretched to the limit when greenies appeared at Warner's Landing, the dam site and drilling sites at the same time. Police boats were forced into trips over potentially damaging shallows. When the Blockade was called off we were in the process of organising actions which would have necessitated the delivery of arrestees to Police base by helicopter.'(13)

The excitement of this cat-and-mouse game with police came to overshadow the original intention of stopping work. Liaison with police began to include a touch of misinformation. Police were told to expect thirty arrests and would arrange transport to Strahan. Five protesters would walk on to the HEC land and the boat would return almost empty.(14)

By February River Camp organisers thought it was important to open up new action sites so that police resources would be stretched even further. One group advised workers at a remote

worksite they would need a police guard. 'We left a note with some chainsaws just below Funnel Web Helipad advising they would need police protection in future as we would be back to interrupt work...'(15) River Camp organisers also developed tactics which pushed the limits of nonviolence: stuffing potatoes in bulldozer exhausts, cutting water pipes, and hiding chainsaws.

Protesters challenged the delivery of heavy machinery to the dam site. From mid-January a boat and barge made their way up-river every few days. Their arrival was always a dramatic event as it marked the increasing power of the HEC to destroy the forest. Police could not arrest protesters on a public waterway so protesters were able to try and stop the barges unhindered by the trespass law. Protesters set up a string of rubber rafts across the river to confront each barge, but each time the boat ploughed through the rafts without checking its pace. The raft barriers had to be abandoned later in the Blockade when police began confiscating rafts and arresting anyone on the river. Protesters wearing wetsuits-swam into the path of the barge but police drove them out of the way. None of these tactics stopped the barge reaching its destination.

To most protesters, at least in the first days of the Blockade, work on the dam meant work up-river, and the effort to challenge the HEC was centred there. In the early days there was no coordinated effort to hinder the movement of construction equipment in Strahan even though the trespass law did not apply in the town. Bruce Lavender says: 'It seemed to us that there was no effective plan to delay the bulldozer at Strahan. This demonstrated the inherent inefficiency of the Blockade organisation - there was no way of quickly changing direction. All the training and logistical support was focussed towards the up-river actions. Nobody was going to quickly change the focus of the Blockade to Strahan even though this may have produced as much publicity and required much less support. Our group certainly never contemplated abandoning our plans to go up-river. We had started training in the expectation that we would be going up-river and it had attained a glamorous status in our minds. Once on the escalator it was hard to get off'.(16)

After this poor start a group began to organise protests in the town. Once there was a nucleus of organisers, people were attracted off the 'escalator'. Blockaders began infiltrating the HEC compound on the wharf and chaining themselves to gates and machinery. This hindered the work more successfully than up-river but even so protesters could only annoy and harrass, they could not stop the work

Civil disobedience

Stop work was not the only strategy pursued. While all the excitement was happening up-river and in Strahan, many people, unable to stay long at the Blockade, made their protest on a bleak construction site on the road to Hobart. Protesters simply walked across the line on the Crotty Road, which marked the northern edge of HEC-controlled land, and were arrested. This civil disobedience, shorn of any attempt to delay work, was seen by many as second best.

In late February the Tasmanian Government moved to close the River Camp. Unable to arrest the Blockaders who were outside the HEC land, police used National Park Regulations to evict all the protesters they could find in the River Camp. Protesters refused to cooperate with police and were carried to the boats. They then challenged the regulations by attempting to reestablish the Camp.

The Blockade ended in the way it had begun. On G-day, just before the Federal election, when over two hundred people were arrested for trespass on one day.

THE POWER OF THE RIVER CAMP

As many organisers had envisaged from the start, the dominant strategies were to try to stop the work and cost the Government money. But the trespass law made it impossible to stop work on the HEC land as the police arrested protesters immediately they arrived. Although the dramatic rubber-raft blockades showed how determined some protesters were, they could not stop the HEC. The Blockaders were able to hinder work at the Strahan wharf but they too could not

stop the HEC. In their effort to intervene, some protesters put aside attempts to stop work, and diverting the police in order to escalate their costs became an end in itself. The incident at Funnel Web helipad shows the confusion of aims: when given a chance to interrupt track-cutting, protesters left a note to make sure police would be there to arrest them when they returned to 'stop work'.

The stop work strategy had some success, it put construction work behind schedule and forced the Government to spend \$630,000 for the police operation.(17) But these pressures did not force Gray to abandon his dam plans. The dam was central to the Liberal Party's economic strategy and even if it had taken a few more years to build or if extra money had to be found to contain the threat to 'law and order' or if alternative prison accommodation had to be organised, as long as the party could maintain its mandate to build the dam, construction would continue.

The focus of action strategies on stopping work came about partly because other organisers were unable to articulate convincing alternatives. Some felt civil disobedience was important but were unable to make it as exciting as duelling with bulldozers and barges.

The stop-work strategy was promoted most clearly and persistently by the River Camp organisers who believed that direct personal intervention to obstruct the destruction was more important than pressuring politicians. Many believed that their battle up-river not a symbolic challenge but where the conflict would be resolved and continually demanded that more equipment and blockaders be sent to the River Camp. The River Camp organisers were able to set the agenda for actions. They had gained additional power from their knowledge of local geography, of police movements and of previous actions through their continuous presence at the River Camp. Their dominance in River Camp meetings made it easy for them to maintain this authority and ensure that action plans reflected their stop work strategy.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

The efforts to stop work were not pushing the Government in its most sensitive spot. But the Blockade did help the campaign achieve a political victory. The actions planned to stop work, produced, as a by-product, an impressive number of arrests; the electorate became convinced, as time went by at least one of the grandchildren or one of the neighbours had been arrested and done time; the mounting of numbers of arrests indicated to politicians the depth of support for the campaign. This chain of events was the sort of thing TWS set out to achieve. It contrasts with the direct effects envisaged by the advocates of stop work.

Organisers never fully realised the power that civil disobedience had to influence public opinion, nor that the thread of civil disobedience ran through the whole protest. It was present in the Campaign's early reclamation of the National Park; it was there in a quiet way in the arrests at the Crotty Road and on Green Day. The response to the evictions had the same strength - it was a win/win situation; either the police carried the protesters away from a place they had the moral right to be, or Gray had to back down. The trespass law, instead of being a hindrance to those who wanted to stop work was actually the basis of actions with the most political impact and the key to further effective actions. Far from being 'no big deal' the simple trespass actions in the first days of the Blockade, when hundreds of smiling lemmings were arrested in front of TV cameras, applied pressure in just the right spot.

If they had recognised the power of the civil disobedience then organisers could have escalated the conflict. Organisers viewed an arrested Blockader who had signed bail conditions as a captured pawn barred from direct action for six months. But there was really nothing to stop people trespassing repeatedly. It is ironic that protesters were prepared to challenge the trespass law, the evictions and the revocation of the Park, in order to apply political pressure, yet were not prepared to break bail. A reoffending campaign could have put Gray in a very difficult situation, either he would have had to back down or apply even harsher penalties for such a trivial and controversial offence. It was this ability to escalate the conflict that the Blockade, with its preoccupation with stopping work, failed to discover.

CONCLUSION

The choice of name, the images of Terania and the logo of the giant hand encouraged the idea that the Blockade was intended to stop work. The Blockade did achieve a political impact but much of its energy was spent trying to stop work, something that it was unable to achieve. The power of a nonviolent civil disobedience action lies in its ability to influence others : success can be measured by how much political pressure it brings to bear on the opposition. The arrests at the Franklin applied political pressure, the Blockade was powerless to stop work but its civil disobedience actions were very powerful.

Other campaigns will have to be careful to recognise the extent of the power of civil disobedience and organisers more perceptive in their choice of political pressure points, so they can escalate the conflict if necessary. Simple outrage may be personally satisfying but as a strategy it is unlikely to bring political success.

CHAPTER SIX

CONSENSUS: RESOLVING THE DIFFERENCES?

INTRODUCTION

The image of a Blockade run by consensus gave a positive impression to observers. Many Blockaders saw consensus as their chance to shape the Blockade: they felt they were part of the decisions that would save the river. Beneath the surface of the Blockade things were not harmonious as the co-operative and responsible image suggested. The word consensus was used by all organisers but this hid the fact that TWS, trainers and River Camp organisers all meant something different by the term, the different meaning the three powerful groups attached to consensus reflected their different assumptions about the protest.

The three groups failed to set up a decision-making system for the Blockade which would allow their differences to be resolved, or at least held in abeyance until the end of the protest. Before long the Blockade was partially preoccupied with the civil war within its ranks. The lack of a decision-making system also meant that there was no way to coordinate Blockade strategy. But circumstance was kind to the protest and the Blockade had served its political purpose before the internal pressures or its strategic inflexibility damaged the Campaign.

This chapter describes the components of a decision-making system and looks at the different systems preferred by TWS, trainers and River Camp organisers. These differences became significant because of the power of each group to influence the direction of the Blockade. Some organisers did try to establish a Blockade decision-making system but these efforts failed, partly because the proposals were unworkable, partly because TWS refused to allow outsiders to participate in its decision-making system and partly because all organisers were uncomfortable with the issues of structure, power and control.

THE SKELETON OF A DECISION-MAKING SYSTEM

Every organisation has a decision-making system. One way to compare and evaluate different systems is to look at their approach, procedure and structure.

Different organisations have different approaches: decisions may be made by consensus or voting or they may be handed down from an elite. On its own the approach does not reveal much about a decision-making system, though it may indicate the ideological stance of the organisation.

Once the approach has been chosen the organisation must agree on a meeting procedure to define the conduct of meetings: when motions can be moved, the proportion of voters needed to pass a motion, who can speak and when, and the role of the chairperson.[*] If the consensus approach is chosen the group may use formal or informal procedures. Formal procedure may involve an agenda, a clear proposal before a decision is made, time allocation for clarification and discussion and a regular check to see if consensus has been reached. With informal procedure there may be no agenda and the group will reach a decision by discussing an issue until no one seems to disagree. Even an informal procedure will use unspoken rules of procedure.

The choice of procedure does not determine how power is distributed in an organisation. This is defined by the decision-making structure: the network of responsibility and enfranchisement. A structure indicates when subgroups are required to consult each other, notify others or bring the matter to a general meeting. In one structure, using either a voting or a consensus approach, everyone may have the right to participate in all decisions. In a different structure some decisions will be made by a few people independently, or small groups may select a representative to act on their behalf.

Lack of structure is a common weakness in social change groups, as they rarely set out how the parts of a complex organisation are related. For example, groups working on publications and lobbying can act independently without a structure until their work overlaps. Then they need a

structure to clarify who has responsibility for the shared task. It is important to remember that neither the approach nor the procedure define the structure in any way.

The structure will have to distinguish between decisions about policy and day-to-day decisions. Policy decisions provide a framework within which daily decisions can be made. Policy decisions will include what actions aim to achieve and how they will be carried out; what resources are needed and how they will be distributed; whether preparation sessions will be provided for protesters, what the aims of the preparation will be and how the protest will be represented to the media, the police force and the legal system. It is reasonable that policy decisions for a protest be made through negotiation and consultation early in the preparation stage. At the other end of the continuum are the day-to-day decisions implementing the policies: such issues as how much food to buy, where actions will be and which aspects of the day's actions to highlight in the media, these decisions will be made with limited consultation and negotiation.

The structure may have different degrees of enfranchisement for different decisions. Some decisions will be in the grey area where policy and daily administration overlap. A protest that is continually calling general meetings to resolve these questions will get bogged; one where organisers never consult will disintegrate. A combination of good judgement on the part of decision makers and an appropriate structure will avoid these extremes.

The number of people who need to participate in a decision may be influenced by the numbers who, will be affected by it. Constraints on time may also influence the numbers who can be involved. It may also be appropriate to have different approaches and procedures for different types of decisions. For example, the size of the group or how well they know each other may affect whether formal or informal procedures are appropriate.

ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH A DECISION-MAKING SYSTEM FOR THE BLOCKADE

Preparation and Proposals

The overall coordination of the protest was not ignored entirely. During the planning stage some people attempted to devise an appropriate system. They came up with a procedure for making decisions in large groups and set it out in the Handbook. They did not clarify who was enfranchised to make which decisions.

The first inkling of the problems which would flow from this lack of structure came prior to the Blockade when planners published a decision that no children would be allowed at actions. In the controversy which followed, planners circulated a paper which included a list of questions asking people to consider decision-making structures for the Blockade:

1. What are the basic ground rules that everybody coming to the Blockade must initially accept?
2. a. What are the areas which require overall co-ordination?
b. What - if any - sorts of decisions ought to be made and 'passed down' by co-ordinators?
c. Are there mechanisms, such as affinity group representatives being part of a co-ordinator network, which can ensure good two way communication rather than a sense of being ordered?
3. What are the areas of decision making that need to be approached by a small-to-large-group consensus network?
4. What are the area of decision making that can be dealt with separately by individual affinity groups?
5. What are the areas of decision making that should be each individuals responsibility?

OR

Should all of the above be left to 'whoever-is-around-at-the-time'?(17)

Pre-occupied with logistic preparations and training workshops, organisers failed to address these questions and so the last option of whoever-is-around-at-the-time was taken up.

When the Blockade Began

The conflicts over the decision to suspend actions over Christmas and over the secret decision to open up new action sites were about who was empowered to make which decisions. ~~They~~ revealed the lack of a structure. Over the Christmas break trainers proposed a structure which set out who had power to make policy decisions and who had the power to make other decisions.

Some elements of this structure were adopted. For example, a daily 'co-ordinating' meeting in Strahan was instigated with the aim of providing an overview of events and to review strategy. But its power was not clear: could it make decisions or only recommendations? The network of responsibility was not clear either. No-one had decided the authority of the representative from the River Camp - decision maker or messenger?

This meeting was only a fragment of a structure, it had a low priority and was held late in the evening. The lack of enthusiasm was palpable.

Trainers tried to use the general meetings at Strahan Camp to decide and review policy. There were three problems with this forum. First, it was difficult to reach a quick decision: a typical example was the dispute over the training of 'celebrities'. It was often proposed that busy celebrities who wanted to be arrested should not have to attend training sessions, unable to reach consensus the large meeting would refer this to affinity groups who sent representatives to a spokespersons meeting in the evening. This meeting would be unable to reach consensus and the next morning a proposal would be put once more to the large group which eventually agreed on a policy. By the time the decision had been made the training could have been completed. Second, it was never clear whether a spokespersons meeting was enfranchised to make a decision, or if their decision had to be ratified by the large group. If ratification was required the whole process could start again because, by the morning, twenty to fifty new Blockaders would have arrived, at least some of whom would want to have their say. Any issue could go around this merry-go-round for days, being rehashed by a slightly different collection of Blockaders. Third, even when a decision was finally reached at these meetings the same issue would often reappear a few days later. A decision on celebrities was taken around the mulberry bush many times. Another favourite for this treatment was 'can a consensus decision overturn a previous consensus decision'!

DIFFERENT PROCEDURES WITHIN THE BLOCKADE

The Franklin Blockade did not have a decision-making system. Each group of organisers used different systems based on the same approach but with conflicting procedures.

Protesters thought they had a decision-making system: consensus was taught in training workshops, printed in the Handbook and voiced by all the organisers. The consensus approach was compatible with the moral and democratic ideals of the protest. Agreement on the consensus approach gave protesters something to fall back on when faced by an immediate threat. Bruce Lavender describes the efficient and unifying way the River Camp responded to the news of the arrival of a bulldozer.

'...Denny arrived after dark reporting that the barge was on its way. We despatched a surveillance group down-stream and set about planning an action for that evening. The first step was a brainstorming session...breaking into small groups, having a spokesperson's meeting, back to the small groups then back again to the full group until consensus was reached. With so much good feeling and cooperation, a practical and effective plan was agreed to...our surveillance group reported that the barge had moored for the evening...So it was back to the camp meeting to decide the strategy for the next day. ... despite the late hour, a workable early warning system and plan for the next morning was decided on. Consensus had worked well.'(1)

But the Blockade often ran into difficulties because each group of organisers meant something different when they said 'consensus'.

TWS: an informal family system

TWS relied on a few strong characters to focus debates within the organisation. As a small group working closely together, they were able to avoid many formal procedures. For example, to get approval for a press release a TWS organiser had only to check with two others in the team who happened to be available. They took satisfaction in the success of these informal procedures and took them to be a measure of how their efficient organisation was able to avoid bureaucratic pettiness. It was a consensus approach, but the structure severely restricted enfranchisement and responsibility. Their decision-making system could only be maintained if there was limited access to positions of responsibility.

This system was brought to the Blockade by the Information Centre workers. They saw this informality and casual consultation as the best way to achieve the flexibility and speedy response to events required for successful campaigning. TWS organisers were delegated responsibility for specific areas and were expected to get on with the job on their own. Individual decisions were guided by periodic meetings which used an informal procedure and made decisions by general agreement. Between meetings there was casual consultation between coordinators of different areas. This procedure relied on friendship and the knowledge of each others working styles and capabilities.

Although the questions of consultation and accessible structure were often raised, TWS organisers held on to their power. They felt that power sharing would make the Blockade inflexible and inefficient, and would increase the risks of the direct action.

Trainers system: democracy through formality and structure.

Trainers shared an enthusiasm for the formal MNS consensus meeting procedure, which some took to be the key to a social revolution.(2) The procedures had been developed to ensure equality of participation and the sharing of power and knowledge. The MNS system made explicit all the procedural steps of decision making: agendas were displayed and strict timing of discussion reflected agreed priorities. The power of the chair in traditional meeting procedures was challenged by a conscious attempt to make this role subservient to the will of the group and to share the skill among all participants. A majority vote was felt to be an unsatisfactory basis for action, the pre-eminence of the place of the individual in the group meant that minority views were emphasised and formally brought to the attention of the meeting. It was expected that an issue would be pursued until a resolution was achieved that was acceptable, if not strongly agreed upon, by all. One member of the Hobart group described the experience of using the MNS system as an 'awakening'.(3) But these procedures could only operate efficiently if the structure of responsibility and enfranchisement was clearly decided beforehand.

Trainers saw the need for a Blockade-wide decision-making system with an agreed structure and meeting procedures but two things prevented them establishing one. First, trainers enthusiasm for MNS procedures made them unable to see the worth of other procedures or the need to negotiate with other groups about procedure. Second, the TWS structure didn't allow those outside the family to be involved in important decisions and so no power sharing structure could be implemented.

Trainers tried to devolve power to others but this became a goal pursued uncritically. They did not take into account the tactical need for swift decisions or that many transient Blockaders were happy to let people with a deeper involvement in the Blockade make some decisions without consultation.

River Camp system: 'structureless' democracy

Consensus was not a new concept to most River Camp organisers; many lived and worked in communities and often said that 'consensus is the way we live'. Alice Hungerford said: 'there was a commitment to organisational consensus decision-making processes whose prime objective was that everybody had a part or input into those processes'.(4) But there was a general attitude in the River Camp that formal procedures were limiting and necessary only for people still entangled in the bureaucratic mentality of industrial society.

Although they agreed with trainers that decision making should be open to all, River Camp organisers saw informality, rather than the trainers specific rules of conduct, as the way to achieve this.

Alice commented: 'the way things ran in the River Camp was the simplest and most effective for all the people concerned. Often the formal structure was modified considerably to enable a smoother flowing of discussion and a clearer reaching of consensus.'(5)

Les Miller gives his impression of informal consensus at the daily River Camp meetings: "It was like an ultimate governing body, expression of an ideal. The meeting's tentative powers lay with the breeze, the openness, the forest, the current of the living river if you like. Most people saw the continuing importance of meetings for keeping alive the momentum of the Blockade.'(6)

Informal structures of decision making grew up including unadvertised meetings of organisers and Blockaders interested in particular actions. These enabled River Camp organisers to plan the work in their sphere of Blockade influence, and took power away from larger meetings. This structure limited participation in decision making.

POWER BASES AND INFIGHTING

The three groups came to the Blockade with different goals and within their own spheres of influence each group had the power to pursue their own goals. TWS had control over the resources needed to stage the Blockade; this gave them the power to decide the location of actions, when the Blockade would end, and what would be said to the media, police and in the courts. Trainers derived their power through contact with Blockaders in training workshops; convincing them that the aim of the protest could best be achieved through nonviolent civil disobedience. Because the resources needed for actions and the administration of the River Camp were in the hands of the River Camp organisers, they were free to pursue their strategy of stopping work and forcing up police costs. Where the responsibilities of the Blockade groups overlapped, conflict arose.

TWS and trainers

Each group disliked the other's procedures. Jenny Dall gives her impression of a TWS meeting: 'The Information Centre meeting had the traditional style of cool, male reservedness. Meeting procedures were informal and initially there was only a rough agenda and no time allocations. There was a lengthy description of all the things nobody had been doing, and all the problems of trying to co-opt irresponsible, less-committed-than-us, ignorant blockaders.' (7)

Some TWS people found trainers' methods 'threatening', 'intimidating' and 'invasive'. Speaking of consensus, Cathie Plowman said: 'In the pre-Blockade months I spent much energy agonising over...the way it was being utilised. Maybe accepting the tyranny of it was the price to be paid for ensuring a successful Blockade'.(8)

The differences in procedure were aggravated when trainers advocated the adoption of a new structure saying TWS had no right to decide Blockade policies without consultation. TWS continued to make policy decisions unilaterally. On one occasion TWS decided, contrary to previous agreements, to open up new action sites and secretly organised this with Blockaders without discussing the new plan with trainers. TWS's exclusion of trainers deepened the trainers' conviction that TWS was elitist, undemocratic and hierarchical, and with the fervour of good democrats, they took every opportunity to challenge TWS.

When TWS proposed to suspend actions over Christmas, trainers argued that TWS could not make this decision 'on behalf of those who will be expected to act on it'.(8) TWS argued that trying to get consensus among all blockaders was unrealistic and time consuming, but trainers persuaded them to consult Blockaders. When consensus was achieved, TWS's argument was undermined.

Trainers forced TWS to consult Blockaders about another possible moratorium on actions in late January. A proposal was sent to Strahan that a moratorium be called on the Blockade. For some reason the information was neither relayed to the River Camp nor to the Strahan Camp and Bob Brown arrived in Strahan one evening expecting a decision to have been reached. There was agreement that the media needed to have the decision by 9.00 am the next day to make the most of the incident. It was proposed that the coordinating meeting make the decision on everyone else's behalf, but trainers felt that Blockaders ought to decide the matter. The coordinating meeting agreed and at 11.30 pm everyone in the Strahan Camp was roused by megaphone. At the meeting everyone agreed to the proposal but, fearing that a Strahan decision would further alienate River Camp organisers, some trainers argued that the media deadline should be ignored to allow time to consult the River Camp. They ignored the ten River Camp organisers at the meeting, who agreed to act as representatives and had supported the moratorium. This inflexible use of their consensus system supported the TWS view that it was impractical. Chris Harris, a TWS worker, said:

'If Nero fiddled while Rome burned, then consensus as practiced at the Blockade was an exercise in trying to decide whether the fiddle was an appropriate instrument to play. The blockaders frequently indulged in an orgy of "democratic" decision-making while the Lower Gordon rainforest metaphorically burned around them.

'As one of the chief critics of and sufferers from the god of consensus let there be no doubt of the tyranny of the alleged majority...Anyone who dared step outside or criticise the consensual decision-making process was a tyrant, a fascist or a member of the Hobart "hierarchy"...consensus...is totally useless as a decision-making tool among large groups of people unpracticed in the process and lacking common targets and goals - for example 200 blockaders who came from all walks of life, having widely different views on how the Blockade should be run and little understanding of the problems of running it. In these circumstances consensus becomes a mechanism for manipulating the decision-making process by those most skilled in the consensus process, or for making no decision at all...a process results wherein everyone claims a right to make decisions but noone assumes the responsibility for carrying them out.'(10)

The conflict over procedure and preferred structure was never resolved and contact between the groups was reduced to a minimum. Chris Harris again: '...consensus...required hours of attendance at laborious meetings. In the event many of the decisions were so long in the coming that they had been overtaken by events, and organisers usually could not spare the necessary time to attend meetings, with a resulting breakdown in communication.'(11)

River Camp organisers and the other groups

River Camp organisers felt that decisions made in Strahan were irrelevant, as both groups there had lost touch with the continuing destruction of the forest. Those in Strahan thought the River Camp organisers had lost touch with the political thrust of the Blockade.

TWS saw no need to consult the River Camp organisers about strategic decisions like moratoriums on actions or ending the Blockade. While they could, River Camp organisers pursued their strategy without consulting TWS. Isolation allowed each group to ignore the other to some extent, but some contact was inevitable. Geoff Law, a TWS organiser, describes his feelings about the River Camp: 'I didn't want to go up river. My friends were all in Strahan and I felt ill-at-ease with the River Camp leaders. The commune atmosphere felt alien. I hated the institutionalised spirituality, and the hand-holding forest worship.'(12)

River Camp organisers and trainers differed over Blockade strategy and decision-making systems. River Camp organisers set out to stop construction by blockading workers and forcing up police costs but their ability to carry out this strategy was limited by the preference of many blockaders, fresh from training workshops, for civil disobedience. This annoyed River Camp organisers who made numerous unsuccessful attempts to have training workshops re-located in the River Camp. Their repeated failure caused much antagonism.

The River Camp organisers preferred 'structurelessness' and saw the system in Strahan as a program that 'stagnated and refused to flow - hindering rather than enhancing people's perceptions of wilderness and the action'(13).

Some Blockaders did find the procedures in the River Camp exciting and effective, Bruce Lavender describes the outcome of a series of River Camp meetings: 'There were certainly several people, by virtue of their personalities and experience at the camp, who were more influential than the others. But there was no feeling, as I had at Strahan, that someone else in the TWS hierarchy was really making the important decisions. There was real feeling at the camp that it was up to us to decide what to do. The decisions made and the procedure used I found interesting and exciting.'(14)

Trainers, however, argued that River Camp organisers were taking advantage of the informal procedures and their better knowledge of the forest and camp. Madeleine Scott wrote: 'Power is about knowledge: the people up-river had knowledge and they used that knowledge as power. ...one day one River Camp organiser claimed that there was insufficient petrol to carry people to an action because he didn't want that action to go ahead. Further investigation revealed ample petrol supplies.'(15)

As individuals and groups who preferred explicit structures and procedures passed through the River Camp, organisers were pressed to adopt formal procedures like having an agenda. But an agenda could be subverted. Madeleine Scott continues: 'When I was in the River Camp we fought to have an issue discussed by the whole camp. But when that item was on the agenda the River Camp organisers who had opposed the discussion failed to turn up to the meeting. That way they had not been part of the consensus and didn't have to abide by the decision'.(16)

River Camp organisers found a powerful voice in the chair, as the following excerpt from a diary kept by Kate Durkin shows: 'One River Camp organiser "facilitated", if you can call it that. He spoke for long periods so the meeting was actually without a facilitator for much of the time. He was not concerned with drawing the meeting together or seeking consensus. When it seemed to me that there was consensus that we should have no action tomorrow and that we should spend the time devising strategies for the next few days, he kept on saying, "Surely there's someone in this meeting who can come up with an idea for an action tomorrow!"'

THE LACK OF A DECISION-MAKING SYSTEM

The odds against protesters establishing a decision-making system were high. Geography was not on the side of those wanting to promote close cooperation and coordination of the protest. The separation of the three groups meant that they seldom met, and this both exacerbated the antagonism and allowed the different systems in each camp to become entrenched. Although TWS, trainers and River Camp organisers had gained power in the protest, TWS still did not open their system to the outsiders. Neither were they keen to include transient Blockaders in any policy decisions. Their complaint about the 'god Consensus' was not really a complaint about consensus at all but a complaint about the constraints that consultation and participation would place on their activities. None of the organisers were keen to compromise. TWS gallantly defended the campaign against the disruptive influence of the uninformed, and trainers nobly fought the TWS "hierarchy" on behalf of democracy and the Blockaders. River Camp organisers looked with disdain on the manoeuvrings of the 'bureaucrats'. The unwillingness to compromise made common ground hard to find.

There will always be struggles for power in an organisation that includes groups with differing views on how to achieve the same goal, so the infighting at the Blockade is neither surprising nor interesting in itself. It is significant only because it indicates that without a decision-making system the groups had no way to resolve their differences.

The success of the campaign and the impressive political impact of the Blockade has obscured the lack of coordination of the protest. Few policies were established before the pandemonium began and the lack of a decision-making system meant policies were nearly impossible to establish once it was underway. This left the Blockade inflexible and unable to respond easily to changing circumstances.

For example, when police attempted to dismantle the protest, turning from their early role of friendly umpire, the Blockade should have responded in a coordinated way. The three groups needed to meet and work out why the police had changed tack and then formulate appropriate training, action tactics and media responses to counter the new thrust. But once the three groups had established mutual suspicion and antagonism, they were unable to do this.

A NEGOTIATED COALITION

TWS had insufficient skilled organisers to run the Blockade on their own and so they had to pass some of the responsibility to the outsiders. TWS was pleased when supporters began to gather around the coming Blockade but they didn't recognise that the newcomers were not simply additional members of their organisation and that they would have to share their power.

To create a coalition the three groups needed to negotiate an agreement before the Blockade began on the policies of the protest, the aims of the Blockade, and the strategies to achieve them. The groups needed to clarify who could propose changes, who must participate in the ensuing discussion, and when a decision was final, in short, a structure for decision making. This would have enabled them to adapt policies or formulate new ones. Each group needed to be able to put aside dogma and preferred styles and seek out mutually acceptable meeting procedures. It was unrealistic to expect unity to develop when the three groups began the protest will little more than an agreement to use a consensus decision-making approach.

WHY WASN'T A DECISION-MAKING SYSTEM SET UP BEFORE

Many of the problems of decision making were anticipated in the paper written in response to the controversy over children at actions. The questions raised in this paper were ignored; but it was more than the pressure of work which swept them under the carpet. Few planners were interested in the apparently esoteric and abstract task of envisaging and implementing a decision-making system. Those that were interested were unable to convince others wary of explicit structures that structure could solve the problems of coordinating the Blockade. To some 'structurelessness' is a virtue, and the spectre of 'structure' reminded some Blockaders of the bureaucracies they were fighting. But 'structurelessness' is the law of the jungle, and it opens an organisation to the domination of charismatic and the articulate. When structures are spelled out people will know when they can participate and who is responsible, and they can challenge abuses of the system.

The need for a Blockade decision-making structure was obscured by the taboo on the examination of who had power and how they came to have it. It was difficult for planners to acknowledge that if they had power in the protest, they also had control over other people. Neither TWS, the trainers, nor the River Camp organisers could distinguish between the exercising of power, and domination and manipulation. Organisers could not reconcile the power they had with their ideals of equality and democracy. To idealists power is tacky.

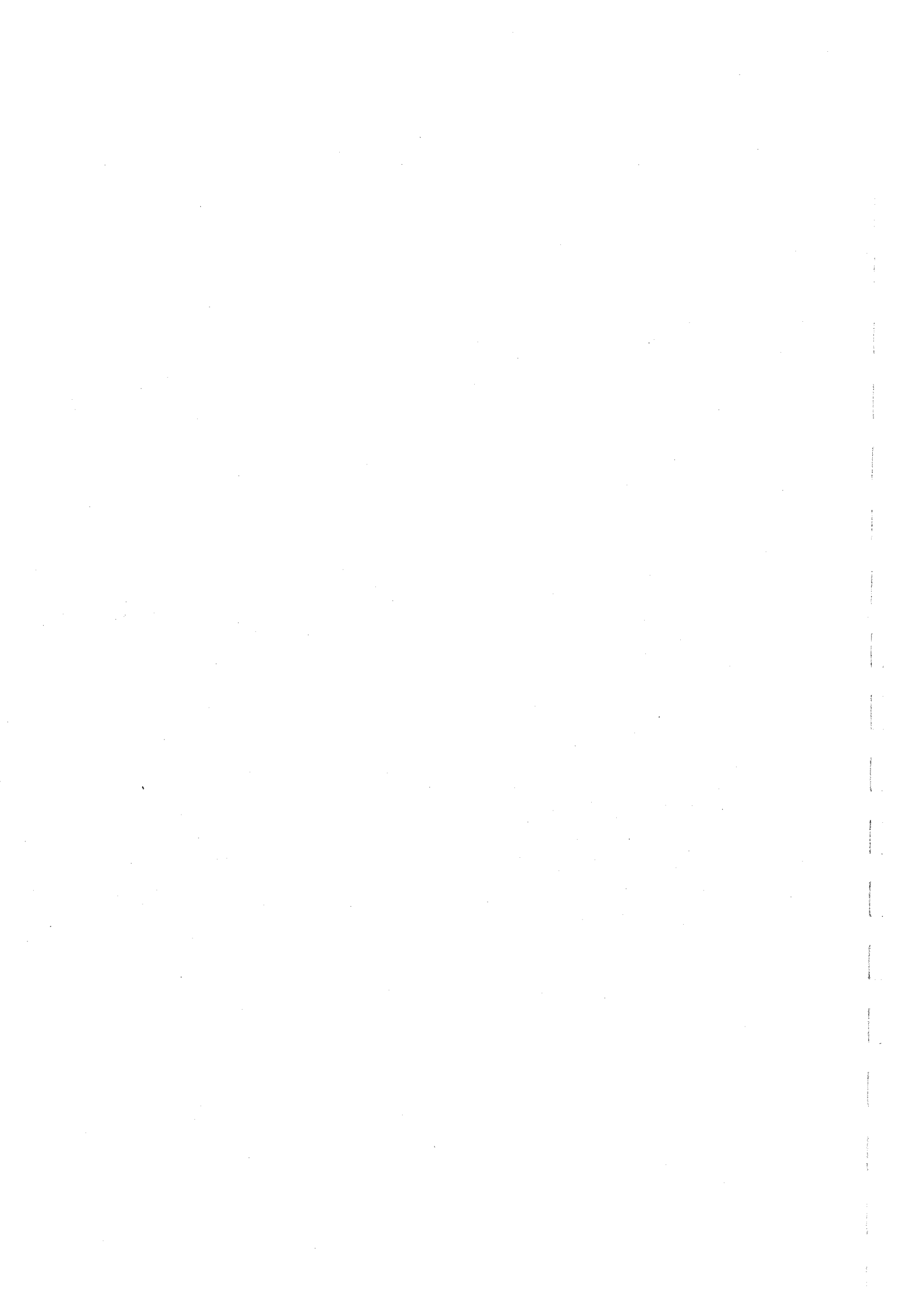
A protest sets out to achieve change. To do this it needs power. The power is generated by the work done and the decisions taken by the groups and individuals who make up the protest. A carefully thought-out decision-making system can ensure that the skills, knowledge and resources of a protest are put together in a way which maintains the internal cohesion and focuses its power on its political objectives.

CONCLUSION

The Blockade benefitted from the image of consensus and co-operation, but this image was a myth. The Blockade was never coordinated properly and so the protest did not pursue a coherent strategy. Observers who thought the Blockade was one voice, one mind, one people based their perception on the well-oiled logistics machine, the nonviolent discipline and the steady lines of rubber rafts confronting the barges loaded with heavy machinery. But there was no agreed

shape to the Blockade. Some protesters were trying to stop the dam by any political means available, to others the Blockade was part of a social revolution to which consensus was the key. Some protesters were arrested in defiance of the trespass law, some set out to bankrupt the police, others set out to put themselves between the bulldozers and the forest hoping to stop the destruction. Some wanted to challenge the HEC wherever they were working in the wilderness, others wanted to concentrate on the river. Without a decision-making system the Blockade could not resolve these differences and run smoothly towards a defined goal. Instead it lurched along, pulled this way and that by the three powerful groups pursuing different goals and unable to co-ordinate their efforts.

[*] There are many workable voting procedures Roberts rules, Joskes etc.. The rigour with which these rules are applied varies from formal to informal.



CHAPTER SEVEN

INTRODUCTION TO PART TWO: CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE - THE STRENGTH OF THE BLOCKADE

The violation of the trespass law at the Franklin was a classic civil disobedience: an open, deliberate, and peaceful violation of a law for a political purpose. Everyone knew that at 9.00 am on 14 December 1982 a number of people would appear out of the bush at the planned site of the dam wall on the Lower Gordon River. The protesters hoped that their violation of the trespass law would draw attention to the Government's plans and provide a focus for stronger opposition. They stood on the bank of the river and waited for the police to arrest them. Offering no resistance and chatting with their arresting officers they climbed on to the police launch. The protesters could not be dismissed as dangerous lawbreakers: people were forced to ask themselves why the law had been defied.

Many people have experienced a conflict between acting according to their beliefs and obeying laws set down by governments. The American philosopher Henry David Thoreau wrote in the 1840s: 'Unjust laws exist; shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavour to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once ?'(1) He acted on the last option.

When a group of people decide they cannot accept a law and then consciously break it, they strike at the general acceptance of the legal system as unquestionable. Because acceptance of the legal system is so strong, a challenge to it has a proportionally strong impact. The effect of civil disobedience is to intensify a confrontation; each side is forced to either back down or to increase their commitment to their position and more people are drawn into the fray

Civil disobedience clearly expresses opposition, but to turn it into an effective protest that will bring about change, protesters must understand the nature, the role, and the public perception of the legal system. This understanding will enable them to anticipate the response of the Government and its agencies to their action and to continue to hold the initiative.

The police, the courts, the jails, and legislation from parliament make up the legal system. This system helps to preserve the 'order' which maintains the position of the powerful. But the actions of the legal system are constrained by the public expectation of impartial law enforcement. So the legal system is pulled two ways trying to be both impartial and carry out its role in preserving the status quo. A civil disobedience protest makes it difficult for the legal system to reconcile these two roles. At times, for example, the police will uphold the rules, at others ignore them and will sometimes contravene them, depending which of the currents, partiality or impartiality, is running most strongly at the time. Individuals in the legal system have some discretionary power which they use to be most partial or more impartial. This reduces the likelihood of consistent behaviour. Protesters at the Franklin were confused about the nature and role of the legal system. They were unable to anticipate the reaction of the police, courts, and jails to their challenge and so were unable to choose between different courses of action. There was some confusion about the aim of the Blockade; most believed it would be an attempt to stop dam works rather than simply breaking the law. Fortunately the Government thought so too.

Governments expecting a protest will often introduce or change legislation to minimise the impact of the protest. The Tasmanian government had the powers a government always has to deal with disturbance and to control protest. The offences of obstruction and creating a public nuisance are just two examples of such laws. If these powers had proved insufficient the government could, after considering the political cost, have fallen back on emergency powers.

To strengthen its hand, the government enacted two new laws. On 2 September 1982 the Tasmanian Parliament passed a bill which revoked large tracts of the Wild Rivers National Park and vested control of the land in the HEC for the purpose of the Franklin Dam(2). On 24 November Parliament approved changes to the Police Offences Act which made trespass an arrestable offence(3), carrying a penalty of up to \$100 or 6 months in jail. Two days later there was an

attempt by Harry Braid, MLC to increase the fine to \$500. But the amendment was not specific to HEC land and was defeated for the unpredictable reason that most MLC's are farmers and they felt that \$500 for trespass on farmland was too severe. This was a missed opportunity for the Government: \$500 could well have discouraged ~~many people from taking part in the Blockade.~~

The Tasmanian Government was left facing a challenge to its authority with legislation that was not severe enough to discourage mass protest.[*]

The following three chapters examine the clash between the Franklin Blockaders and the legal system.

NOTES

[*] This was the case with the large fines threatened by Sir Charles Court which stopped a direct action planned by the Campaign to Save Native Forests at the Alcoa refinery site at Wagerup, Western Australia, in 1978.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND THE COURTS

INTRODUCTION

There is a widely held belief that the legal system acts impartially. Unlike some other protest groups, TWS had access to the legal system through the expertise provided by sympathetic lawyers both within and outside the TWS family. This enabled TWS to take on the Tasmanian Government in the legal arena. The publicity surrounding this legal battle was used to further the aims of the Campaign. The fact that the Blockade had access to the courts served to reinforce in observers and participants a belief in the legal system's neutrality. But, rather than evidence of neutrality, the legal strength of TWS was a reflection of the solid middle-class roots of the Campaign.

The strength of the belief in impartiality encouraged protesters to try to use the legal system to restrain the Tasmanian Government in its moves against them. These attempts were, at times, successful. At other times they created problems of strategy that the Blockade had not anticipated or prepared itself for.

This chapter analyses the preparation and legal initiatives of the Tasmanian Government and the planning and response of the Blockade, and explores which legal moves are appropriate in a direct action.

TWS LEGAL STRATEGY AND LEGAL SUPPORT

Policy and strategy

The expectation of arrests and legal proceedings encouraged Blockade planners to look at the Tasmanian legal situation. Some were bewildered because they knew nothing about the law and others feared it as the Government's most powerful weapon.

In an attempt to prepare themselves and other organisers in the months before the Blockade, the legal advisers wrote briefing papers on general topics like bail and arrest. But the future remained unclear until, in November 1983, the Government showed its hand and changed the trespass law. This left the lawyers only the three hectic weeks before the Blockade began, to study the law, to think about possible strategies and to explain the situation to other organisers. The Blockade started, continued and finished without an explicit legal strategy and without any policy guidelines on legal matters. Although this was little different from most areas of Blockade organisation that required policies, the remote and forbidding mysteries of the law further discouraged most organisers from involving themselves in legal matters. As a result nearly all legal decision-making was left to the lawyers as experts.

In the absence of a legal policy the lawyers' strategy was to use their knowledge and skill to try to thwart the Government's legal initiatives and to use the legal conflict to generate publicity for the Campaign. A TWS lawyer throughout the Blockade, Lincoln Siliakus, said: "The Blockade was a massive publicity campaign; and I consider that the legal system can be used, if you are prepared to be a bit creative, to bring about fantastic publicity."⁽¹⁾ One tactic the lawyers used to gain publicity was to tease Magistrates until they said something stupid. The Magistrates' statements would then be put out as press releases, many of which made excellent copy. ⁽²⁾

Legal support

To cope with the large number of arrestees TWS set up a Legal Support system. This group of people looked after arrestees on their way through the Courts. This support system was administrative, defensive and publicist: it was not combatative. The Legal Support team for the Blockade drew on a pool of about twenty lawyers, four full-time lay legal assistants and countless other helpers. Additional advice was available from eminent lawyers, Professors of Law, and Queen's Counsels.⁽³⁾ The support team wrote a section for the Blockade Handbook

outlining possible offences, procedures before and after arrest, and the possible consequences of conviction.(4) Throughout the Blockade, all protesters had a legal briefing and a question-and-answer session with a lawyer before going into an action. This was a chance for lawyers to pass on information, not a forum for discussion of legal policy or strategy. At the Queenstown Magistrates Court lawyers explained hearing procedures and assisted protesters to enter pleas and make bail applications. Lawyers were also available for the later hearings in Hobart. This meant that with few exceptions, each of the of the one-and-a-half-thousand people arrested at the Blockade had legal representation. This was a relief to most protesters since few had ever appeared in Court before.

The lawyers representing people in Court were backed up by a team of legal assistants in Hobart. An up-to-date record was kept of all arrests. The names of arrestees were sent by telex from Strahan to Hobart. A comprehensive cross-reference system was then used to make sure that each person was represented in Court and visited in prison. Two legal assistants during the Blockade, Leonie Patterson and Patricia Lloyd described the work of the Legal Support staff:

'Most important was the reassuring contact made with Blockaders either in the cells or in Court prior to the sitting. Messages were taken to be relayed to friends, relatives and travel agencies....We maintained a very good working relationship with the Police, both in the jails and the Courts, and with the Prosecution. The benefit of this was enormous and helped to smooth over difficulties when our files arrived late from Queenstown or when people not on our lists were brought before the Courts. As well as court work, every day one of us went with the lawyers to visit the remandees and answer their legal questions. This was much appreciated...Our success was due to attention to desk work. Writing up files, records, and statistics, and answering telephones took an average of 12 hours a day. The Police acknowledged that they were unable to cope with the numbers going through the Courts and professed amazement at our expertise....At the start of the Blockade we were a mixed group of totally untrained, unqualified, enthusiastic amateurs, with no previous experience of the intimidating areas of the Courts, prisons and the Police. At the conclusion of the Blockade we had become a well-trained, confident, and closely knit team that had developed skills of a level that commanded the respect of professionals.'(5)

While the majority trod the beaten path that TWS had made through the Court procedure, there was one way people used their initiative in the legal battle. This was through a public statement in Court. As well as the personal benefit to each individual, sometimes the comments found their way into the media and benefitted the Campaign as a whole.

The legal support system was typical of the way TWS took professional and paternal care of their protesters. They had good reason for doing this, the strong support encouraged inexperienced protesters to take their protest further and go to jail. But the TWS policy created the impression in some protesters that from the moment of arrest on they had only one choice: to go to jail or accept bail. Other direct actions have shown that there are many possible strategies.

THE BATTLE IN THE COURTS

Charges

The Government had also been preparing for the Blockade. They gave control of the land to the HEC and made trespass an arrestable offence.

More than one thousand people were arrested and charged under the new trespass law over the two-and-a-half months of the Blockade, twenty-eight of these on two counts. Most pleaded not guilty on the grounds that they did not recognise the right of the HEC to control land, which in their eyes was still a National Park. This plea was consistent with the TWS redeclaration of the Park which followed the Government's revocation of the Wild Rivers National Park. Some protesters pleaded guilty, either as test cases or because they did not want to risk the possibility of having to return to Tasmania for trial two or three months later. They were fined fifty dollars.

All other uses of the legal system to discourage or punish protesters were based on long-standing legal statutes.

One hundred and sixty people were charged with obstructing a police officer. Eighty-one were charged with both trespass and obstruction. The first arrests for obstruction were on 5 January 1983. The Blockade had promised new tactics in the New Year but the nature of the protests had not really changed. By raising public expectations of a greater conflict TWS had given the police the chance to undermine the respectable image of the Blockade and the police used this opportunity. On 6 January the Mercury ran the headline: 'Charges of Obstructing Police, Dam Action gets more Serious'. The article went on to say: 'the charges of obstructing police are considered to be more serious, because they involve a more physical action than trespassing.'

Twenty-seven protesters were arrested for creating a public nuisance. The nuisance charge was used against people in Strahan attempting to obstruct the movement of heavy machinery. This charge revealed the Government's determination not to have work impeded at all, even if it meant arresting people on a flimsy charge.(6)

National Park regulations, to control camping in National Parks, were used by the Government in late February to evict protesters from all the river camps. No arrests were made, protesters were simply bundled up with their belongings and taken across the Harbour to Strahan.(7) Some people took to the bush and from that time the camps operated secretly. Police continued to evict anyone they found camping in the National Park.

All the charges were different means to one end, to remove protesters from the work-sites and to allow preparation for the dam to continue.

Bail

The normal purpose of bail conditions is to ensure that the defendant returns to Court to be tried. Magistrates have the power to put conditions on bail to reduce the likelihood of the remandee not returning to the Court (for example, daily reporting to a police station, imposing a sum of money as surety, or removal of a passport). They may also impose conditions designed to prevent another offence. For example, the defendant may be deprived of the right to speak to witnesses or alleged accomplices. It is very unusual to impose bail conditions on people who are charged with minor offences such as trespass.(8) But in the same way that the trespass law was designed to allow police to remove protesters from the work sites, the courts were able to impose bail conditions that discouraged protesters from re-entering the HEC land. Protesters who re-entered the HEC land could have been charged with contempt of court, which carried a more severe penalty than trespass.[*]

The conditions of bail varied enormously, some arrestees were released without bail, others were required to leave Western Tasmania within twenty-four hours, but most were required to agree not to 'enter on to, remain on, trespass, lurk, loiter or secrete himself/herself on any land subject to the control of the Hydro Electric Commission and commonly known as the Gordon River Power Development Stage Two'.

The outcome of the charges.

The declaration of the new trespass law served the Government well for some months and enabled them to remove protesters and continue work on the dam project, but the charges didn't stand the test of time.

A TWS lawyer mounted a successful defence of Alison Killen in a test case for trespass.(9) The argument centred around whether the HEC had land-ownership title to the Kelly Basin Road. The question of title affected whether the Magistrates Court could hear the case. Under the Tasmanian Police Offences Act the Magistrates Court has no jurisdiction in cases which involve questions of title to land. Matters of property title are the business of the Supreme Court. But trespass had become an arrestable offence through changes to the Police Offences Act and the Supreme Court could not hear charges under this Act since they were not indictable offences under the criminal code. In order to convict Alison Killen the Court had to be satisfied that

she was arrested on HEC land. Despite the Act of Parliament vesting the disputed land in the HEC, the Commission had never tried to register or take title to that land. This lack of attention to the correct procedures reflects the unchallenged position of the HEC in Tasmanian affairs. The magistrate decided that the Magistrates Court did not have the power to hear the trespass case and the appeal was rejected.(10) The police then dropped all charges relating to Kelly Basin Road.(11)

After the Killen case Premier Gray wanted to move amendments to the Police Offences Act, to give the Court the power to deal with trespass charges. But other MP's felt that the retrospectivity involved in the proposed amendments was unacceptable and refused to support them.(12) In the test cases involving those charged in the Lower Gordon area a TWS lawyer successfully put forward similar arguments based on the definitions of river banks and use of waterways controlled by the Tasmanian Water Act 1957.(13) All trespass charges were subsequently dropped by the police on the grounds that there were 'real questions as to whether the land was vested in the HEC.'(14)

Following the test case for obstruction, in which the Magistrate held that there was no duty that the policeman had been performing which had been obstructed by the defendant, the Police dropped all the obstruction charges. In the nuisance test case Phillipa Micklin was found not guilty and the case dismissed. Except for a small number of cases all other charges were then dropped by the Police.(15)

The dropping of charges indicates the dubious grounds on which the legal opposition to the Blockade was based. The Government may have gambled that successful defences would not be mounted, but, apart from revenge, it did not matter whether charges were dropped or successfully prosecuted as they had already served their purpose: the protesters had been prevented from obstructing the work. The legal system, through the new trespass legislation and the unusual bail conditions, had helped the Government achieve its political aim of continuing work on the dam.

WAS THE TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT'S USE OF THE LEGAL SYSTEM EFFECTIVE?

The Government's use of the legal system was guided by its desire to ensure that work on the dam proceeded unhindered. They used trespass, obstruction and nuisance laws to make quick arrests so protesters did not get a chance to stop work and be able to claim a tactical victory.

The Tasmanian Government was then able to use the imposition of bail to help achieve their goals. TWS observers in the Court noticed throughout the Blockade that when difficult decisions had to be made Magistrates would often disappear into their private rooms for a time. This led observers to suspect they were seeking advice.(16) Whether this is true or not, there is no doubt that during the Blockade the Magistrates were able to apply bail conditions that fulfilled the aims of the Government. Protesters who refused to accept bail in Queenstown were remanded to Risdon Jail. A few days later they were taken to Magistrate's Court in Hobart where, if they refused bail again, it was imposed by court order. Magistrates in Queenstown had the same power to impose bail but, by remanding arrestees at their first court appearance, the Government could be seen to be reacting firmly to the threat to law and order, and by imposing bail in Hobart they could keep the pressure off the prison system.(17)

The laws the Government chose were strong enough to keep the dam project going but not so harsh as to be conspicuous and alienate those supporters who weren't prepared to see the Government use what, to their mind, would be undue repression. Had restraint not been effective the Government may have been tempted to show more steel, but this would have cost them the support of the squeamish, and strengthened the position of those Liberals who wanted to force Gray to compromise.

The arrest-and-bail strategy had some success: Tasmanians were persuaded that dam work had not been interrupted. Had public opinion and political victories in Tasmania been the deciding factors in the dispute the Government may well have defeated the Blockade using the legal

system as they did. But it was not solely a Tasmanian issue nor solely a legal conflict, the battle was being fought on other fronts.

There was some confusion among both the protesters and the Government as to what was the best strategy to pursue. With hindsight we can see that it was in the Government's interest to concentrate on continuing the work, and it was in the Blockade's interest to focus on the status of the land. Unintentionally, the Government maintained the focus of public attention on the status of the land, the crux of the TWS campaign. If the Government had used obstruction rather than trespass this may have turned public attention towards the continuing work.

Shortly before the election the Government made its biggest mistake when police were directed to evict people camping in the National Park. It is difficult to imagine what other action could have benefitted the Campaign more. The tactical overkill of the evictions put the Blockade back on the front pages of the Tasmanian papers and coverage on the mainland improved markedly.(18) It is ironic that Gray was so ill-advised as to leave what could have been his most effective tactic until a time when it actually benefitted the Blockade. If camping had been prohibited before the Blockade began, actions in the Lower Gordon area would have been extremely difficult. Without a permanent river camp, surveillance of HEC works and the planning of protest actions would have been severely hampered.

The mistakes of the Gray Government have been studied by other Governments in Australia. They are now prepared and well-equipped to deal with intervention protests. In subsequent direct actions of a similar style: the Roxby Downs, Daintree and Errinundra blockades, quick removal of protesters became a standard response of the State. This prevented protesters having access to work sites and the Governments used the most inconspicuous charges in their repertoire to control the situation and maintain their reasonable and benevolent image.[**]

BLOCKADE INITIATIVES.

As well as looking after protesters and seeking publicity, several times the TWS lawyers went on the attack.

Injunctions

There were several proposals to use legal means to constrain the actions of the skipper of the 'Cape Martin'. The 'Cape Martin' was used to tow barges of HEC equipment up the Gordon River to Warners Landing. On each journey the boat and barge ploughed through the string of rubber rafts across the river and on many occasions protesters' lives were endangered.

The first time this happened TWS lawyers, without wide tactical consultation with other Blockade organisers, publicised their intention to take legal action.(19) A few days later, when the 'Cape Martin' once more broke through the river blockade, legal action was again proposed.

A different legal action with a similar purpose was considered to restrain the actions of the HEC bulldozer drivers. Bruce Lavender describes the situation:

'The bulldozer drivers were actively endangering people's lives. One person climbed a tree which had been uprooted but was propped against another one. One of the bulldozer drivers seemed to delight in working close to this tree even though he was told that this was causing the tree to rock endangering Andrew's life. Another person ran in front of a bulldozer and grabbed hold of the blade. Instead of stopping and waiting for nearby police to make an arrest the driver tried to dislodge him by raising and lowering the blade rapidly. Several others, running in front of the bulldozer in full sight of the driver, found themselves in very dangerous situations as the driver kept pushing over trees rather than stopping. It seemed to us that the HEC workers were losing patience with the Blockade game. After we had been arrested and released many people urged us to document the day's incidents for a press release. As we were being interviewed someone, perhaps the lawyers, decided that it would be a good idea to get sworn affidavits in the hope of taking out a restraining order or court injunction to stop the work on the grounds that our lives were being endangered.'(20)

Most people's first reaction was to support the injunction proposal thinking legal action would be good publicity. Some supported it because they were frightened by the new risks up-river: to find that participation in the Blockade might involve physical injury was contrary to the safe image of the Blockade. For these people participation in actions without guaranteed safety was out of the question and they hoped an injunction would make the Blockade safe again.

The proposal to take out an injunction was subject to wide consultation. After one-and-a-half days of heated argument, the question was dropped as people found out that, if legal proceedings started, it would have been illegal to publicise other events in which lives were endangered. Later it was discovered, after seeking the advice of other TWS lawyers, that due to a legal technicality, it was impossible to take out an injunction anyway.***] Although these facts resolved the debate they did not solve the questions which had been raised about Blockader safety or about whether this sort of legal initiative is appropriate in a direct action.

Writs

The other legal move of the TWS lawyers was to take out writs against the police. During the Blockade there were a series of incidents in which protesters were falsely imprisoned. TWS lawyers immediately took out writs for false imprisonment. The lawyers argued: 'the police will always try out methods of going beyond their legal powers. They will test their opposition to see what they will do. So when the police transgress the law even to a minor degree it is valuable to take firm and effective action to show them that you won't let them get away with it.'(21) The writs for false imprisonment had an immediate dampening effect on such actions by the police. The effectiveness of this swift response was increased by the uncertainty of the police. The rank-and-file believed that there were a variety of legal problems with the arrests they were making, but they had to rely on their senior officers whose advice in this situation they distrusted.(22) Their disquiet was vindicated by the inability of the police prosecutor to get any of the charges to stick.

A CONSIDERATION OF BLOCKADE LEGAL INITIATIVES.

Guilty or not guilty?

Almost all protesters pleaded not guilty to the trespass charge. The not-guilty plea made sense to most people as it was consistent with their reason for being in the forest. Circumstances at the Blockade meant that pleas could be chosen solely on moral grounds. In other direct actions there may be other considerations that will influence which plea is chosen.

When the State frames a special law to make opposition illegal as at the Franklin, or when protesters choose to break an existing law, must protesters always try to 'prove' that they were not-guilty? After all the law is an expression of the State's position and the opponent of the State is always 'guilty'. People at the Blockade would have agreed that it was possible to be both legally guilty and morally not-guilty, but the effort made to be proved not-guilty and the joy shown when all the charges were dropped suggests that Blockaders felt the need for the 'impartial' legal system to vindicate and endorse their stand. Circumstances at the Blockade meant that pleas could be chosen solely on moral grounds. In other direct actions other considerations may influence which plea is chosen.

Scott Kennedy in his article 'Civil Disobedience and Legal Strategy'(23) argues that some US civil disobedience movements have suffered 'death by trial' as a result of trying to sustain drawn out legal proceedings to prove innocence. Kennedy argues that too many resources are consumed in such legal battles and that the initial reasons for protesting are often lost in the meantime. He cites the example of those arrested at the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant in 1977. Two years later they were still battling it out in the courts. This had three negative effects. First, defendants felt abandoned by others in the campaign and unsure what their sentence would be. The trials, spread out over months and years, reduced the solidarity among defendants and increased the likelihood of people doing time in jail alone. Second, these people became reluctant to join in further direct actions. Third, the pleas of not-guilty and the attempts to defend arrestees only moved the fight into the courtroom, a

battleground on which protesters had little control and little chance of taking the initiative. Long and complicated legal entanglements served to exhaust people in the movement and confuse the public. Kennedy argues that the most clear and powerful action may be to plead guilty and request sentencing as soon as possible. The trial can still be used to make public declarations about the motivations for the action.

The decision about pleas should be made carefully after considering how the cases and their outcomes will affect the overall campaign. The following questions may be useful in choosing a plea: Are the penalties severe or minor? Does the campaign have adequate legal knowledge to pursue cases over a long period of time? Will the resources of both people and money used to sustain drawn out legal battles be diverted from another more important campaign area? Will the pleas be consistent with other political stands being taken on the issue? Will the pleas confuse the public or help them to understand the purpose of the action?

The Blockade had the luxury of skilled and competent lawyers, and the short and conclusive court cases were not an intolerable drain on Campaign resources. The not-guilty plea was consistent with the public stand of TWS over the disputed land and it helped reinforce the aim of the Campaign in the public mind. For these reasons the not-guilty plea of the Blockaders was not inappropriate.

Re-offending

If the bail conditions were, like the trespass law, a legal mechanism used by the Tasmanian Government to control the protest, then why did protesters not pressure the Government by challenging the bail conditions and re-entering the land given to the HEC? First, protesters had given their word to the court that they would fulfill the bail conditions, the preparation had emphasised the moral duty of disobeying the trespass law but, in the same way that it did not discuss the distinction between being morally not guilty and legally guilty, the possibility of breaking this apparent promise was not brought home to protesters. Second, contempt of court carries not only a fine but a possible prison sentence. There was already some nervousness about the possible repercussions of a conviction for trespass, and challenging bail would have required more commitment from protesters and clear leadership from organisers. Third, unlike trespass where the Government had clearly defined the border between disobedience and challenge, the imposition of bail was very unpredictable: seventeen different types of bail conditions were applied throughout the Blockade.(24) This was partly because bail criteria in Tasmania are vague anyway.(25) Magistrates are meant to exercise their judgement in the imposition of sentences and bail and the political pressure of the Blockade revealed that some magistrates were prepared to go to some lengths to clamp down on the protest, others were more aware of the public expectation of impartiality. The legal validity of imposing the many types of bail came into question in early February following two Tasmanian Supreme Court decisions relating to bail conditions prohibiting or limiting driving while on remand for drink-driving charges. In both cases the judge held that the restrictive conditions were inappropriate because they went far beyond ensuring the re-appearance of the defendant in Court. After the Supreme Court decision at least two Magistrates refused to impose the conditions.(26)

It didn't take a legal education to realise that the bail conditions were intended to support the trespass law and keep the work sites clear of protesters, but the unpredictability and variety of bail conditions kept protesters from seeing that bail, like the law, could also be disobeyed in a way that would draw attention to the Government's use of the legal system and build public support for the campaign.

Safety and public sympathy

The proposed legal initiatives against the HEC and the skipper of the Cape Martin reveal the underlying assumption that nonviolent actions do not involve any risk to the activists: if we are nonviolent then they will be too. The logical extension of this assumption is that the legal system can be used to make the opposition play by the rules. The assumption of safety is based on misconceptions about nonviolent direct actions and the basis for public sympathy and support.

As Alan Cumming says in Understanding Nonviolence: 'by choosing a nonviolent form of struggle we are defining our parameters of action - not the opponents. Our decision to be nonviolent does not define anything for the opponent. Indeed it is probable that the opponent will react violently, as governments are founded on, and familiar with violence in all its forms. Our being nonviolent does not mean we will not be hurt. It means we will not behave violently.'⁽²⁷⁾ Blockaders would have agreed in theory with this argument, but the stunned surprise which struck some Blockaders when they heard that violence was in the air suggests that their understanding of the nature of confrontation had not been deepened by the discussion of this point in training workshops. The expectation that the Blockade would be safe was too strong.

The second problem with the proposals for legal action was that the Blockaders had put themselves into dangerous situations. The credibility and perceived commitment of Blockaders could have been seriously undermined had Blockaders sought the protection of the legal system. In a direct action the dynamics of public support are quite precariously balanced. A successful direct action is one which maintains and increases public support in the long run. Public sympathy and support tend to go to the side which goes knowingly into a risky situation. People in rafts being run down by an HEC boat will be perceived as committed and determined. Further support will probably be forthcoming if they stand firm against harsh treatment from the other side. If the aim of a direct action is to persuade the public of a point of view using the legal system to minimise the risks may well be counter-productive.

Can a legal victory be a strategic victory?

Despite the difficulties, activists should not be reticent about using the legal system. A good win in court can strengthen the political position of a campaign, but the issues have to be chosen carefully as legal victories will not always benefit a campaign.

The writs against false imprisonment were both legally successful and strategically advantageous. The legal victory was swift. As soon as police broke the law, the writs were issued and they were effective. The police and, by implication, the Government were caught bending the rules and this was of strategic value to the Campaign. The proposed 'Cape Martin' injunction on the other hand, would not have benefitted the Campaign even if TWS had won the court battle. First, there was some doubt whether the 'Cape Martin' skipper had broken the law. Second, the complex maritime laws gave little hope of a speedy outcome. A long tussle in court would have wasted valuable time and money and the sight of Blockaders running for safety behind the legal system would have weakened the Campaign's political position.

The role of the lawyer in direct actions.

The confusion over some legal matters was partly a result of the role the lawyers were playing in the Campaign. No policies were ever developed to assist the lawyers and so they were not only legal advisors but also initiators of legal moves. The blank cheque given to the lawyers could have led to some monumental strategic blunders, but the key lawyer had worked very closely with TWS over a long period before the Blockade began. He understood the Campaign and the aims of the Blockade very clearly and so his ideas were usually in harmony with TWS aims. Not all campaigns will find the suggestions of their legal advisors so much in harmony with their strategy.

Legal experts should be seen as consultants who can give legal advice. There will always be a tendency to leave strategy decisions to lawyers because most people find the legal system confusing and intimidating. But a distinction must be made between giving a legal opinion and taking part in a strategy decision. It is important to ensure that the lawyers understand clearly the aims of the direct action; and that issues such as pleas, bail, reactions to police violence and so on, are well thrashed out before beginning. Legal advice can help predict whether a legal initiative might be successful in court, but organisers and strategists must gauge the impact of the legal initiative on the overall campaign. If advice suggests that a legal action is winnable but campaign strategists feel that even a win in court won't benefit the campaign then legal action should not be taken. In a direct action there are interactions with the legal system every step of the way and each one will require both a legal and a political judgement.

Civil disobedience: the need for policy

Civil disobedience can take many forms, but once you have challenged the legal system how much do you then cooperate with the authorities? Vietnam Moratorium protesters went limp in the streets and had to be carried to the police vans. More than one hundred women at Pine Gap told police their name was Karen Silkwood (a US anti-nuclear activist). Suffragettes in Britain went on hunger strikes in prison, and later, in further defiance refused water as well.

There was no agreement among Franklin Blockaders about the extent to which non-cooperation should be taken. Going limp was discussed but was, in the end, discouraged. Some protesters accepted bail, others refused. Some felt that the protest would be served best by people staying in jail indefinitely. Others encouraged people to come out after a few days. This lack of a non-cooperation policy could have been a problem.

Some protests have been hampered by disagreement over this issue. Protesters at the occupation of the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant in the USA in 1977 fell out over the degree to which they should cooperate with the National Guard. Spilts developed in the protest group and future direct actions at Seabrook were weakened.(28) The Karen Silkwoods at Pine Gap had not decided when or if to give their real names. When police used force to get the information, the Silkwoods had to make a difficult personal and strategic decision in isolation. In the confusion the tactical force of the initial stand was weakened.(29)

Fortunately lack of preparation did not undermine the strength of the protest at the Franklin. Because protesters usually cooperated with the authorities after their arrest, their solidarity was not threatened. Unlike Seabrook the ideological pressure to confront the State at every step was not strong. Having set the precedent of limiting non-cooperation to refusal of bail, the protest was characterised by the rapid progress of protesters through the system. For some a short protest fitted well with other demands on their time and for most there was no urgency to confront the legal system as a whole. Few protesters pressured TWS to escalate the level of non-cooperation. Instead of obeying police, they could have refused to be photographed and refused to give their real names. They could have fasted in prison. They could have gone from Risdon back to the river and trespassed again. The escalation of the non-cooperation would have raised the temperature of the confrontation but would it have strengthened the Campaign's already strong political position? Franklin Campaign strategists saw no necessity to escalate the non-cooperation, as the Blockade was not a last-ditch stand and by late January the Campaign's focus had moved to the Federal election.

The TWS Campaign was built around the status of the land as World Heritage. The responses to the Government's use of the legal system reinforced the TWS campaign. Despite being forced to respond to legal moves initiated by the Government, TWS was able to come out of the legal tussle in front on points.

Each response of the Blockade to the Government's use of the legal system was consistent with the initial refusal to recognise the right of the HEC to own, control or use the land: the park was redeclared; protesters asserted the right to be there; they pleaded not-guilty to charges of trespass; they refused to sign bail conditions; they went to jail; and when camping was prohibited they refused to move and had to be carried away by police.

CONCLUSION

The track arrestees took through the legal system was well-defined and they were well-supported by TWS. It was a strategically inflexible path, but this inflexibility protected the Blockade from the lack of policy which had arisen, partly because organisers left legal matters to the experts, and partly because the nature of the legal system was not understood.

If the protesters had been clear about the contradiction between the two roles of the legal system then policy could have been made; such dilemmas as that between being morally not-guilty and legally guilty would not have arisen and new tactics could have been prepared.

As the protesters expected, the Government used the legal system to harass the protest. the arrest-and-bail strategy did not secure victory for Gray even though it allowed work to continue.

A well-judged civil disobedience steers a careful path between insufficient resistance and a protest that is so dramatic that it draws attention to itself rather than the issue. The Blockade, with its implicit policy limiting non-cooperation to arrest and bail refusal, found this path and the issue was broadcast to the nation.

NOTES

[*] The ability of magistrates to use their power in support of political rather than 'legal' ends was also illustrated when two Tasmanian aborigines, who did not want to go to jail and were willing to sign the agreement not to go back to the disputed land, were refused bail and sent to Risdon. At the same hearing white protesters, who also did not want to go to jail, were allowed to sign the agreement and were released on bail.(30)

[**] At Roxby Downs: failure to cease loitering;
at Errinundra: The Victorian government introduced new forest regulations which prohibited people from being within 200m of a timber harvesting operation.

[***] Any case which is before a court is protected from speculation and publicity in the press by law. This called 'sub judice'. The law which made the injunction impossible was one which forbids legal action directly against state instrumentalities.

CHAPTER NINE

UNDERSTANDING THE POLICE: THE VALUE OF DIPLOMACY

INTRODUCTION

Both TWS and the Tasmanian police force worked to create the impression of friendly relations between police and protesters and the public image of both groups was improved by the appearance of harmony they achieved.

The protesters did not recognise the conflict hidden behind the facade of friendliness and were surprised when the police force worked to neutralise and break the protest.

Protesters did not share an understanding of the role of the police force in enforcing political decisions. Nor did they understand that friendly relations with police would not ensure their safety or prevent violent tactics being employed by police. So when the police moved away from the friendly role they had adopted under the media eye, many protesters were shocked. Blockaders continued their protest under this new pressure and tried to expose underhand police tactics, but these attempts were inconsistent and ineffective.

FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE POLICE FORCE

Early on TWS decided to pursue friendly relations with individual police and the police force. Bob Brown explained why: 'We should disregard the new laws if necessary. Yet we must do so in peace and allow the police, who are ordered to uphold those laws, to apprehend us, that is their job and we have no quarrel with them ...our stand is against the velvet-chaired, unfortunate and rigid men pursuing power from their Hobart offices.'⁽¹⁾ TWS overtures to the police gained the tacit support of the Tasmanian Police Association who called on Premier Gray to stop making inflammatory remarks about the Blockade after headlines like 'PROTEST BY GREENIES COULD RESULT IN BLOODSHED; PREMIER'⁽²⁾

TWS met with senior police to discuss the protest. At an official level relations were cordial, but the police, reluctant to trust information from TWS, remained sceptical that nonviolence would prevail and took precautions against sabotage.[*]

Training workshops encouraged Blockaders to see the person behind the uniform, not to view individual police as the enemy. People were encouraged to be helpful to police, and this friendliness was mutual: 'A lasting memory of camp life is the visit of four policemen in a patrol car. Blue lights flashing in the gathering dusk, three of them got out of the car and, having been assured there would be no photos, the blue lights went off, the motley band of guitarists, violinist, flautist, banjo player and tin whistle player set to, and the police joined in the dancing.'⁽³⁾ When the protest began the police force appointed a Liaison Officer who worked around Strahan Camp and the Information Centre. The presence of a police officer in the Information Centre meant TWS could have few secrets, but it avoided the problems of witch-hunting police informers. Arrests did not undermine the goodwill: some Blockaders arranged with their arresting officer to go bushwalking when they got out of jail, arrestees and arresting officers had photos taken together with each others' gear on, and the police began giving each 100th arrestee a little something: a toy bulldozer or a can of deodorant.

THE BENEFITS OF FRIENDLY RELATIONS

TWS gained some benefits from the relationship with the police force, but the success of this tactic depended on the presence of the media. Because they were on show and because they had to match the Blockader's inoffensiveness, police officers were on their best behaviour in the early days of the Blockade. One of the most striking images of the Blockade was people smiling and being polite to the police who arrested them. Not only did this image encourage people to participate but it undermined Gray's attempt to make law and order the main issue. Their

courtesy set Blockaders apart from chanting, banner-waving ratbags in the minds of 'middle Australia' and, with the conflict between police and protesters defused, public attention could focus on the dams issue.

Friendly relations with police provided Blockaders with some protection from potentially violent pro-dam locals. Police called regularly at Strahan Camp to check Blockade security. On one occasion two car-loads of angry pro-dammers were followed within minutes by police. The pro-dammers were asked to leave and the police stayed on to chat to Blockaders. Police were keen to press charges when attacks on Blockaders did occur, charging a young man after a scuffle in Strahan Camp on New Years Eve and when Bob Brown was assaulted his assailants were also charged.

The friendly relations policy exploited divisions within the police force. Not all police were keen to promote Gray's pro-dam cause. The large number of police involved in the Blockade included a cross-section of the views of the polarised Tasmanian community ; some police secretly wore No-Dams badges. Many police felt the arrests were on shakey legal ground and distrusted the advice of senior police. These factors, together with the friendly and respectful attitude of protesters, made the police reluctant to use heavy-handed tactics. South Australian authorities learned from the Tasmanian experience and set out to ensure that there would be no weakening of police commitment during the Roxby Downs-Blockade in 1983. One of the Roxby police wrote : '...the last thing the department wanted was confrontation from within. Nobody wanted to duplicate the ...experience at the Franklin...where police actually fought amongst themselves.'(4)

NEW POLICE TACTICS.

The appointment of a new Minister of Police in January coincided with a change in police behaviour. The police began to attempt to undermine the Blockade. The longer the Blockade continued the more important it became to Gray stop it, and his increasing determination was reflected in police tactics. They laid careful plans that would disrupt the Blockade and allow work to continue. They also began to intimidate Blockaders.

The Bulldozer operation

A series of well-planned moves ensured that the first bulldozer arrived unimpeded by protesters. In the early hours of the morning, telephone and telex lines to the TWS Information Centre were cut and radio communication was jammed. Blockaders in Strahan knew the bulldozer was on the way, but could not contact scouts along the route or alert those at the camp of its imminent arrival. Police placed a road block on a bridge between the camp and the township preventing large numbers of Blockaders coming to obstruct the bulldozer. Other police escorted it safely into the HEC compound on Strahan wharf.

The next day the Mercury reported that the Police Minister, '...was at Strahan yesterday with the Commissioner of Police on a visit which was planned several weeks ago to observe police operations in the area.'(5) While it is not known who cut the wires, there is no doubt that the police were part of a co-ordinated operation. This extra-legal activity was given a gold star by the Mercury in a front page article headlined: 'Police get dozer to harbour'.(6) TWS sunk its chance of exposing the wire-cutting operation when, on the same day, a mainland branch released to papers the more 'newsworthy' story of a survey on voting patterns.

An Attempt to Impose Police Bail

In late January, the failure of a police initiative revealed how closely the police and government were co-operating. On the 27th, the police were expecting the usual handful of trespassers, instead they collected sixty-five. These arrestees spent the day in the rain in the compound behind the HEC camp. In the evening, when all the protesters had been brought in, the police inspector informed them that instead of being taken to Strahan, they would be dumped back at the Gordon River camp under police bail[**] forcing TWS to bear the cost of getting them to the court in Queenstown. The inspector claimed that protesters could be bailed against their will and also that the large boat needed to transport the sixty-five back to Strahan had broken down. The protesters began to chant: 'No Bail! No Bail!', and decided to go limp if they were forcibly transferred to the River Camp. This seemed like a good tactic with only seven police and sixty-five protesters.

The protesters had now been standing out in the cold and rain for eight hours. Concerned for their safety, the inspector allowed them inside the HEC huts to warm up. A doctor, called from the River Camp, diagnosed twenty-one cases of exposure one of these particularly severe. It was apparent that the police inspector was unhappy about the orders he had been given, and, after arguments with his superiors, found a boat to take those with exposure to Strahan. He told one protester of his sympathy with the goals of the campaign and that he was impressed with protesters behaviour. The other Blockaders continued to refuse police bail and were shipped to Strahan the next day.(7)

As all this was happening, Robin Gray was telling an ABC interviewer: '...the Blockade down here at the Gordon River site has collapsed. The Blockaders...have been sheltering in HEC huts overnight because of the extreme cold and wet that they've been experiencing. The Blockade will end naturally within a few days and the whole nonsense will be over.'(8) The Mercury ran a story that day headed: 'Arrests continue: 63 freed on bail'. The story said: 'Sixty people were arrested at Warner's Landing and the dam site, but were set free on police bail because bad weather and reduced manpower stopped police bringing them out of the area. They are expected to appear in Queenstown Court on Tuesday.'(9) A report in the Launceston Examiner on the 29th pinpoints the source of this information: 'reports released through the Premier's Department in Hobart late on Thursday night indicated that the Blockaders had asked for shelter at the HEC camp.'(10) In fact, the Blockade had not collapsed, no Blockader accepted police bail, none were 'set free', and none had 'asked for shelter'.

Physical Intimidation

Early in the Blockade the river had been neutral ground, and police had turned a blind eye to the chains of rubber rafts which met each shipment of equipment to Warners Landing. In February police began arresting people on the Gordon River itself. On the 16th, when the motorised barge the 'Kalunda' arrived at the string of rafts, police pulled plugs from rafts, and used gaff hooks to tip people into the near-freezing water. They impounded a runabout and a rowing boat that had gone to rescue swimmers and arrested the occupants.(11)

The next time the 'Kalunda' came up-river, tactics on both sides changed. Blockaders took to the water in wetsuits so police could not confiscate rubber rafts. Greg Sheehan give his account of this event:

'Even before the 'Kalunda' was in sight many police boats arrived to clear us from the water. Boats roared and crashed into swimmers. I watched a boat collide with a friend. The driver then came full throttle towards me. The force of the collision pushed me deep into the water. I emerged to see the leering face of the police officer who crashed into me. "Oh, you're still with us", he said grinning. The police continued to drive their boats in a frenzy - circling, charging and crashing into swimmers. The police didn't try to pull us from the water, or threaten us with arrest. They were content to intimidate us until we left of our own accord. I called out to a policeman: "Doesn't it worry you that you might hurt somebody?" "Get out of the water then", was his reply.'(12)

EXPECTATIONS OF BLOCKADERS

Protesters expected the police to protect them from injury. They also expected the media to pounce on incidents where officers of the law stepped over the mark, and so saw no need to develop a strategy to counter a potential police push against the Blockade. The push, when it came, created a lot of confusion. Their expectations of the police force reflected their assumptions about society, rather than an understanding of civil disobedience.

Public Outcry

There had been no thought given to the best way to expose the the political use of the police force, and so the Blockade failed to exploit instances of partisan activity. By mid-January, when the police were stepping up their efforts against the Blockade, the media had lost interest in details of daily events, and none of the police's questionable activity raised a ripple in the press. In a frantic effort to re-inspire the indifferent media, TWS released press statements which alleged police complicity in dirty tricks over the bulldozer incident.

When TWS accused police of cutting communication lines to the Information Centre in Strahan, it was the Police Association that got a sympathetic hearing in the Launceston Examiner: 'The Police Association is considering legal action over allegations that police cut telephone and telex lines...(it considers) the allegations were grossly provocative and it would consult its solicitor about them...(it also feels) the allegations were an insult to the integrity of the police involved in the South West operation'.(13) This tone of wounded dignity was appropriate, after all TWS themselves had reinforced the idea that police were impartial and uninvolved, and could not expect to overturn that image with a single press statement.

It is possible to exploit blatant examples of police support for the other side and the police themselves are aware of this. In a review of the events at Roxby in 1983 one officer wrote: 'Police blundered in committing a vehicle to apparent support of a company blockade... a police car was placed on the road and strategically blocked a gap behind a company truck, through which protesters cars would have flowed. The situation was one in which the police could not take sides and had to maintain their brief of keeping the peace. Fortunately for police the vehicle on the road became insignificant in the day's tumultuous events.'(14)

Official complaints

Complaints were made about many incidents but they were ineffective. For example, following the attempt to force police bail on protesters, TWS called for an inquiry into the treatment of protesters. A Statutory Declaration was drawn up on behalf of the 65 protesters and submitted to the Ombudsman's Office and the Police Department. Neither department responded.

There were no policy guidelines about whether to make official complaints. After another incident in which police went too far, TWS lawyers encouraged Blockaders to draw up Statutory Declarations, arguing that filing complaints would restrain the police. Other TWS people discouraged the complaints because they doubted that the incident had occurred, then said that the protesters had provoked it and finally argued that complaints would worsen relations with police or cause adverse publicity.(15) In general those who supported the filing of official complaints had little time themselves to pursue the matter and when a Blockader ignored criticism and filed a complaint, with no one to follow it up, it got lost in the system.

TWS could have increased their chances of provoking a public outcry or of restraining police through official complaints if they had understood from the start that it would be necessary and had prepared themselves to counter-attack. A clear policy of filing and following up complaints combined with appropriate press releases could have exposed police partisanship and strengthened the Campaign.

Standing Firm and Physical Safety

When physical intimidation was discussed in training workshops Trainers explained that to backdown in the face of violence would invite further repression. They suggested that Blockaders should stand firm and continue the protest. The TWS attitude to the police and training workshops, which had emphasised nonviolence, combined inadvertently to create the impression that no one would get hurt when they stood firm. At times Blockaders risked their lives certain that the guardians of law and order would intervene. For these people the Blockade was a crash course in the reality of civil disobedience.

Protesters put themselves in danger in an attempt to stop the 'Cape Martin' which was towing the first bulldozer to Warner's Landing. The boat ploughed through the string of rubber rafts stretched across the river, running over a woman in the middle of the line. She resurfaced, fortunately unharmed. Moments later, the 'Cape Martin' drove over a scuba-diver near Warner's Landing. In a similar incident, a few days later, someone was nearly crushed against the wharf at Warner's Landing. Blockaders argued that police should have prevented the skipper of the 'Cape Martin' from aiming the barge at protesters and many felt that legal action should be taken.(16)

The expectation of police protection remained even after boats and barges had been bursting through river blockades for over a month. But Blockaders continued to plan dangerous actions on the false assumption that police would intervene.(17)

CONCLUSION

It is advantageous to have friendly relations with the police force. Media coverage of amicable contact between police and protesters will increase public support and generate helpful sympathy among police. Confrontation with police will alienate many potential supporters.

Insubordination in the police force is rare, although the unsuccessful attempt to enforce police bail shows that, under special circumstances, protesters can exploit cracks in the system. What is more likely is that officers who are sympathetic to the protest they are policing, will obey their orders but exercise some discretion.

The benefits of friendly diplomatic relations with police can obscure the fact that the police force will serve the interests of the State. During the Blockade the police worked with Gray and the HEC to ensure that construction of the dam was not interrupted. Initially police dealt with the Blockade in a friendly, protective and apparently neutral manner. But in response to the Campaign's continued success they moved to an aggressive policy designed to end the protest. Some protesters, who had believed the rhetoric of diplomacy, were shocked when the police force showed its hidden face.

Nothing is more likely than police activity to dismantle a successful protest. The severity of their tactics will depend on the eagerness of politicians to break the protest, the resources made available to them, and the extent to which they are in the public eye. As time went by at the Franklin, politicians became more determined, and the police, who were unable to maintain a large enough force in the South West to neutralise the protest and were no longer in front of the TV cameras, turned from arrest and removal of protesters to running them down in boats.

Police in Australia have learned from the Franklin Blockade. The South Australian police review of the Franklin and Roxby police operations shows that they are now more aware of the dynamics of civil disobedience protests and the need to conceal their political role. The 'Operation Protection' reports stress the need to appear neutral and let the protesters have a 'fair go'. Police at Roxby established liaison with all the protagonists: protesters, the mining company, local aborigines and the people of Andamooka. This sophisticated public presence did not diminish the ability or readiness of the South Australian police to use force against the Roxby protesters. One member of the police dog squad commented: 'most dog handlers would have liked a little more physical action'.(18)

What can be done to gain both the benefits of a diplomatic friendship and to maintain the ability to expose police actions against a protest? Individual protesters should understand the limitations of police friendliness. There is much to learn from the expectations Blockaders had of the police. The unrealistic assumptions of police fairness and protection permitted some Blockaders to persist in dangerous tactics, and had these backfired, through serious injury, panic throughout the Blockade may have unravelled TWS's image of competence and control. While civil disobedience actions are sometimes dangerous, they become needlessly risky if they are built on false assumptions.

As well as individual understanding of the role of the police, the protest as a whole needs to prepare for police opposition. TWS set up their Blockade in such a way that its legitimacy depended to some extent on the image of friendly relations with police. Even if organisers had been expecting police tactics to develop as they did, their unqualified support for the 'neutral' police force before the Blockade began made it impossible for them to turn around later on and challenge dirty tricks.

Right from the start of a campaign, organisers can acknowledge the pressures on police to take sides, and while expressing a desire for friendly relations and liaising with police, they can also stress their right of protest. This will give them the opportunity to criticise any underhand tactics the police use. If organisers need to expose police violence, they should speak calmly and convincingly to the media and apply unrelenting pressure through bureaucratic

channels. This may not necessarily restrain police actions but publicity may gain wider support for the protest.

It is possible that drawing public attention to police rule-breaking may not always be desirable. The harsh treatment of the women who protested at Pine Gap in 1983 was given sympathetic coverage in the press. Many demonstrators felt that this publicity given to their loss of civil liberties had weakened their protest by shifting the public debate away from the presence of US bases in Australia. This shift is likely to occur with any protest and can be exploited if organisers link the denial of civil liberties with the issue. TWS left themselves little room to make this type of move. Their campaign relied to some extent on separating the need to preserve World Heritage land from other political issues. It would have required a change in the emphasis of the whole campaign in order to challenge the hidden role of the police force.

NOTES

[*] In 1982 an HEC work camp in the South-West was burnt down and just after contractors began work on the Franklin scheme some machinery at the King River bridge was damaged. This was the reason police made special arrangements to guard the HEC work camp at Warners Landing.

[**] Usually those arrested were escorted by Police to Queenstown, where they came before the Magistrate who granted or refused bail. Under Police Bail those charged were released and required to attend Queenstown Magistrate's Court a few days later.

CHAPTER TEN

THE JAIL PROTEST : FURTHER CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

INTRODUCTION

Australians are not unfamiliar with political incarceration. Van Diemens Land was used by the Governor of the penal colony of New South Wales to further isolate those already exiled from the political and religious struggles of Britain's Industrial Revolution. Sarah Island, in Macquarie Harbour, was one such convict prison and it was somewhat ironic that the trip up-river to the dam site took the J-Lee-M and its Blocakders past the island.

During the Blocakde, as part of a jail protest, 447 protesters were sent to Risdon Jail.(1) In many ways it was a tactical victory for the Campaign. Gray appeared extreme and heavy-handed and this helped to build public sympathy and support for the no-dams cause. For the protesters themselves, the experience of being taken from the rainforest and locked in a concrete box strengthened their commitment to the Campaign.

The concept of a jail protest, where public attention is focused on large numbers of people in prison, was well-known to Blockade planners through historical and international precedent. Its political benefits were apparent. But it was a step beyond what had been tried in Australia and its implications were not fully understood. The Campaign overlooked two important things : the mechanism to sustain a jail protest was only established once protesters were inside the prison and people were not adequately prepared for or supported in the harsh prison environment. Fortunately the Tasmanian Government did not make the jail as unpleasant as they could have and, where the Blocakde organisation fell short, individuals improvised and ensured that the jail protest was a success.

THE POLITICAL USE OF JAILS

Jails can be used politically by the State. A political jail sentence[*] may be a response to a challenge or may be intended to isolate influential people and check the growth of a protest movement. But isolation and punishment in jails do not always smother political opposition. To give just two local examples; the jailing of draft resisters did not hinder the success of the Vietnam Moratorium campaigns, and the imprisonment of union leader Clarrie O'Shea helped workers defeat an attempt to impose penal provisions on the union.(2) Saul Alinsky argues that political jailing can bring benefits to a protest movement, by drawing attention to the conflict, and investing those inside with the aura of martyrdom.(3) Blockade planners, knowing that people would be arrested, hoped the Blockade would benefit from a jail protest in the way Alinsky describes. They expected Gray to apply bail conditions when people trespassed in the National Park. By refusing to accept these conditions and being sent to jail the civil disobedience could be extended giving the Blockade the moral high-ground and much favourable publicity. The Tasmanian Government seemed ready to create a crop of martyrs and some organisers, swept away by the expectation of political imprisonment, dreamt of Thoreau, Gandhi and the jail protests of the US anti-nuke movement.

The apparently limited resources of the Tasmanian prison system also encouraged the idea that large numbers of protesters would cause the prisons to overflow, making it impossible to enforce the bail conditions.

THE BLOCKADE JAIL PROTEST

The tactical concept of a jail protest was attractive and easy to grasp, but the planning never advanced beyond acceptance of the concept and several predictable but unforeseen problems arose.

Organisers strongly promoted the idea of a jail protest and in the first four days 167 blockaders were taken to Risdon jail.(4) But it was unclear to the first remandees exactly how

long they should wait before accepting bail conditions and securing their release. Some were prepared for a long stay (the longest stay was 26 days(5)) and they felt the jail protest was being undermined by those who took bail at their first hearing in Hobart. There was some difficulty reaching agreement on the length of the protest once inside the jail as the protesters were held in three different parts of the prison. Even for remandees in the same cell block the stresses of prison life made it difficult to be objective when weighing up their individual preference and the demands of sound tactics. Even had remandees been able to arrive at a common position there was still the problem of communicating with Campaign leaders in Hobart and Strahan.

Outside the jail there were differences of opinion about how long people should stay inside. Visitors told remandees that their stand was an inspiration to the Campaign but, at the same time, remandees read reports in the Mercury(6) of TWS organisers urging Blockaders to come out of jail as they would be of more use in other parts of the Campaign.[**] Before this tactical confusion could cause the Campaign any lasting problems the courts came to the rescue. In early January bail conditions began to be imposed at the first hearing in Hobart and from this time no-one stayed inside for more than a week. It is not clear why Gray limited the prison term to one week. The accomodation bill was certainly mounting, the threat of jail was not deterring trespass and there was some political cost in having a rising number of protesters in jail. The one-week limit may have allowed Gray to ease the pressure the jail protest was applying without retreating from his law-and-order position.

Publicity expectations

Organisers expected that the large number of blockaders in jail would improve the image of the Campaign and give the media another angle on the Blockade. The jail protest did improve the image of the protest but media coverage was limited to number tallies tacked onto other Campaign news. The only coverage of jail itself came when, during their time in Risdon, David Bellamy had his fiftieth birthday and Bob Brown became an MP. Unhappy that the martyrs were going unnoticed in the Press, the usually astute TWS media team called in Amnesty International to use its resources to support the Blockade's 'prisoners of conscience'.(7) The appeal to Amnesty showed how little organisers understood the publicity mechanism of a jail protest.

The effects of the jail protest

TWS stumbled into the jail protest without much thought. Each of the three groups of organisers found something in the jail protest which reflected their stance. It was acting according to the truth, it was a clear refusal to back down, and it opened many political and publicity possibilities. But common approval of the idea masked their lack of clarity about how it would be managed from day to day and encouraged a casual approach to planning and preparation. What would be the cost of a jail protest? How many organisers would be needed to do the administration work? How long could the jail protest be maintained? How could it best be developed? What preparation would protesters need? These questions were not answered.

One strategy that was articulated at the beginning of the Blockade was to clog the jails. But organisers were surprised at how the system was able to cope with the population explosion at Risdon. In the women's prison remandees were simply given beds in the corridors. When, over Christmas, it was rumoured that prison authorities were ordering tents and so would be able to cope with any number of visitors, the impossibility of overflowing the jails had finally become apparent. Organisers discussed the situation in early January and decided that the jail protest was still a good thing even though no-one could pinpoint exactly how it was helping the Campaign.

The jail protest did not directly pressure Gray to stop the dam but, like trespass, the civil disobedience of the jail protest worked against the dam by strengthening and mobilising opposition. Jailing the sons and daughters of the middle class created an impact out of proportion to the column inches devoted to it in the newspapers. TWS media people should not have been disappointed, although the benefits were not in the form they expected, the jailed trespassers made the Tasmanian Government appear ridiculous and those who had been in prison were all the more willing to work in offices and at polling booths in the subsequent mainland election campaign.

THE COSTS OF A JAIL PROTEST

How jails work

Jails are built to isolate prisoners from the community. Continued isolation relies on tight control of prisoners and this control begins with an induction process that establishes the 'prisoner' role. All traces of individuality are systematically removed: the sexes are segregated, prisoners are allocated a number and a uniform, they lose all privacy, they are told when to sleep, when and what to eat and they are forced to do routine work.

Once stereotyped identities are established, control is maintained by fostering insecurity. Knowledge of prison rules is withheld from inmates and these rules are applied inconsistently. Solidarity is undermined by discouraging opportunities for mutual support, cell mates are often shuffled for this reason. If the day is filled with busy work there is less chance for conversation and the possibility of prisoner strikes or boycotts is reduced.(8)

An inmate culture replaces the culture and identity removed by the prison. It is based on the common experience of being rejected by society and it establishes a new set of values and beliefs. The inmate culture provides the possibility for prisoner solidarity but it also provides further opportunities to exercise control. Guards learn who is who in the prisoners' hierarchy and enter into alliances with dominant prisoners to maintain order.(9) In return guards help dominant prisoners maintain their position in the inmate elite.

There are good reasons to assume that protesters' experience of jail will be different: they may have greater access to information about their rights, and many enter prison in supportive affinity groups with a cause to further unite them. But while there are differences between the political and non-political prisoner, the Franklin Blockade shows that the induction process can strip political prisoners of their identity and once inside they are not immune from the inmate culture.

Risdon Jail

The excitement of the protest helped many blockaders overcome their fears of going to jail. Not only was jail a protest against the absurd bail conditions, for some it was part of the adventure of the Blockade. But what was 'doing time' like? Blockaders had a relatively easy time in prison in Tasmania. Some prison staff were active TWS members, others gave tacit support, and publicity surrounding the Blockade protected Blockaders from some of the physical abuse which remandees face from the authorities and each other. But even so, each afternoon the heavy door was slammed and locked leaving the protester alone in their cell and as the days went by the inconsistent rules and the close contact with the bleak life of the other inmates took their toll. As the number of protesters in jail decreased, and public interest waned, there was less difference between the treatment of Blockaders and other prisoners.

Warders were inconsistent about granting privileges. Even people imprisoned at the same time were treated differently. Some people were allowed to bring all their belongings into the jail, others were not. Some were given writing paper, some were not. Little or no information on regulations was forthcoming from warders and Blockaders had not been briefed before going to Risdon. Their lack of knowledge of their rights made asserting them difficult and warders found it easy to browbeat those who were overwhelmed by the prison system. Technically Blockaders could sign the bail conditions whenever they wanted and be released. But some remandees were not aware that release was a possibility, and some thought they might be forgotten and have to stay in jail for months.(10) Those who did know the regulations and wanted to leave prison before their court appearance found it hard to organise the signing of bail conditions.

Blockaders were often denied their rights. They were entitled to daily visits by lawyers and two other visits a week but prison officials often implied that visits by lawyers would cost remandees their other visitors. Remandees were also entitled to wear their own clothes, but Blockaders were pressured to wear prison uniform. Several Blockaders were put into solitary confinement, although this was illegal. The Governor of the prison, when challenged about the

denial of Blockaders' rights said that Risdon was his prison and he would do as he chose.[***](11)

~~Life in the mens' and womens' prisons mirrored sex role stereotypes.~~ There were only seven prisoners in the womens' jail and their behaviour was very submissive. Karen Donaldson describes the atmosphere:

'...the niggling petty routines and codescending, boarding school authority were very hard to take. Common sense was outraged by orders to wash an immaculate floor three times a day; or to leave the kitchen sinks not only clean but absolutely dry after washing up ...I once went back to get a glass of water, and one of the sentenced women followed me anxiously and said "don't let a drop of water fall in the sink, will you? We get into trouble..." Pens and paper were forbidden in your cell, there was to be no singing as you worked, and no running along the paths or corridors. Everything was prim, sedate, neat and deadly quiet.'(12)

In the mens' prison there was an atmosphere of aggression. Noisily traded insults, encouraged by the warders, rattled around inside the caged exercise yards. John Stone describes the atmosphere:

'...slowly each cell in the yard was opened and a group of frenetic men began pounding up and down the tennis-court-sized cage. Waiting my turn to be released I heard a string of curses directed at "The fucking greenies who had fucking woken me up at three in the fucking morning". Not sure how safe I'd be I ventured into the yard with other, equally bewildered looking, greenies.

I was soon aware that such abuse was part of the "toughness" of survival in the barren jail environment and beneath the curses there was some sympathy for our position.'

Support Inside

Some blockaders breezed through the prison system. Others found the isolation and the pressure of the system traumatic. These protesters needed considerable emotional support. Tony Faithfull writes of his stay in Risdon:

'Far from being a rest, I found I was very tense during my whole stay in prison, and this tension was compounded by the ... larrikinism of other 'A' yard Blockaders...within 'A' yard there was a vocal, perhaps widespread feeling that "we don't need meetings - we're in prison". ... One of the more sensitive members of the group called a brief meeting to which not everyone fronted, at which he pointed out the increasing aggression...In the last two days we seemed to settle down into daily meetings at which everyone was encouraged to express their feelings, and the general tone of the yard improved. Meetings in prison were generally not allowed. "Divide and conquer" was the rule. We did manage several meetings but the warders seemed to delight in disrupting them.'(13)

The larrikinism and letting off steam was a good survival strategy for some men, but it was also part of the dynamic of control. Endless aggressive games of volleyball and cricket in the confined space made quiet conversation and support difficult. Those Blockaders who thrived on the larrikinism were unaware at first that others needed support and protection. Meetings were eventually organised at which blockaders gave each other emotional support, shared knowledge of prison routines and prepared themselves for court. Male blockaders found the discipline of meetings even more difficult later in the protest when they were housed with other remandees.

In the smaller women's prison the protesters maintained their group cohesion and needs for emotional support were usually recognised more quickly. Without the distraction of the games they found it easier to organise meetings. Talking was an important way of maintaining solidarity, as Karin Donaldson describes: '...our "sharings" in jail became long sessions. Caroline said at one: "I feel as if my spirit is under attack" and we all agreed. The system is surely designed to throw people off-balance, to weaken them, to get them under control, to reduce the sense of self-worth.'(14)

Support in Hobart

When protesters started to arrive in Risdon, TWS quickly set up a jail protest support team. In the first week of arrests there were three people on the team which confirmed lists of those in jail, hassled prison authorities to deliver mail to prisoners and arranged visits for those without friends or relatives in Tasmania. Coming out was a shock for many Blockaders. A TWS building in Hobart acted as a half-way house to help people readjust after they had left prison, but few people were interested in staffing the house and counselling disoriented protesters. This task was left to one jail support person. As time went on more people were going to jail unprepared for the experience. This was partly a reflection of the growing numbers of politically inexperienced people in the Blockade population, but sometimes people ended up in jail by mistake when the magistrate unexpectedly failed to offer them bail. The lack of preparation put a lot of pressure on the already inadequate support team. Considering its importance to prisoners' morale support in Hobart was a badly neglected area of the jail protest.

Preparation in Strahan

There was some effort made to prepare Blockaders in Strahan who were considering refusing bail. At first there was no information available on the conditions in Risdon but once remandees began returning to Strahan their experience was in great demand. Often women organised evening sessions to talk to other women about the conditions they could expect in jail. By and large information about the mens' prison was passed around the camp informally through anecdotes and stories. Any information was pounced on, but there was always the problem that one person's 'facts' didn't necessarily match with another remandee's experiences. Surprisingly information about jail was not included in training workshops, partly because of poor communication between trainers and those who'd been to jail, and partly because few trainers gave preparation for jail a high priority.

What preparation and support are necessary for a jail protest? Although protesters will experience prison differently to other prisoners many will still be thrown off-balance by the prison system and the process of becoming a prisoner. In particular there will be confusion about legal matters, rights in jail, problems establishing and maintaining friendships, and difficulties adjusting to coming out. Protesters will need to be prepared for this. Separate womens' and mens' discussion sessions could prepare people for the uncertainty and isolation they will face in prison. The importance of structuring time to provide support and build solidarity in the jail should be emphasised. Support teams outside the prison are also necessary. These teams will have to organise visits to maintain morale, disseminate information about rights and privileges and be able to support people when they are released.

CONCLUSION

The Franklin Blockade shows that a jail protest is worth the effort : the potential benefits are significant.

It also shows that successful jail protest is not just a matter of getting people into jail. A protester who is imprisoned may emerge more determined than ever and the time in prison may have strengthened the solidarity of the group, but prison has long been used to ensure the reverse occurs.

The Tasmanian authorities did not lean hard on the protest or the protesters. In fact, by making the stay in jail predictable, they removed some of the teeth from the prison system. Authorities which mean to break a jail protest would create as much uncertainty as possible by manipulating the rules, acting arbitrarily, alternating harsh and lenient treatment, making both the length of time and the prison life as unpredictable and frightening as possible.

A jail protest must be prepared to overcome this opposition. Organisers must be fully informed about the jail and the legal situation, protesters must be well briefed. The strategy being

pursued must be discussed and clearly understood before going into jail so that, as with any civil disobedience, protesters know how far to take their refusal to co-operate. The personal preparation must not be neglected as the pressures of the inmate culture and the divisive and depersonalising prison system are considerable.

As much thought and effort needs to go into structures of support as the other side has put into creating the prison environment.

NOTES

[*] The distinction between political and non-political prisoners is unsatisfactory since all prisoners can be perceived as political in some sense. What is important here is the consciousness of being a political prisoner.

[**] Possibly these appeals were aimed at Bob Brown by those who wished him to return to the helm.

[***] Being deprived of 'rights' normally taken for granted, and contact with other prisoners, politicised many blockaders. Karin Donaldson describes her experience which illustrates this: '...some people reflected on how the whole campaign...challenged the values they'd been unthinkingly living by...and we talked about that, and the future...and about the whole jail system.

Once one of the sentenced women came and joined us, and talked about her husband and her little boy, and then began to weep. She got up to go away then, but I was sitting next to her and I caught her and said "have a hug first", and we all grouped around her...but she broke away guiltily and said "I'd better go we can get put in Solitary for touching anyone..." We realised how emotionally stripped and violated these women were.'(15)
Some attempts have since been made by Blockaders to publicise the position of women in jails.

INTRODUCTION TO PART THREE: THE WIDER CONFLICT

Strategies for Environmental Change

Environmentalists share basic assumptions, Barry Commoner has put the common attitudes very neatly in his four laws of ecology:

1. Everything is connected to everything else.
2. Everything must go somewhere.
3. Nature knows best.
4. There is no such thing as a free lunch.(1)

These shared assumptions are translated into agreed positions on single issues: Lead-free petrol, glass and paper recycling, protection of flora and fauna, and public transport are all 'good things'. But environmentalists disagree about what an environmentally sound future will look like, and about how to achieve their short-term goals.

Some groups make rational appeals for change. This strategy assumes that once the facts are made public and an environmentally sound alternative is available then commonsense will see that the environmentally sound alternative will be adopted as social policy. These groups assume that a healthy environment can be achieved without fundamental social change, but this ignores the powerful groups which have an interest in supporting environmentally destructive alternatives. Rational appeals for environmental protection are often not rational, economically, for those who make the major decisions in our society. Those who make decisions about investment are likely to give a lot of weight to short-term economic considerations: in an attempt to maximise profits resources will be used as quickly as possible. These people are unlikely to be convinced by an environmentally rational balance sheet.

Other environment groups, recognising the strength of the opposition to environmentally sound policies, argue that a complete change of culture and economy is necessary to eradicate the causes of environmental destruction. But this attitude can lead to inaction when people argue that there is no sense trying to convince individuals or become involved in the day-to-day compromises of political action in a system which, by its very nature, exploits the environment.

One group overlooks the depth of conflict over environmental policy and the other overestimates the strength of the opposition. There is strong opposition to environmental concerns but not all powerful groups in society will be automatically opposed to any one environmental reform. Between these two extremes lie strategies which can lead to social change.

Power Groups

Environment groups are often ignorant of the ecology of politics and this is to their disadvantage. There are many important power groups, each with its own support: its source of power, and with its own way of wielding that power: its instrument of power. For example, the sources of power for a party in government are the party machine, influential supporters of the party, and the voter. It wields its power through the instrument of legislation. In another case, business draws its power from capital, and wields it through its ability to invest or withdraw investment. Other powerful groups include bureaucracies which wield the power to implement and initiate government policy, unions, which have power to withdraw labour, and the media with their power to decide the news agenda which influences which ideas become legitimate in the eyes of the community and which issues become politically important. Power groups with sources of power outside Australia, such as foreign governments or trans-national companies may also have interests in Australia.

Each power group seeks to promote its own interests but is constrained by the other power groups. Power groups prefer to pursue their goals out of the public eye. For example business can bargain quietly with a sympathetic Government. But sometimes, when the power groups disagree the conflict may come into the open as the groups vie for support.

Power groups are not the only ones trying to influence the direction of society. There are many interest groups both small and large, nudists and church groups; both influential and largely

unnoticed, the RSL and prison reformers; both radical and conservative, animal liberation and the duck-shooting lobby. Interest groups can seldom bargain directly with power groups and must take tortuous and tenuous paths to achieve their goals. When their ideas are new, or challenge the status quo, they first seek public support, out-doing counter-campaigns of other interest groups and power groups. Then by lobbying or allying with politicians, business, unions, or the media they try to encourage power groups to wield power on their behalf.

Many interest groups set their sights on politicians. Interest groups can influence the electorate, a source of power for politicians, through public debate. There is no doubt that media coverage helps foster public debate but to gain media coverage a group must meet the media's criteria of public interest and newsworthiness. It requires some skill for a protest movement challenging the status quo to present their issues in a way that will meet these requirements. Politicians are open to influence through the electorate, but even when they have been convinced that the issue is of public importance they will not necessarily legislate in favour of the interest group as they have to consider the reaction of other power groups and of their own sources of power. Even legislation, if it is achieved, is not the whole answer as legislation is only one of the instruments of power being wielded in society and it may be blunted by the instruments of power of another power group. On its own a parliamentary campaign is unlikely to achieve all the goals of the interest group as parliament is only one power group among many.

The challenge to activists is to influence as many sources of power as they can and to find as many allies among the power groups as possible, in order that more than one instrument of power can be used in their favour. Activists will need to unravel the tangle of groups and factions involved in a conflict: Federal, State and Local Governments and their bureaucracies; union federations at state and national level; local and interstate media; the various factions of business and other interest groups. Some of these groups will be potential allies, other indifferent, and some will be hostile; further, the public face of a power group will not always represent its actual position on an issue. A campaign with a subtle understanding of the political environment, and with support from more than one power group is on the road to success.

The Franklin Campaign

TWS, during the Franklin Campaign, was somewhere between the two extremes of environmental strategy: they did not rely on rational appeals for change, nor did they attempt to change the economic and cultural base of society. Their vision of Tasmania's future was sufficiently different to that of the HEC to show them that there was a conflict of interest that reasoned argument alone could not resolve. But their focus was not on changing the concept of progress-through-development but the more immediate goal of stopping the Franklin dam.

They entered the Campaign with a gut-feeling about wilderness preservation but without a thorough understanding of the Tasmanian political environment. They built a successful campaign based on the most obvious power group, parliament, and on its most accessible source of power, the voter. Their strategy included a big effort to get positive media concern for wilderness, but they failed to build an alliance with other groups who were in conflict with the HEC.

CHAPTER TWELVE

PARLIAMENTARY PRESSURE AND THE FRANKLIN CAMPAIGN.

INTRODUCTION

Environmentalists had been campaigning for the South West for fifteen years before TWS began its Campaign to save the Franklin and Gordon Rivers. The South West campaigns have had many common elements. TWS' Campaign, like those before it, applied electoral pressure on parliamentarians because the campaigners thought politicians were the pre-eminent decision makers. They worked hard to raise public awareness by leafletting and lobbying, publishing and public meetings. Their Campaign involved them in elections, referendums, parliamentary inquiries, and in organising demonstrations of support, including a direct action.

When they found that hydro-industrialisation was impervious to the limited electoral pressure they were able to apply in Tasmania, they took their case to Canberra. TWS assumed that if they applied sufficient pressure to the Federal Liberal Government, it would stop the dam. They failed to see that Liberal Party ideology made this expectation unrealistic. In the Federal election of 1983 TWS's ability to apply parliamentary pressure brought them success. Their skills allowed them to exploit some good luck, and the party they were supporting was elected. A subsequent High Court case decided the conflict in TWS' favour.

A social-change campaign always risks defeat, but, by relying solely on a parliamentary focus, and being unable to draw on or influence other powerful groups, TWS gambled unnecessarily.

TASMANIA'S ECONOMY

In 1981 Tasmania had a population of only 427,308 people. The major industries depend on exploitation of the natural environment: raw materials taken by mining and clear-felling are processed and refined in smelters and pulpmills. Tasmania has water in abundance and, viewing this as a resource to be exploited, Tasmanian governments have, since the 1920's, provided cheap hydro-electric power in an attempt to attract energy-intensive industries. Tasmanian Governments have argued that this would, in turn, build up manufacturing industry and create employment and prosperity. This strategy is known as hydro-industrialisation. Successive governments have devoted most of the State's resources to dam building, cutting off all other options.

As the apparent provider of prosperity, the Hydro Electricity Commission has great political power and makes no secret of its ability to shape government policy. The HEC absorbs more than half of Tasmania's public capital works expenditure and is a major employer.(1) Some big companies like Comalco, Broken Hill Propriety, and Australian Pulp & Paper Mills have taken advantage of the cheap HEC power.[*] But even so, unemployment has remained higher than other states and in recent years discouraged by high transport-costs to and from the mainland the investment dollars have gone elsewhere.

When the Franklin dispute began the national and transnational companies were no longer keen to take advantage of HEC power and so did not lend their weight to the HEC cause.

PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS

It is often said that there is little difference between the Liberal Party and the ALP in Tasmania, whether that is true or not, the ALP was only out of office for three years between 1934 and 1982.

The Tasmanian labour-movement is often characterised as uniformly conservative. But the labour movement has several factions. The Broad Left holds a majority on the State Council of the ALP and there is a militant tradition among West Coast mining unions. The left faction, though it lines up with the left of the ALP at a national level, often holds a conservative position in

Tasmanian politics. Despite some doubts about the HEC the left, on its own, has not been able to develop a strong critique of hydro-industrialisation. Many of the left unions have members in the HEC workforce, and are wary of attempts to diminish the scope of HEC activity. Almost all ALP parliamentarians have their power bases on the right of the party, the most well-known labour movement figure is the independent right-wing Senator, Brian Harridine. He and the National Civic Council have dominated The Tasmanian Trades and Labour Council for years.

The small and conservative Tasmanian political scene, and the proportional representation system which encourages the parties to stand personalities like footballers and pubkeepers, partly explains why local environmentalists came to see themselves as isolated voices for change.

LAKE PEDDER

When the HEC drowned the outstandingly beautiful Lake Pedder, environmentalists vowed that such a loss would never happen again. One activist described the Pedder and Franklin campaigns as 'a continuum of experience and activity'.(2)

In the early 60's, when they learned that the planned Serpentine Impoundment would flood Lake Pedder, bushwalkers who knew the beauty of the area tried to persuade the Government and the HEC to spare the Lake. In 1967, the Save Lake Pedder Committee(SLPC) was formed after some concluded that the 'polite backdoor methods of dealing with officialdom had failed and the time had come to make the fight public'.(3) In the public outcry that followed the release of the HEC's plans, the SLPC raised a petition of 10,000 signatures. Even so, there was a widespread feeling that it was too late to save Pedder.(4) The Legislative Council, Tasmania's conservative Upper House, quickly convened a Committee of Inquiry. The HEC's plans were rubber-stamped and approved by Parliament. At this point the SLPC gave up.

Resentment and anger at the HEC resurfaced in Hobart in January 1971 when the Lake Pedder Action Committee (LPAC) was formed. LPAC pressure forced Parliament to debate the scheme for the first time and the existence of attractive alternatives became public knowledge. Over the next couple of years LPAC held public meetings and slide-shows, wrote and published articles, and unearthed more information about alternatives to the scheme. Olegas Truchanas' photographs and lectures were particularly inspirational.

LPAC attempted to gain direct access to Tasmanian parliamentary power. A month before the 1972 Tasmanian elections the United Tasmania Group (UTG) was formed. This single-issue party contested the elections hoping to gain the balance of power. UTG came close but did not win a seat.

LPAC opened branches in Sydney and Melbourne and activists began to pressure Federal politicians. By early 1972, Lake Pedder was a national issue gaining media coverage and drawing large crowds to public meetings on the mainland. Prime Minister McMahon received a barrage of mail, and offered financial assistance to Tasmanians to save the Lake. The Tasmanian Premier refused to consider the matter and the Federal Liberals dropped the issue.

In the run-up to the 1972 Federal election, LPAC lobbied the Federal ALP which then promised an Inquiry into the HEC scheme. By the time Whitlam was elected the inundation of the Lake had begun. Expert opinion suggested draining the dam, arguing that a few months submersion would not destroy Pedder's magnificent beach. In its interim report the ALP's Committee of Inquiry said that the Lake could and should be saved and recommended a three to five year moratorium with the payment of compensation to the Tasmanian government. Federal Cabinet threw out the report so LPAC turned to Caucus who had the power to overturn the Cabinet decision. After a successful advertising, letter-writing and lobbying effort, Caucus voted to save the Lake, but the Tasmanian Premier rejected the Federal proposal.

As a last resort, LPAC turned to the labour movement hoping to enlist their support and force the Tasmanian Government to accept the moratorium.(5) Not surprisingly, having nothing to offer unions with a stake in hydro-industrialisation, LPAC's last-minute appeal for worker solidarity failed. In 1973 the LPAC closed its doors and Lake Pedder now lies sixteen metres under the Serpentine Impoundment.

THE FRANKLIN CAMPAIGN

Early Days

The conflict between conservation and exploitation in the South West remained after Pedder was flooded and, in response to continued threats from hydro and forestry schemes, environmentalists formed the South West Tasmania Action Committee (SWTAC). By 1976, SWTAC was a national organisation with active branches in all States. SWTAC fought a number of campaigns with varying success; they were able to force the Tasmanian Parliament to double the size of the South West National Park to include Precipitous Bluff.

During the 70's rafting became a popular way to explore the western rivers. Many people began to repeat the travels of Olegas Truchanas and the fame of the rivers spread. SWTAC changed its name to the Tasmanian Wilderness Society and began to shift its focus to the Franklin and Lower Gordon Rivers which were obvious targets for the HEC dam builders. In June 1977 when the HEC announced plans for a dam on the Lower Gordon, TWS responded immediately with an advertisement on the front page of the Tasmanian Mail which attracted a lot of support. Unlike the Pedder campaign which had continually fought to catch up on the HEC, campaigners for the Franklin and Lower Gordon were ready from the start. Even so, few people could foresee the long battle ahead. Bob Brown wrote: 'It appeared in 1976, when TWS was set up, that the issue would be resolved by 1978 at the latest.'(6)

In 1978 TWS was still a small organisation with a single desk in the Tasmanian Environment Centre, but with a core of committed people and resources like the film 'The Last Wild River' they built a strong public campaign. By 1979 their work had paid off and the Franklin debate was dominating local politics. Bob Brown describes the style of the campaign: 'We grabbed ideas from wherever we could. We looked at the way people sell cheese and paper tissues... and thought...(those methods could) be grafted by us to save a wilderness.'(7) TWS sought advice from people in advertising and their high quality publicity material set them apart from other conservation groups. Celebrities were used to lend weight to the TWS cause. The "Wild Rivers Pictorial" was the first of many high-quality, full-colour books to be published during the Campaign. A public-opinion survey, commissioned by TWS, showed that Tasmanians were two to one against the dam.

The HEC report and the Olga option

In October 1979, the HEC reaffirmed its earlier proposals and announced a \$1.3 billion system of dams affecting nearly every western river. For the first time ever the HEC were forced to publicly explain their plans, a sign of TWS's emerging strength. The HEC tried to overwhelm the opposition with a 'multi-volume glossy publication, several feet thick and costing several hundred dollars'.(8) TWS responded with a large rally in Hobart.

In early 1980, while the Tasmanian government was considering the HEC report, TWS stepped up its community education and lobbying campaign. 'We realised that we had to take the issue to the community, so we were ... involved in a round of public meetings, one or two a week all over the State'.(9) TWS bought half an hour of prime-time Tasmanian commercial TV for their film 'The Last Wild River', which was also shown on the ABC.(10) The campaign received a boost when a Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service report recommended a Wild Rivers National Park to protect the Franklin. In Melbourne a public meeting attracted six hundred people. Karen Alexander, local co-ordinator of TWS, believed the good turn-out was partly due to the strength of the Pedder campaign in Melbourne, people had not forgotten.(11) In Sydney, campaigners not only put on slide-shows and sold books and calendars, but also produced a critique of the HEC report exposing the false assumptions underlying its electricity-demand predictions.

In an attempt to defuse the growing controversy, the ALP Premier, Doug Lowe, announced a plan to set up a Joint House Select Committee of Inquiry to look at the HEC proposals. Without the support of the other parties, this plan came to nothing. In the three or four weeks before Cabinet announced its decision on the HEC report between thirty and fifty thousand anti-dam messages reached Parliament House.(12) At the same time, the South West Conservation Area, covering all the disputed region, was listed on the Register of the National Estate by the Australian Heritage Commission.

Pushed from both sides, Cabinet opted for the Gordon-above-Olga dam which, although it would drown the Gordon Splits, would save the Franklin. The ACF immediately rejected this proposal. TWS was in a dilemma; some said this was the best that could be expected, after all no government had ever crossed the HEC before; others argued that to accept the compromise would confuse supporters and that it was environmentalists duty to stand firm in defence of the rivers. After much debate, TWS decided to fight all the schemes, and called a rally. Ten thousand people attended; the biggest rally Hobart had ever seen.

The HEC had only suggested the Olga option in their report to fulfill the Government's demand for alternatives, flabbergasted that the Olga was being taken seriously, they too rejected the compromise.

In the meantime the Legislative Council had set up a Committee of Inquiry. Sydney SWTAC was the only conservation group permitted to appear; their detailed submission was dismissed and the Inquiry backed the HEC coming out strongly in favour of the Gordon-below-Franklin dam. The Council then took matters in their own hands and shut out the Olga option, by suspending parliamentary standing orders and writing their own legislation supporting the Gordon-below-Franklin Scheme. (13) This deadlocked the Parliament.

The Tasmanian ALP Caucus was divided over whether to support the Gordon-below-Franklin dam or the Olga scheme. Lowe at first won support for the Olga as there was some opposition to the Franklin dam among left branch-delegates and union officials. But he had previously antagonised this group by his opposition to the 35-hour week and so when the HEC subsequently applied the heat to Caucus, the left withdrew their support leaving Lowe out on a limb.

Parliament still hadn't resolved the issue when it went into recess over Christmas. Anti-dam campaigners used the hiatus to strengthen their support with public meetings, leafletting and letter-writing. On the mainland the Campaign was growing: Melbourne TWS went to work on the ALP; all local branches were offered speakers, and soon an anti-dam policy was adopted by the Victorian ALP State Conference. Attempts were made to influence the Liberal Party in the same way but, unable to reach the branches, TWS concentrated on the upper echelons, finding a few strong supporters in people like Senator Alan Missen. In 1981 Melbourne TWS people laid the groundwork for a national campaign by lobbying their local Federal members.

Back in Tasmania politicians were coming under pressure from another source. Small business was subsidising the bulk users and a lobby group, the Business Association For Economic Power, released a well-researched report challenging the HEC claim that new dams were essential.(14) Meanwhile TWS were making firm plans for a direct action.

Referendum

Early in 1981, with Parliament still deadlocked, the Attorney-General proposed a referendum in an attempt to resolve the conflict and during the year the ALP made some concessions to environmentalists. The Government proclaimed the Wild Rivers National Park and in November, after much lobbying from the ACF, Lowe forwarded a World Heritage List nomination to the Federal Government for Cradle Mountain and parts of the South West[**].(15)

In October the referendum was announced and, without reference to Caucus, Lowe promised a 'No Dams' option. This incensed his opponents within the ALP and he was forced to present the referendum with only two options: the Olga and the Gordon-below-Franklin. In the ensuing brawl Harry Holgate challenged for the ALP leadership. Lowe was defeated, resigned from the State ALP and, with another anti-dam exile, the ex-government whip Mary Willey, went to sit on the cross-benches with Democrat Norm Sanders. These three then had the power to bring down the

Government. Without a No Dams option on the referendum TWS was faced with another dilemma. Should they go for the Olga option or encourage an informal vote? They decided to encourage people to write 'No Dams' on their ballots. Between them, ACF and TWS spent about \$100,000 on the campaign which featured the striking No Dams triangle for the first time. Hundreds of supporters were mobilised, 85-90% of Tasmanian houses were doorknocked and all polling booths except Tullah were staffed on referendum day.(15) Holgate claimed the 47% vote for the Gordon below Franklin as a mandate to proceed. But, in defiance of Government advertising claiming that defacing ballots was illegal, 36% had written 'No Dams' and a further 9% had voted informally; TWS had scored a significant victory.

After the referendum, Lowe, Willey and Sanders threatened to bring down the Government if bills to proceed with the Franklin dam were introduced. Holgate closed the Parliament for as long as possible but when it eventually resumed, the bills were brought forward, and the hopelessly divided ALP Government fell. Predictions of 17% support, enough to win between three and five seats, encouraged TWS to contest the subsequent election. With the Democrats they ran 'No Dams' tickets in all seats. But only Lowe, an independent, and Sanders, a Democrat, were returned. Pro-Franklin MPs no longer had power in the Parliament. The Liberals had held out hope of stability to an electorate weary of controversy and under Robin Gray they won easily. With the Liberals in power the ability of TWS to exert parliamentary pressure in Tasmania came to a dead end.

TWS GOES NATIONAL

After the Tasmanian election campaign a disappointed and somewhat demoralised TWS regrouped and swung into a national campaign to get the Federal Government to over-ride the Tasmanian Government and stop the dam. Some Melbourne activists had been pressing for a national campaign for some time and the ground work had been laid. Support was strong in the marginal electorates of eastern Melbourne and TWS branches were set up in many electorates in anticipation of a Federal election some time in the next eighteen months.

Letter-writing and lobbying put the Campaign on the political agenda in Canberra. The Democrats initiated a Senate Select Committee to look at power development in South West Tasmania and the evidence presented to this committee helped establish the credibility of the No Dams case with the Federal ALP. Early in 1982 Prime Minister Fraser forwarded Lowe's nomination of the South West to the World Heritage Committee with a personal letter urging them to list the area. During a Sydney by-election in March, TWS encouraged voters to write 'No Dams' on their ballots, twelve percent did so. At a Canberra by-election in May a similar campaign produced a 41% write-on. This significantly increased pressure on the Federal Government. In June TWS challenged, under the Heritage Act, the HEC's right to borrow money to build the dam.(16) TWS established its 'standing' in court and attracted considerable publicity but failed to win the case.[***]

Until mid-1982 TWS publicity emphasised 'preservation of wilderness' but market research established that few saw the need to preserve wilderness but many wanted to protect World Heritage areas.(17) From that time TWS stressed the World Heritage status of the South West. The market research also showed that a direct action would not alienate supporters or potential supporters.

In July work began on the dam and TWS announced plans to blockade the work. Support on the mainland was high and in November a rally of 15,000 people was held in Melbourne.

Throughout 1982 Fraser equivocated. He tried to direct the debate onto constitutional issues, arguing that, although he did not support the building of the dam personally, intervention in Tasmanian affairs would threaten the constitution. Like the Democrats, the Federal ALP adopted a 'No Dams' policy at its national conference after lobbying by TWS activists. TWS planned to begin the Blockade in November but postponed it in favour of one last national letter-writing effort. Many TWS activists believed that Fraser was close to intervening and hoped a little extra pressure would tip the balance. Despite the bags of letters, Fraser did not bend.

By December 1982 the Campaign had reached a watershed. On the 4th there was a 40% No Dams write-on at a Melbourne by-election. TWS took a nonpartisan stand, still hoping that the Liberals would intervene, and until the result was announced the successful Liberal candidate was hot against dams. Four days later Doug Anthony announced the Cabinet decision against intervention.

On the 12th, TWS, ACF and other conservation groups formed the National South West Coalition (NSWC). They announced that the normally non-partisan conservation movement would take sides at the next election. Unless the Liberals moved immediately against the dam they would support the opposition to the Liberals : the ALP and the Democrats. (18)

Working with the Democrats, conservation lawyers drafted the World Heritage Bill to protect the South West using existing constitutional powers of the Commonwealth.(19) The day the Blockade began was also the last day of Parliament. The World Heritage Bill came before the Senate early in the day. Four Liberal Senators crossed the floor, the Bill was passed and sent straight to the House of Representatives. The timing was perfect : pictures of the arrests on the Gordon demonstrated the public support for TWS and put life into the debate and the fear of the voter into Government backbenchers. That same evening the news came from Paris that the South West had been included on the World Heritage List. Despite rumblings from their backbench the Government squashed the debate and the House adjourned without a vote. (20)

The Campaign continued to gain momentum, and in the New Year the Liberal National Party Coalition looked to Gray to help them kill the issue. The Premier was playing to a home crowd and could not be convinced to negotiate. In mid-January Fraser privately offered Gray compensation to pay for alternatives to the dam and get the Federal Liberals off the hook. Even though Gray refused, Fraser went on and made a public offer of \$500 million. Gray refused this as well, and Fraser backed down, arguing that he had done all he could.

The Federal election

No-one knew when Fraser would call the election, but in January senior TWS decision-makers moved to Melbourne and stepped up preparations. Fraser called a surprisingly early poll, leaving only a month for campaigning. Hawke, the new ALP leader, promised the dam would not be built if Labor won. The ALP was going to benefit from the No Dams Campaign in the marginal electorates: with the anti-dam vote going to the ALP in the House of Representatives and the Democrats in the Senate. The NSWC used their resources judiciously. They chose to campaign in fifteen key seats where a small swing would unseat a Liberal, where they already had a local Campaign branch, and where volunteers could doorknock on foot.(21) Within the targeted areas high-quality full-colour leaflets were distributed, and at all polling booths how-to-vote cards were handed out next to a large, full-colour photograph of the Franklin. Just before the election, \$50,000 was spent on a full-page colour advertisement in selected newspapers. The election campaign cost TWS \$198,000.(22)

During the election campaign the Blockade was still applying political pressure. Some politicians visited the Blockade but public interest in the direct action was wearing thin. Plans were laid for a day of mass arrests just before the election. Gray co-operated unintentionally by applying a ridiculous eviction order on top of the ridiculous trespass law and, once again, the arrests were back in the news. The Federal Liberals squirmed as their man in Tasmania exacerbated their difficulty. Fraser secretly offered Gray \$870m but was again refused.(23) Just before the election there was a huge rally in Melbourne. In Queensland, police joined the media circus by banning Franklin how-to-vote cards.

The ALP won the election. Opinion polls the following week suggested that the votes of 2% of the electorate had been influenced by the issue. In the targeted seats up to 16% followed the Franklin how-to-vote cards.(24)

The High Court

In March 1983 a special sitting of the new Federal Parliament passed the World Heritage (Western Tasmanian Wilderness) Regulations. These regulations imposed a fine of \$5000 a day for willfully damaging a World Heritage area.(25) Gray and the HEC continued to build.

In April the Government passed the World Heritage (Properties Conservation) Act. This Federal law prohibited dam works without the consent of a Commonwealth Minister and created a direct conflict with Tasmanian law which had implemented the dam.(26) The High Court, given the task of adjudicating the dispute between the Federal and State legislatures, decided, by reference to the External Affairs power, the Corporations power, and the Aboriginals power of the Australian Constitution, that the Commonwealth laws had precedence over the Tasmanian law.(27) The External Affairs power was relevant because the Commonwealth had signed an international treaty: the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the Franklin was covered by this treaty because it was on the World Heritage List.(28) Environmentalists celebrated victory.

Unfortunately the legislation the ALP brought in does not give a Federal Government power to protect all places on the World Heritage List; it is specific to the South West and other areas will require their own legislation to give them similar protection. Further, a Minister can remove protection without reference to the Parliament. This means future development in the South West, including the Gordon-below-Franklin dam, is still a possibility.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND PARLIAMENTARY PRESSURE: REVIEWING THE TWS CAMPAIGN

TWS leads environmentalists into the conflict

TWS organisers were extremely determined. They knew that there was no possible compromise between them and the HEC, either the dams were built or the rivers were saved. Although they did not have a comprehensive political analysis, they, unlike the first Pedder campaigners, knew that there was a conflict and that the resolution would be political. When offered the choice between the Olga and the Franklin dams, they rejected both, and so gave clear leadership to anti-dammers. The offer of one dam or the other was not a bargain in which both sides would make gains, TWS could only lose. TWS made the right decision, to accept the lesser evil would have undermined the Campaign. Trying to make it easy for the other side would have been an admission of powerlessness and allowed the other side to take the advantage. It was an important stage in the Campaign; denial of conflict and the search for happy compromises have been the cause of failure in campaigns too numerous to mention.

TWS were ready for a fight, but how could the HEC be stopped? Organisers assumed that it would be through parliament that the conflict over the Franklin would be resolved. They also assumed that politicians would bend to the will of the voter, underestimating the other forces acting on parliamentarians. Their assumptions led them to a strategy of applying pressure on parliament through the electorate.

Building public support

Applying pressure on politicians by changing the minds of voters takes a lot of hard work, a lot of people and a lot of money. Its success lies in the long slow process of public education and TWS did this task well. TWS had mastered almost all the aspects of a parliamentary pressure campaign which can be controlled. They benefitted from the work of the Pedder campaigners who had first brought Tasmanian wilderness to public notice, their public meetings, street stalls, slide-shows, films, publications and propaganda paraphenalia further raised public awareness. The campaign brought in money and volunteers and this enabled TWS to stage demonstrations and letter-writing drives, and then to doorknock and leaflet at crucial points in the campaign. By the 1983 Federal election TWS had established the infrastructure that allowed volunteers to come off the street and into a job with the minimum of fuss. This gave people an easy way to be part of the campaign.

While other environmental groups have refused to dirty their hands, TWS were prepared to use techniques of the other side. They were not afraid to spend money. They backed their high-quality, glossy campaign literature with well-executed advertising material and well-researched and simply presented arguments which undermined the HEC's position as an authority on power generation. They tested their gut-feelings against market research. When the research failed to confirm their prejudices, they wisely took the course suggested by the surveys. TWS financial management was not done by amateurs. To get the money they needed they

adopted methods that many found distasteful: direct-mail appeals, short-term money markets, and attention to taxation details.

Alongside their campaign of public education TWS sought media attention. They developed public relations skills and made personal contacts with journalists. This paid off; their films and photos were widely distributed. They established a respectable and credible image with the media on the mainland and kept up positive coverage over a long period.

TWS found two other ways to add weight to the bags of letters reaching Parliament House. Through a series of challenges they established standing in court and gained experience in environmental law. By 1983 they were collaborating with the ACF and the Democrats in the drafting of Commonwealth legislation. They also planned and implemented a direct action. Restraining the impulse to rush to the defence of the forests, they waited until the direct action was fully prepared, well-explained to the public, and politically appropriate. The Blockade mobilised the support built over years of public education, and opened doors in Canberra.

The limits of a parliamentary strategy

Both Pedder and Franklin campaigners stood candidates in Tasmanian elections in an attempt to influence parliament from the inside. But it is difficult to get single-issue candidates into a powerful position in parliament. In both cases, fearing that the environmentalists would hold the balance of power, the major parties vehemently attacked the single-issue candidates as disrupters of democracy. The support for the environmental candidates was spread across the state and this made it hard to get enough votes in any one electorate.

One of the motives for standing candidates was to gain the balance of power. In 1982 Sanders, Willey and Lowe held what environmentalists called the balance of power in Parliament. The three MPs sat on the crossbenches and because they were under neither ALP nor Liberal party discipline they had a strong hand in the dams issue. But with no major party willing to oppose the dam, the possibility of doing a deal was slim. The cross-benchers gave the Government an ultimatum; the ALP called their bluff and was brought down. The subsequent election put the Parliament firmly in the hands of the Liberals. Because they could not form an anti-dam alliance with either party what the three anti-dam MLCs held was the power to bring down the Government, not the balance of power. To achieve a balance of power in the dams decision environmentalists in Parliament had to find a major party prepared to stop the dam in exchange for support in another issue. This was impossible at the time in Tasmania.

TWS efforts in the Tasmanian referendum were more effective. The write-ons were an endorsement of the clear stand taken against both options. The tactic of write-ons was transferred with great success to the mainland. By the time of the Federal election TWS were skilled in electoral tactics. They worked hard to tie conservation groups together in the NSW and to get them to make a party political commitment. Their campaign in the marginal seats was disciplined and effective. The Blockade had demonstrated both TWS's organisational ability and their level of support, so the ALP believed them when TWS said they could deliver votes.

TWS was in a position to exploit good luck. The timing of the election was perfect: the electorate was in a mood to remove the Liberals, the finish was going to be close, the key marginal seats had a high concentration of green voters, and the ALP had reasons of its own to take on Tasmania which had nothing to do with the Franklin. If all these circumstances had not coincided TWS may have reached another deadend in their parliamentary pressure campaign. Even so, after Hawke's victory, TWS had to wait, powerless, while the dispute was before the High Court, an institution reasonably well insulated from the influence of bumper stickers and ballot boxes. If the vote of a single judge had gone the other way and the dam had been allowed to proceed, the ALP could have easily argued that there was no more it could do. As it has turned out they have backed away from some of the more far-reaching environmental legislation proposed before the election.

TWS overcame their setbacks in Tasmania and were able to persist in their strategy of parliamentary pressure by going national. But no matter how much time, money and effort was put into that strategy, TWS remained dependent on factors outside their control to make victory possible.

Intervention and ideology

TWS recognised that there were differences between the Federal Liberal and Labor Parties. But they did not realise that party ideology would determine the extent to which support from party members could be translated into political action.

Federal intervention was not a new idea. Pedder campaigners had adopted the same strategy ten years before. TWS hoped that an appeal to the apparently sympathetic Prime Minister and other key MPs, backed by bags of letters, would demonstrate the strength of feeling in the electorate. They felt that if they could generate enough electoral support in key seats to threaten the Liberals with loss of government, then the Liberals would be forced to intervene to stay in power. Few single issue campaigns will generate more electoral pressure than the Franklin campaign. Why did the Liberals not respond as TWS hoped?

Many TWS organisers thought that Fraser was on-side and that his sympathy would help catalyse action. Press photos of the PM holidaying in the Tasmanian bush led people to believe that he valued the South West. Fraser had said publicly that he, personally, was against the dam, and environmentalists remembered the victories of the late 70's, when Fraser stopped some sand mining in Queensland, and whaling in WA. But to the Liberals, sympathetic or not, the Franklin decision was quite different to the decisions to pick off a redundant whaling industry and prohibit minor sand mining exports; TWS was asking the Federal Liberal government to assault the major economic policy of the Tasmanian Government.

One of the fundamental tenets of Australian Liberalism is a concept they call 'States Rights'. By this they mean allowing different sectors of industrial and financial power in different states to carry on without undue interference from each other. The apparently solid Liberal Party is a coalition of these different sectors. Interference is not tolerated and leaders' heads have rolled when they have strayed from the concept of states rights(29); the idea of one Liberal government challenging the major economic strategy of another Liberal government is unthinkable to most Liberals. It was in this context that Fraser was both anti-dam and against intervention.

Believing Fraser to be sympathetic[****], TWS organisers mistook his silence for deliberation; they saw electoral pressure taking effect when dissenting Liberals gave strong support to the campaign but they did not realise the strength of commitment to States Rights ideology, and that their expectations of Federal Liberal intervention were baseless.

In contrast to the Liberals, ALP ideology favoured intervention. The ALP has always been committed to centralising power in Canberra and Hawke himself has argued that the State level of government is obsolete and should be abolished.(30) Aside from the dam, intervention was attractive to the ALP. If, as legal advice suggested, they could use the dams case to broaden the accepted interpretation of the External Affairs power of the Constitution the possibility of centralising control over companies and State utilities and of introducing a Bill of Rights would exist.

The ALP was able to capitalise on the excitement generated by the No Dams Campaign and the Blockade and, unhindered by the Liberal ideology of States Rights, the ALP was able to promise intervention and gain the assistance of environmentalists in the marginal seats.

With all their campaign eggs in the parliamentary basket it was fortunate for TWS that Fraser, who could not act, was replaced by Hawke, who could and did.

Alliances

TWS tried to gain support from a range of groups for their wilderness Campaign. Direct approaches were made by full-time activists and, like Pedder campaigners, they developed systematic and persistent techniques. Some politicians, for example Doug Lowe, responded to this electoral pressure. Lowe took the unprecedented step of questioning the HEC's proposals, declaring the Wild Rivers National Park and nominating key wilderness areas for the World Heritage List. But TWS did not know how to build support within the ALP - they learnt this lesson later on the mainland - or how to get the unions on-side, and Lowe's support in the electorate was not a sufficient defence against an internal party vote which removed TWS's influential friend from the leadership.

But there were potential allies in Tasmania. Because the HEC absorbed over half of Tasmania's capital works budget, other government agencies were starved of funds. These government agencies were potential allies. If the activities of the HEC could be curtailed, money would become available for badly needed government projects in housing, education, roads, ports and so on. Small business had reason to oppose the HEC, since small business subsidised the bulk electricity users. With hydro-industrialisation clearly not fulfilling its promise of prosperity, and with unemployment high, the labor movement was another potential ally.

TWS was able to present a simple critique of HEC plans because flaws in the HEC's logic stood out like a sore thumb. But debunking electricity demand predictions is not the same as developing alternative employment strategies, suggesting a restructured tariff system or arguing for different allocations in the State budget. The TWS emphasis on wilderness made building alliances difficult, the interests of the three potential allies would have been furthered by limiting the power of the HEC but TWS failed to draw them into the Campaign.

A single issue, like whether to build the dam, will be seen differently by different groups in society. In order to gain the support of these groups, and to weld them into an alliance for a particular campaign, the issue must be presented to the potential ally in their language. TWS was unable to present its campaign in terms of the other people's concerns. This was a missed opportunity. An alliance with any of these groups would have given them more weight in the conflict.

CONCLUSION

TWS based the Campaign on parliamentary pressure and pursued this strategy skillfully. They used their resources effectively and provided uncompromising leadership, which enabled them to maintain public support and put pressure on politicians.

But even a well-executed campaign based on parliamentary pressure has limitations. The Franklin campaign demonstrates these limits. The parliamentary pressure strategy in Tasmania showed the same deficiencies. Individual support was not enough. Without the support of powerful groups the Campaign suffered many setbacks.

Having exhausted all possibility of applying parliamentary pressure in Tasmania, TWS took their Campaign to the mainland using the same parliamentary pressure strategy. The Campaign had early success, as it had had in Tasmania, convincing many MPs, including the Prime Minister. But again, individual support was not enough. The ideology and power base of the Liberal Party prevented intervention.

But favourable circumstances refined campaign skills and greater public support enabled TWS to climb onto the ALP bandwagon and together the incoming party and the environmentalists rode to victory.

NOTES

[*] In 1981 bulk consumers were subsidised by domestic consumers at a rate of \$47 per quarter, small business were paying even more.(31)

[**] The United Nations, through UNESCO, maintain a register of environmentally and culturally significant sites throughout the world. Nations who register sites with the World Heritage Commission also sign a treaty, the 'World Heritage Convention', which obliges them to protect the sites. Only national governments are able to deal directly with the World Heritage commission, but because of Australia's federal system it is the states which have power over most land-use decisions. For this reason the national government in Australia can only make nominations at the direction of a state government.

[***] 'Standing in court' is the legal right to take action in a court. It is usually determined by proof of economic interest in the issue in question. In the case of TWS, 'standing' was established through its 'Wilderness Shops' whose trade depended on the existence of the wilderness.

[****] There were reasons to believe that Fraser would never intervene. Privately he held a grudge against the ACF, the chief representatives of environmentalists in Canberra. Until 1972, the ACF was a gathering of conservative scientists and business people, including Malcolm Fraser an up and coming politician. This group had outraged Pedder campaigners by accepting the pro-HEC decision without a fight. In 1972, the establishment-oriented committee was removed through a coup umpired by Prince Phillip.(32) Fraser did not forget this and for the seven years he was Prime Minister, he refused to meet representatives of the ACF.



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

EVENTS INTO IMAGES: MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE FRANKLIN CAMPAIGN

INTRODUCTION

Some people pick up the morning paper expecting to find an impartial presentation of the news. Others look at it critically understanding that because of the paper's slant and the editorial process they will not find an impartial presentation. Still others avoid the big dailies altogether arguing that it is impossible to get anything worthwhile from the 'filthy capitalist press'. These three attitudes are all found among environmentalists and activists in other campaigns.

Each attitude produces a particular style of campaign. The first group may look on the papers as a forum for debate, but if they expect even-handedness they will be disappointed as they will find that ownership of the press and the editorial process influence the way things are reported.

The second group sees the media as a tool to be picked up and put down at will. They believe that at times the media can be used to get their arguments before the public. But the media does not sit passively waiting to be used, nor can newspaper reports be the framework for a public education campaign, as most newspaper coverage is of events not issues.

The third group sees their interests and those of the media as fundamentally opposed, and so avoid tangling with the media at all in their campaigns. Their issues are easily excluded from mainstream politics, and few people outside their group become aware of their concerns.

Is there any reason for activists to chase press coverage? TWS recognised that they needed to be on the mainstream political agenda, and they realised that it was not possible to get on the agenda without dealing with the media. TWS made newspaper coverage an integral part of their campaign. The aim of the campaign was to create the political environment in which the Federal government could intervene to stop the dam. TWS devised a media strategy to help build a climate of opinion favourable to Federal intervention. In this they were eventually successful.

TWS paid a price for their affair with the media. Some said they won a shallow victory: by adopting the limited goal of stopping the Franklin dam, in their effort to get onto the political agenda, they missed the chance to tackle wider social issues like alternative energy strategies.

Such dilemmas will always face activists. This chapter analyses what TWS gained and lost in the media battle as pro- and anti-dam forces fought for public support.

THE DISTORTING MIRROR

Dealing with the media requires an understanding of their character and how they see themselves.

The media in Australia present themselves as both impartial and objective. They claim that freedom of the press is part of the foundation of democracy. This claim is based on the idea that the press provides the public with information which can be used to create policy alternatives.

But like washing detergent, there are many brands of newspaper in Australia, and only a few owners. Murdoch, Packer, Fairfax and the Herald and Weekly Times, own all of Australia's major newspapers.(1) Their concentration of ownership extends to television and radio. The press barons' financial interests, which spread well beyond the mass media, preclude coverage likely to jeopardise other business interests.(2)

In order to sell advertising the paper must have a specific audience. The content is intentionally restricted to avoid offending members of the target group. In this way financial necessities further restrict the opportunities for debate.

Journalists working in this environment imbibe the ideology of impartiality and see themselves as spectators not players in the political game. They value this detachment from events above all else. But the involvement of journalists in the editorial process of selection and presentation means that they cannot be impartial observers, nor can they present 'news' objectively. Four things shape the presentation of news. Journalists are required by space and time limitations to select fragments from the mass of raw data. They tend to censor views which contradict their own papers' slant. Third, because they can't be seen to be supporting a particular group the story must be written in a way which cloaks their own views and reflects the views of a wide variety of consumers. Fourth, they use stereotypes as a form of shorthand, and as a way of making events recognisable.

Because of monopoly ownership, the demands of the market place, and the editorial process, the media presents a distorted reflection of the world. If freedom of the press is a cornerstone of democracy, then democracy in Australia could be on a firmer footing. The media monopolies and the demands of the market place mean that the media cannot be impartial.

To activists in a media battle the media's self image as the detached, impartial spectator, is doubly hard to grasp. Activists can see that coverage, whether antagonistic, supportive, indifferent or non-existent, has a bearing on the progress of the campaign.

THE MEDIA BATTLE

The strategies of TWS and the Tasmanian government reflected the nature of the media they were trying to woo. While the strategies were similar each side rallied around different community values. Gray chose state's rights and TWS World Heritage. Both sides relied on a sympathetic relationship with journalists to promote their chosen focus.

The HEC ignored the importance of a close relationship with journalists. Their uncooperative approach cost them media points.

TWS Media Strategy

The Blockade was a vehicle by which TWS could further demonstrate to the politicians that there were votes in the Franklin issue.

Over the years TWS had established friendly relationships with journalists. To implement their media strategy, they complemented the friendly relations with an infrastructure of telex, telephones and radio links in Strahan. Two media co-ordinators wrote to every national media organisation with details of accommodation, transport and the communication facilities.

During the Blockade TWS used a team of up to six people to back up the two co-ordinators. This team answered routine inquiries, issued media statements by telex, held media briefings and up to forty live interviews daily.

From their market research TWS had a good idea of which anti-dam arguments would catch the attention of a national audience and they chose to fight on those terms. Waving the flag became part of the campaign. They argued that the conservation of the Franklin was an affair of national pride. TWS called the dam vandalism and said that the river should be saved for future generations (Age 8.1.83). The concept of heritage was also found to be important and this was reflected in predictions of world contempt for Australia if it were built (Age 15.12.82).

TWS sought to pre-empt criticism that they threatened law and order by committing themselves publicly to nonviolence and friendly relations with the police. TWS presented a Christmas moratorium on action as a gesture of goodwill to the police. The gift of Christmas at home with the family also established that, beneath the conflict, TWS shared important community values.

TWS attempted to establish the legitimacy of their case in two ways. They showed that there was a constitutional obligation on the Federal Government to intervene. They also fielded a bigger team of 'experts' and public figures than the other side. For example academics, whose appeal was based on knowledge, and pop stars, whose appeal was based on personal fame, were approached throughout the campaign in an attempt to boost support among diverse groups. All these different thrusts were brought together by a Blockade in which many people demonstrated their commitment to the river by being arrested.

Gray's Media Strategy

Premier Gray already had an infrastructure of phones and telexes, and winning and dining journalists is standard practice in political life. Gray's campaign was based on state issues. While he reached for a well-used set of slogans like 'law and order' he gave them a distinctly Tasmanian emphasis. Gray consistently argued that Tasmanians had a right to control their own destiny and that his government was the rightful mouthpiece of Tasmanian opinion.

He tapped the deep Tasmanian mistrust of the mainland. He portrayed the Blockaders as outsiders and intruders, and ignored the large number of Tasmanians involved in the protest. He worked at creating an impression of consensus over law and order and of outsiders coming in and flouting Tasmanian laws. Gray and other politicians stressed the jobs that the dam would create and linked its construction to the state's prosperity and progress.

The HEC's Media Strategy

The HEC had always had the ear of Tasmanian journalists who could not afford to ignore their power. They approached the Blockade so confident of their position that they did not deign to answer growing criticisms or to woo the media. This policy backfired when they gave offence to journalists from the mainland.

In December, the HEC had refused permits to journalists who wished to travel freely in the area of the damsite. Reporters were considerably annoyed at the HEC attitude. A Nationwide report televised after the first week of actions shows the dangers of snubbing journalists. A group of television journalists landed their helicopter inside HEC boundaries without a permit, and police threatened to impound the helicopter. Journalists lashed out, and broadcast film of the event. The voiceover said: 'You don't argue with the man with the truncheon', and was accompanied by the Gilbert and Sullivan song 'A policeman's lot is not a happy one'. They then sped up previous footage of police activity and set it to Keystone Cops music to reinforce their ridicule. This attack on both the HEC and the police was a publicity bonanza for TWS.

Police Media Strategy

Because the police were involved in the conflict between TWS and Gray, they featured in the media. Unlike the HEC they took this opportunity to continue a long standing media campaign. The theme was familiar: the impartiality of the police force. The Tasmanian Police Association criticised Gray's more inflammatory remarks, and simultaneously a police spokesperson criticised Blockaders as a group of people planning to disrupt law enforcement.

In this way they presented an image of impartiality and of law enforcement officers 'just doing their job'. Despite their enforcement of a law introduced with clear political purpose the police managed to avoid being seen as the agents of Gray's policy.

In their desire to play down the conflict TWS reinforced the impartial image of the police. TWS later felt they could turn the law and order myth on its head by exposing the illegal actions of the police. In indignation they accused police in the media of cutting telephone lines, and harassing blockaders. The accusations failed to dent the police image which TWS had reinforced themselves.

ANALYSIS OF NEWSPAPER AND TELEVISION COVERAGE

Assumptions about the media can be tested by a detailed study of what is covered and what is omitted in news presentation. Our analysis of newspaper and TV coverage during the Blockade led us to certain conclusions. These conclusions were consistent with the results of a similar analysis of coverage of the Roxby Downs Blockade and the Pine Gap Womens Action in 1983(3).

1. NEWSPAPERS

We surveyed the newspapers of the period 15 November 1982 to 15 March 1983. Since the Blockade was part of the wider anti-dam campaign the newspaper coverage of the Blockade was always intertwined with other aspects of the Campaign. We placed each of the 701 articles that appeared in the Age, the Canberra Times, and the Mercury in categories according to the main thrusts of each article. Our analysis is based on the proportion of coverage received by each topic.[*]

The ideas and issues that impelled TWS to wage the Campaign were translated into events at the Blockade. By and large it was these events that were reported rather than the arguments for or against the dam.

What Got In?

What got into the newspapers was not what TWS put out but a selection of items from TWS, Gray and other sources that the newspapers chose to present to their readers.

Shared wire services and national syndication of articles meant that some feature articles and photographs appeared in all papers. But often they covered the same events quite differently and local bias was apparent. For example in response to the decision of the Fraser Government not to intervene:

'TASMANIA TOLD IT CAN BUILD DAM' (Canberra Times)

'FEDERAL INTERVENTION ON DAM - OUT

Victory on dam'

(Mercury)

A difference between the mainland papers and the Mercury can also be seen in their reports of the findings of the Senate Select Committee on South West Tasmania :

'SENATE COMMITTEE SAYS "NO DAMS"' (Age)

'S.W. REPORT URGES THREE YEAR BAN; BLOW FOR DAM PLAN' (Mercury)

The Mercury's headline reflected a local determination to fight on, while the Age's slant suggested the conservationists had won.

i) The Tasmanian Papers

In general TWS got sympathetic coverage from mainland papers while the Mercury supported Gray. The Mercury's coverage of the Franklin dispute reflected the pre-eminent position of the HEC in Tasmanian affairs. The HEC's ideology of hydro-industrialisation had been absorbed by all major Tasmanian institutions, including the Mercury. They equated the dam with prosperity and until this ideology was challenged the dam could not be questioned.

For many Tasmanians the economic consequences of the dam overrode the environmental considerations. Powerful local interests had much to lose if the dam didn't proceed. TWS opposition was insufficient to change the slant of the Mercury's coverage. During the media battle, the Mercury sided with Gray and the HEC, reporting Gray's statements three times more often than Brown's. They ran twelve editorials on the dispute, all in support of Gray. They focussed on Tasmanian politicians and local unemployment. It was through the Mercury and other local papers that Gray was able to run his 'state's rights' campaign.

Local opposition to the dam couldn't be completely ignored. During December they published an equal number of letters from each side, and TWS celebrities were covered if they were in Tasmania.

ii) The Mainland Papers

The mainland papers, who had no stake in the local controversy and who viewed hydro-industrialisation from a distance, were more open to TWS's criticisms of the dam. Editorials on the topic in the Age (there were five) and the Canberra Times (three) were all against the dam. Both papers criticised the non-interventionist stand of the Fraser Government as weak and unprincipled. During December the Age printed six pro-dam and forty six anti-dam letters. In response to a pro-dam feature article in the Age (14.12.82), they published eleven letters that attacked the feature and only two in support. The Age and the Canberra Times

covered Gray and Brown, with almost equal frequency: the Age covered Brown five times to every four times it covered Gray; the Canberra Times covered Brown three times to Gray four. The pro-dam bias of The Mercury shows how important it was for TWS to fight the media battle on the mainland.

What did the Papers Report?

Only a few aspects of the dam conflict were chosen as news. Front page coverage on the mainland included the performances of politicians and pro-TWS celebrities. The first few civil disobedience actions also made it to the front page largely because of the anticipation and suspense built up by TWS's careful public preparation and Gray's predictions of violence. This was typical of the character of items in the newspaper generally. As Figure 1 shows, over half the coverage was celebrities, politics, actions, and legal events.

Celebrities like David Bellamy and Dick Smith were the main theme 100 times over the four month period. It seemed that the rich or artists or singers or establishment figures had only to arrive at the Blockade to appear in the newspapers. The simple anti-dam message was repeated by the many celebrities but it was their performance that gained the coverage, not the message itself.

Newspapers chose their celebrities carefully. They sought figures who they thought had authority. When the threat to the Kutikina cave was discussed it might have been expected that Tasmanian aborigines would have been interviewed, but only anthropologists' opinions were printed.

Because the newspapers needed to interpret the complexity of the Blockade through a single human face Bob Brown was made a media personality. The political debate was also presented in terms of personalities. The conflict between federal obligation and state autonomy was portrayed as bouts between Brown and Gray, Fraser and Gray, Chipp and Gray, with other figures like Anthony, Hodgeman and Bjelke-Petersen on the sidelines. Throughout the conflict, Gray's belligerence, Fraser's indecision and Brown's idealism and readiness to negotiate were the dominant themes of mainland articles. Although the Mercury had different heroes and villains the debate was still presented through personalities.

The newspapers were attracted to the early civil disobedience actions and reported the growing tally of arrests like a cricket score. Some used the numbers as a measure of public support like an opinion poll. Courtroom drama also attracted the attention of reporters onto the courtroom. Newspaper tradition made legal arguments an area where events were described in detail.

What the Newspapers did not report

What was actually at issue in the Franklin dispute : questions of unemployment and the state economy, the preservation of wilderness and aboriginal sites, gained proportionally little coverage. Surprisingly, even a topic like alternative energy options in Tasmania received only 2.7% of total coverage, and most of this was provoked by Doug Anthony's pre-election visit to Shell coal reserves in northern Tasmania.

Politicians and other protagonists often mentioned issues of substance but the papers reported these as assertions. The reader was not provided with any evidence to evaluate the different options.

Even though TWS had had the sympathy and understanding of many journalists and had provided them with excellent support in Strahan, and even though they achieved a high place on the news agenda gaining as much space as any campaign is likely to get, the coverage of issues was minimal.

This forces us to the conclusion that newspapers are not a forum for the discussion of substantive issues.

Newspaper coverage of the Franklin Dam dispute

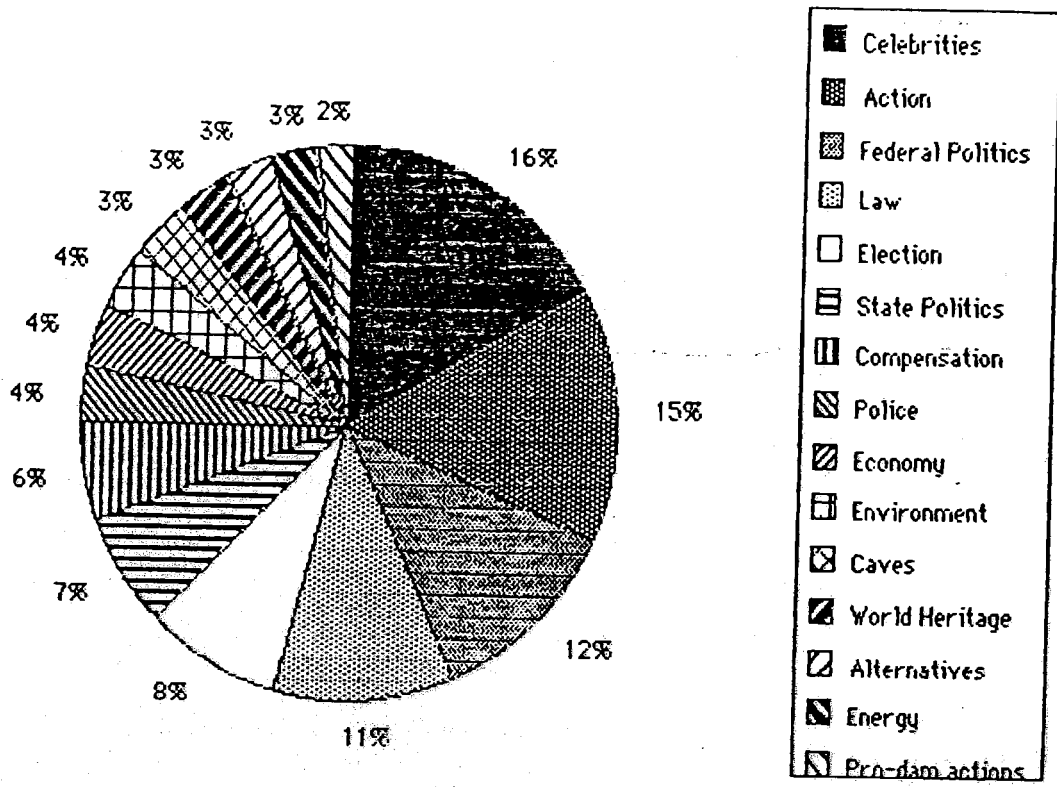
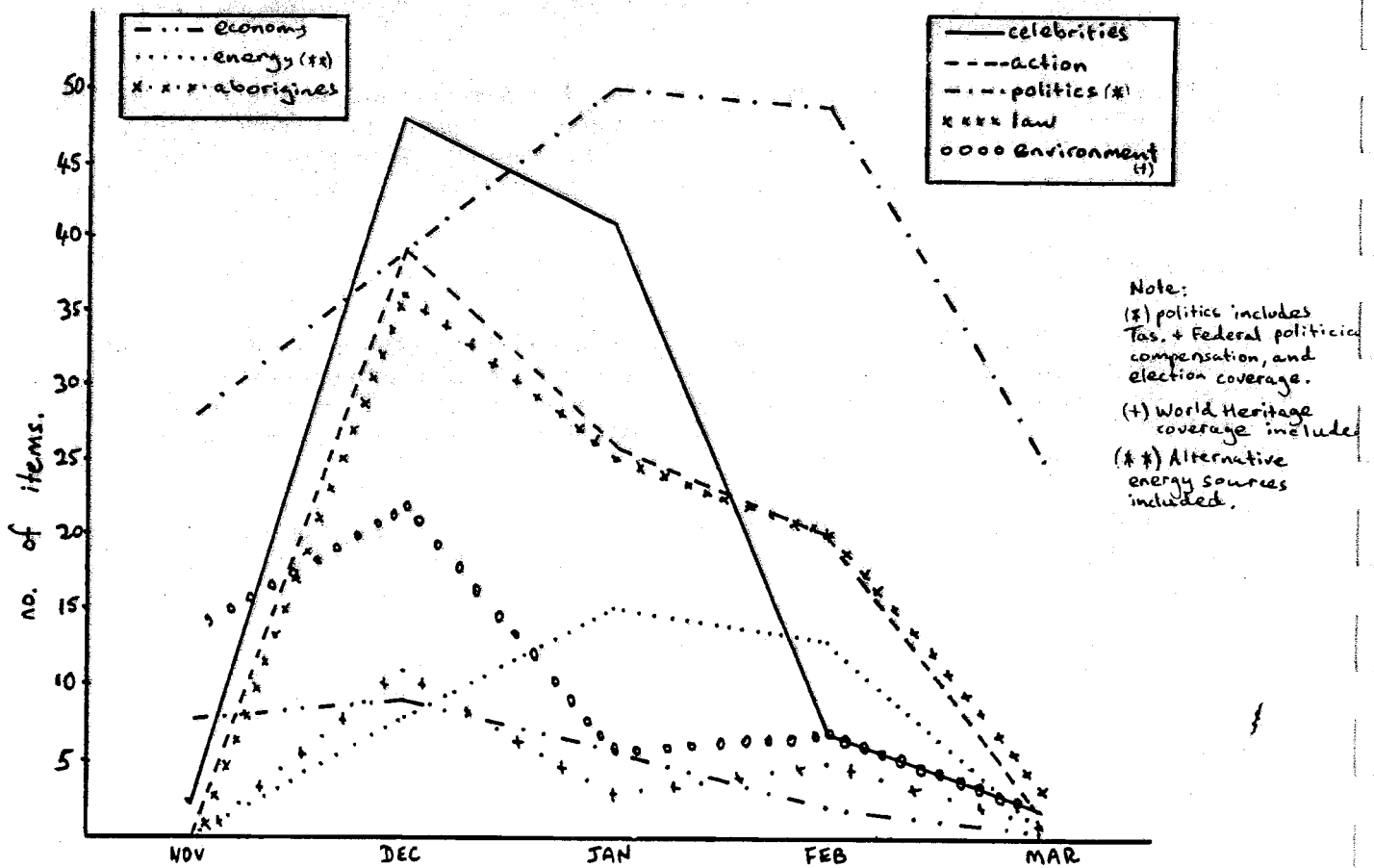


Figure 1: % coverage of different topics.



Note:
 (*) politics includes Tas. + Federal political compensation, and election coverage.
 (+) World Heritage coverage includes
 (+) Alternative energy sources included.

Figure 2: Changing coverage over time.

How the News Agenda Changed

The Franklin dispute stayed in the news throughout the period we surveyed, but it did not always appear in the same form nor did it always have the same prominence. Newspapers continually demand new angles and TWS had to respond with new events. No one topic could consistently hold a high place on the news agenda.

Figure 2 shows how the content of news items changed over time. In a flurry of speculation before the Blockade, articles relating to the environment appeared with increasing frequency. They dropped away dramatically once it had begun. The peak of newspaper coverage occurred as the beginning of the Blockade coincided with the World Heritage listing for the South West of Tasmania and debates in Federal parliament.

Eyewitness reports of actions were frequent and extensive for the first few days of the Blockade because there were many journalists in Strahan. When the pattern of trespass and arrest emerged journalists were withdrawn and the eyewitness reports were replaced by arrest tallies and court reports that could be gathered from a distance. The Christmas moratorium briefly revived interest in actions because of speculation about a change in tactics for January. Coverage of daily civil disobedience actions then became sporadic.

The Blockade had a limited life as a news generator. Fortunately, just as its news momentum was flagging the federal election was announced. The papers continued to report the dispute but in the more familiar terms of electoral politics. Together with the compensation offers that it produced, the election became the new vehicle for TWS publicity as speculation began about TWS' election strategy. Coverage of politicians and the Franklin continued through January and February.

2. TELEVISION : PICTURES AND IMAGE BUILDING.

Television accommodate a more diverse audience for its news programmes than newspapers. Television news does not claim to explore issues, only to present events. But of course it can only present a glimpse of the event. These glimpses are not random or impartial but are chosen and interpreted by reporters, camera operators and editors.

The basis of television is the picture. A television news item is a 30 second selection of the available pictures. These pictures create a brief impression of the event. Viewers put the pictures alongside their own opinions and experience, and interpret what they see accordingly. In this way one item produces many private news stories.

Our analysis of television news in Hobart showed that both channels presented similar pictures and like the newspapers concentrated on celebrities, arrest tallies and events in general rather than substantive issues. Local television did not support the dam in the same way the Mercury did. Local news and local attitudes are more expensive on television than in a newspaper. A Hobart television station must rely on 'foreign' programs and advertising and local news must take second place.

The Franklin Blockade, while it was a local event, was national news and was packaged for a national audience. Supporters of both sides could have watched the same reports of the first month of the Blockade and seen their opinions reflected. It is also true that the pictures played an important part in TWS media battle by presenting and reinforcing a positive image of protesters and providing eyewitness evidence that the area was worth preserving. But the pictures alone would not have undermined the opinions of those predisposed to support Gray.

One element of the television coverage which benefitted TWS was the picture presented of Bob Brown. He provided a human face and charismatic leadership for the campaign. He not only spoke impressively but the image he conveyed was that of a visionary. This other worldly aura made Gray's political manoeuvring seem grubby.

The beauty of the wilderness provided pictures which continually reinforced the arguments for preservation. (It was no accident that the wilderness image was frequently repeated as TWS had

provided the stations with broadcast quality videotape of the area). On 13 December both channels showed an aerial shot of a helipad that the HEC had cut in the middle of otherwise untouched forests. A week later Doug Anthony was arguing that the dam was a Tasmanian issue, but his words were accompanied by pictures of the wilderness.

The pro-dam cause found it difficult to link the pictures of the site with their arguments. Gray tried to create a different image of the river by calling it a 'brown, leech-ridden ditch' (4) but the TWS image of the river was already too well-established for such a direct challenge to succeed. A different image, using, for example, the myth of the pioneer who tames the wilderness, could have been created. But Gray did not present any image with enough vigour. The difficulty of his task was compounded by having to pit the hypothetical against the real. The yet-to-be-built dam could not be filmed, while the chaos of construction could be easily used to support the anti-dam view. The HEC also made Gray's job of image creation more difficult by antagonising journalists and so attracting unsympathetic coverage.

The discipline of protesters on camera conveyed a positive image of the protest by preventing the capture of unfavourable pictures. On 13 December channels showed well prepared groups setting off up river. On the 19th, the ABC showed film of neatly stacked equipment in the clean and well-organised Strahan camp. On Channel 6, Gray painted the protesters as fanatics but the pictures on the screen were of Bob Brown in collar and tie cheerfully chatting to his arresting officer.

In contrast, at Roxby in 1983, cameras found an exuberant crowd trying to move trucks which were blocking the road, the excitement looked like chaos to the television audience. The voice-over described the protest as violent and, to all appearances, the pictures backed this up.

TV cameras did seek out the weird and unusual at the Franklin. But the pictures were of those belonging, as Channel 6 said, to the 'middle-class short-haired majority'. This made it difficult for viewers to see the protesters as fanatics, as Gray was asking them to do, in an attempt to undermine the legitimacy of the protest.

THE DILEMMAS OF A MEDIA BATTLE: HEADLINES & DEADLINES.

TWS's disciplined and consistent public face was responsible for its success in the media battle. Behind this facade there were disagreements and disputes which reveal some of the dilemmas of running a campaign with at least one eye on the media. In their determination to pursue a successful media strategy made a series of compromises.

Stereotypes

When Gray stereotyped protesters as 'drop-outs' (Mercury, 17.12.82) TWS refuted the claim by producing statistics to show that most Blockaders did have jobs. A response more in keeping with many Blockader's attitudes, but perhaps more risky in a media battle, would have been to question the underlying implication that the unemployed are second-class citizens and have no right to enter political disputes.

TWS maintained the image they desired by insisting on strict codes of behaviour and dress: 'Brush your hair and clean your teeth - Australia is watching', said some Melbourne organisers in a telegram to Strahan. Such attitudes caused friction. Blockaders rejected the suggestion that Australian flags be flown, feeling that it would have been taking image creation too far.

Press Releases

Disputes arose as media deadlines put pressure on spokespeople to ignore the decision-making process. Spokespeople were constantly under pressure from journalists to translate the protest into headlines, and to interpret the events of the day without consulting other Blockaders.

An example of this was the release of a press statement at the end of December predicting 'guerilla tactics' in January, before tactics for the new year had been discussed. Some Blockaders felt that the statement not only pre-empted such discussion, but that the effect of the statement on the image of the Blockade had been negative.

Figureheads

As figurehead of the campaign, Bob Brown played a valuable role : not only did he appear to be the leader who could be relied on to make sure the protest was responsible, he also came across as a charming person who people could respect. But some people thought the existence of a figurehead undermined the egalitarian principles and non-hierarchical ideals of the Blockade.

Organisers of other actions have refused to provide a Symbolic Protestor for the media. At Pine Gap media spokespeople rotated to prevent the establishment of a figurehead. The media thwarted this strategy by focusing on Sister Gleason(5), who was presented with the same other-worldliness as Bob Brown had been. She was the human face they sought.

In the case of the Roxby direct actions, media bias about uranium mining aside, it would not have been easy for the media to portray the protests as organised without someone who appeared to be in charge.

Celebrities

Celebrities benefited the campaign by attracting extensive coverage. However their celebrity status often resulted in them being seen as more important than other protesters. Pressure built up to bend the rules for their convenience : often they claimed to be too busy to remain in Strahan for the training period. Special rules for special people went against the ethos of the Blockade.

Tactics

Actions were planned around media deadlines. Controversy arose when priority was placed on actions that were carried out early in the day and that were accessible to journalists. Those who emphasised the tactic of trying to stop work wanted to have actions throughout the day and sometimes in inaccessible places.

(The HEC took advantage of these deadlines. For example, the first bulldozer delayed starting work until after media had left to meet their deadlines for the day. The second day's bulldozing would still have made dramatic film but it would no longer have been 'news'.)

Media Stunts

Some events were purposely ignored by journalists who claimed that they had been staged cynically for publicity alone.

There is a fine line between turning an issue into an event so that the media can cover it and staging events for publicity alone. An understanding of the media's taste for events and an acceptance that journalists see themselves as impartial and detached, makes the distinction between seeking crude publicity and transforming an issue into a media event more apparent.

Journalists fear no attack on their impartiality when they are asked to cover stunt-athons for the Red Cross since support for the Red Cross is thought to be universal. But when activists stage a stunt to get publicity for a 'political' issue, journalists fear accusations of partisanship and their sense of detachment from the news is threatened. Journalists are more likely to be sympathetic to an action which is not seen as being for publicity alone, and which occurs independently of the journalist's presence.

Limited Aims

There is little place for subtlety in a media battle. TWS felt that it had restrict its demands in order to have an appropriate target for its media battle. It was tempting to shorten the odds and restrict themselves to a battle over the Franklin dam. Many activists have said that there was no point stopping one dam as the builders simply started work somewhere else. But hydro-industrialisation would have been an ambitious target even for TWS's style of campaign.

ACCEPTING THE MEDIA'S TERMS?

TWS had to tackle all these dilemmas to wage its media battle. Campaigners will always be faced with similar decisions about the degree to which they will accept the media's terms. At one extreme will be those who will accept no compromise of any ideal and who will reject any attempt to 'dress up' for the media. At the other extreme, are those who think that the advantages of a successful media campaign are so great that they will accede to any of the media's demands in order to win.

TWS was more up the latter end of the continuum. They accepted without question the terms that the media sets. It was necessary to have a simple slogan, to have achievable goals, and to translate the issues into reportable events. It may not have been necessary to take such a hard line in creating a 'respectable' image for the protest. If they had been less enthralled by the media and been more confident of the strength of their own position, they might have been able to carry some of the wider critiques of growth economics on the back of the 'No Dams' campaign.

WHY TWS WAS ABLE TO FIGHT A MEDIA BATTLE

TWS were able, as Mungo MacCallum said: 'to convince the media, who in turn convinced the politicians, that not only was support for the dam the moral equivalent of burning down orphanages, but it was a political issue.'⁽⁶⁾ Less tangibly, the TWS victory raised the morale of social change groups both inside and outside the environment movement. People for whom the Blockade was their first experience of direct action, and there were many, are more likely in the future to participate in political action.

The media battle was a central part of a wider strategy. Not every group that has tried to wage a media battle has been successful. Not all groups have had as strong a base to fight from as did TWS.

Public Education

As we have seen it is the events and images of a campaign rather than the issues which will appear in the media. TWS turned their issue into events and the media carried images of the events to the public. But TWS had already made a strong connection between the issue and their protest. When the events and images appeared, people could link them to the issues because of the years of continuous public education through the alternative media, slide shows, talks, publications and submissions to Government.

A public education campaign must be continuous in order to keep pace with the sequence of events directly related to the issue. It must also counter the flow of arguments and continual reinforcement of opposing assumptions and values. To overcome their antipathy to protest the community must understand the issue. Other groups attempting to emulate TWS's media success have translated their issues into direct actions. But without an adequate public education campaign they have found that public attention remained focussed on the act of protest.

Some issues are easier to translate into powerful images than others. The S.W. of Tasmania is photogenic and was easy to produce beautiful pictures and compelling events.

Tapping Community Values

Formulating some issues in ways that will tap the values and preconceptions of potential supporters may require activists to choose to run with some arguments rather than others. The Tasmanian 'Wilderness' Society made the preservation of wilderness the central theme of the campaign. Market research showed that people did not have a preconceived notion of wilderness as a 'good thing', but that people did value areas of World Heritage. Once the campaign focussed on World Heritage it began to generate mass appeal.

TWS has now returned to the concept of wilderness and is promoting its value in the community so that wilderness status can be used in the future to generate support for saving an area.

The Strength of the Opposition

If the opposition can run a strong media campaign using universal values then the activists' task is Herculean. TWS was able to side step a strong opposition. Gray completely outflanked them in the Tasmanian newspapers by linking the dam with the concepts of progress and prosperity. But TWS was in a unique position of finding a media battleground on the mainland where World Heritage outranked Tasmanian prosperity, and the politicians they convinced outranked those they didn't.

CONCLUSION

This chapter demonstrates that protest groups have much to gain from a strategy which understands and includes the mass media. But the limitations of this forum are substantial. The ownership of the media and character of 'news' mean that many campaigns will have difficulty establishing legitimacy and will be at a disadvantage in a media battle.

Many campaigns owe a lot to the existence of radio stations, newspapers, magazines, and film and video outlets that are outside the control of Government and commercial media. The alternative media provides a forum for a wider range of opinions and can better deal with issues. But the audience of the alternative media is small, and will have to get much bigger before the alternative media can influence the agenda of the mass media or before it can have a significant influence on Australians' opinions and values.

An important step towards increasing the size of this audience is for a wider range of community groups to participate in the alternative media by running their own programmes, writing features, and providing information, stories, news and events.

Until the alternative media is able to reach a wider audience, organisers have no choice but to work within the current mass media to get their issues onto the political agenda.

NOTES

[*] We analysed three newspapers: the Mercury (Tasmania), the Age (Victoria) and the Canberra Times (A.C.T.). These papers were chosen because they are from different states because they covered the Blockade and associated events extensively.

The method used to record data from the newspaper coverage was to pick out the main themes of each article. This enabled us to establish patterns of coverage over time. We based categories on the facets of the Campaign that were covered most frequently.

We have presented the main thrust of news reports or protagonist's arguments rather than recording the actual number of times they were reported saying something.

The sample consisted of 346 articles from the Mercury, 196 from the Age and 159 from the Canberra Times. TWS scrapbooks were an invaluable source.

[**] We used videotapes, made by TWS, of all ABC and Channel 6 news broadcasts between 12 December 82 and 17 January 83, to analyse both the pictures and spoken words.



CHAPTER FOURTEEN

LOCAL ALLIES

INTRODUCTION

TWS needed a base in the South West for their Blockade. They found an ideal place in the tourist town of Strahan. The town was not only well-placed geographically, it was also the only place on the West Coast where there was a significant anti-dam feeling among the local people.

Realising that without a secure base and the assistance of townspeople the protest would fail, TWS went to some lengths to build and maintain a local alliance : conferring with residents in the run-up to the protest and consulting with them while it took place. During the Blockade, townspeople supplied resources including a campsite in town and transport from Strahan to the River Camp for Blockaders.

Having the protest on their doorstep polarised the community and, after three months of conflict, even staunch no-dams supporters were glad to see the Blockade dismantled, although this did not resolve the bitterness in the town caused by the Blockade.

THE TASMANIAN WEST COAST

Support for the Campaign

Strahan was established as a port for trade in Huon pine from the Gordon River and for minerals which came by rail from Queenstown. When the Huon Pine was cut out and the ore was diverted to another port Strahan was left with one primary industry : fishing. But toxic tailing-waste from Queenstown smelters damaged fishing in Macquarie Harbour, forcing the fleet to fish in the ocean. The shallow sand-bar at the harbour's mouth makes it impossible to base large fishing boats in Strahan and this prevents the industry from expanding. Strahan turned to tourism and now 60,000 tourists visit Strahan each year for scenic cruises up the Lower Gordon River and to the site of the infamous Sarah Island penal settlement in Macquarie Harbour.

The Morrisons, a family with a powerful place in the local community, have a close association with the Lower Gordon. They first worked cutting Huon pine and exploring the rivers. Building their own boats from the pine, they began to run cruises up the Gordon River. The Morrisons have long given an anti-dam commentary to passengers on the 'Denison Star', arguing that forests on the banks of the Lower Gordon would be killed by salt water making its way up-stream against the reduced flow of the dammed river, and that the remaining rainforests would be destroyed by the bushfires which accompany human intrusion.

Conservationists who rafted down the wild rivers and who caught a lift on the 'Denison Star' back to Strahan, realised they had some allies in the South-West. In Strahan, opposition to the dam strengthened in mid-1982 when the HEC announced plans to build a road to the damsite along the most beautiful stretches of the riverbank. This contradicted their earlier claims that the dam would have no visible impact along the tourist route.

Support for the dam

Strahan was a divided town : some people were dependent on preservation of the Franklin and Lower Gordon, others saw their future in the dam's construction. One earth-moving contractor relied on the 'hydro' for 80% of his business.(1) He and others saw the options as the dam or the dole. A tour operator, in competition with the Morrisons, saw potential business in boating and fishing on the dam pondage.

Outside Strahan nearly everyone on the West Coast supported the dam. Most West Coasters live in a mining town, like Queenstown, Rosebury and Savage River, or a hydro town like Tullah. The depression in copper prices led the Mount Lyell Company in Queenstown to retrench workers. The outlook for mine workers in the region is grim. With the Pieman hydro scheme nearing completion,

The promise of a thousand or more jobs on the Gordon-below-Franklin scheme was eagerly received by the West Coast community. It is not surprising that they had little time for preserving rivers. The fear of unemployment found expression in the Organisation for Tasmanian Development (OTD). The OTD began in Queenstown in November 1982 and gradually built support both there and in Strahan.

THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN TWS AND THE LOCALS

During 1982 Blockade planners made frequent visits to Strahan. They liaised with supporters, negotiated with officials, asked business people whether Blockaders would be welcome customers, and worked out what behaviour townspeople would find unacceptable. Gradually they built a solid base of support for the Blockade, and many Strahan residents offered practical assistance.

TWS found three valuable allies, including the Warden (Mayor), on Strahan Council. TWS was able to negotiate the use of the Council camping ground, the 'People's Park', until early January, when community pressure built up and the Warden and supportive councillors found it increasingly difficult to justify the presence of Blockaders on Council property. Strahan Camp was then moved to private land three kilometers out of town. The Camp was a convenient base for training it also provided easy access to action sites: the River Camp, the Crotty Road, and Strahan itself.

The Morrissions transported Blockaders to the River Camp free of charge in their semi-retired cruise boat the 'J-Lee-M'. This helped the Blockade in three important ways. First, the 'J-Lee-M' made it possible to have actions on the photogenic banks of the Gordon, and to monitor the destruction of the area. Second, control over access to the 'J-Lee-M' enabled TWS to screen out unsuitable participants, and maintain the respectable, nonviolent image of the protest. Third, the long boat trip and isolation of the River Camp increased the excitement of the Blockade and attracted more protesters.

Locals gave more than material assistance. Some showed their support by bringing morale-building refreshments to protesters Blockading the HEC wharf at Strahan. Behind the scenes many argued the anti-dam case with friends and relatives. This created a climate of opinion which allowed people to give public assistance without being isolated and ostracised, and made it hard to develop the hysteria necessary for the pro-damers to run the greenies out of town.

Maintaining Goodwill

A few goodwill gestures were made by TWS: they organised foreshore rubbish collections, gardening teams for elderly people, and a clean-up on Sarah Island. They invited anti-dam locals to Strahan Camp. But otherwise most blockaders had little contact with the local community as most liaison was done by Information Centre workers. In an attempt to reduce the pressure on anti-dam locals, sober behaviour was encouraged: Blockaders were asked to keep out of town as much as possible, to avoid the one pro-dam pub in particular and drink and dope were prohibited.

The separation was to some extent motivated by a fear of violence, and, unfortunately, Blockaders often gained the impression that all locals were antagonistic. Some protesters made little attempt to be friendly and polite, others were careless of the support of anti-dam locals and smoked dope on the 'J-Lee-M' against the wishes of the owner. Others went further and showed a lack of respect for the local community, going to the anti-dam pub, singing protest songs and demanding to be served.

A group in the local community that were ignored by Blockade organisers were those without strong opinions on the conflict. Some residents were indifferent about the dam but definitely resented the invasion of their town. Some people, who were forced to share their home in the caravan park with hundreds of Blockaders, were consistently blamed by police for any trouble. (2) TWS supported police when they charged one of these people after a scuffle inflamed by one of TWS's own media personalities. Believing the motivation for any hostility was based on pro-dam sentiment, and fearing retaliatory violence, TWS did not attempt to find a way to satisfy the unwilling hosts and so alienated part of the town.

The welcome wears out

The fears of a violent pro-dam reaction were not unfounded, Blockaders were often harassed. Insults, punches, pushing and shoving, and bricks through the window of the Information Centre fuelled the antagonism between Blockaders and some in the Strahan community. Some pro-dam locals put blockaders under close surveillance, even following them out to the tip! By late February, the OTD mounted counter-demonstrations in Strahan and a move was made against TWS allies on the Strahan Council. In March 1983, Queenstowners who owned holiday shacks in Strahan and local pro-dammers defeated the three Councillors who had supported the Blockade, including Harry MacDermott who had been Warden for 20 years. Harry said :

'The end of my official involvement [in Strahan Council] was in sight from the beginning of the Blockade. I had been asked to resign on two occasions leading up to the Council elections and had refused. The other two retiring Councillors were also anti-dams and it was clear that a well organised campaign to replace all three of us was being mounted. This was strongly supported by the OTD, which in turn was supported by the Premier, Queenstown Council, various politicians from various parties and some unions. The result was predictable : all retiring Councillors were defeated.'(2)

Though local pro-dam pressure did not stifle the Blockade, the two-and-a-half months of confrontation with neighbours and relatives wore down local supporters and by the Federal election, few were willing to continue their support. It was fortunate that the Blockade ended when it did.

CONCLUSION

Strahan residents and TWS were able to build an alliance on their shared opposition to the dam. This alliance grew through the efforts of the Information Centre workers and the commitment of the locals to the preservation of the River. It was important to the Blockade that its local allies were powerful people in the Strahan community.

The Forest People's protest in East Gippsland, Victoria, in January 1984 shows what the opposition can get away with if there is no alliance between protesters and sympathetic people in the local community. The situation in East Gippsland was already tense when the Forest People arrived : conflict over the forests just over the border from the Eden woodchip mill had been raging for years.

The Forest People did not consider the position of local conservationists, who had no strong economic or political base in the region and who had been struggling, with some success, against the 'hippie' stereotype for years. When the Forest People arrived, with their bare feet and cosmic ideals, demanding 'an end to all logging on the planet', they were a publicity gift to the sawmillers. Once the Forest People were discredited it was a small step to discrediting all environmentalists in the region. With the opposition neutralised, sawmillers were able to create panic by convincing people that these outsiders would be able to halt all logging within weeks. Loggers rushed in every available vehicle to get the last logs out of the forest. At the same time as this torrent of anti-greenie feeling was sweeping through the community, the Forest People tried to open 'debate' and called a public meeting which stopped just short of an all out brawl. Now it is a brave person in East Gippsland who says they are a greenie. By ignoring the local community, the Forest People brought down not only themselves but also made life very difficult for local environmentalists.

There is no doubt that TWS benefitted from their alliance with local people. Their willingness to see the locals' point of view was important in sustaining the alliance throughout the Blockade. TWS tried to help its allies as much as possible, they consulted locals before the Blockade began and during the protest insisted on sober behaviour in the town. Realising that they were stretching the goodwill of local supporters, TWS tried to put something back into the community. They tried to minimise these tensions by keeping Blockaders out of the town. If there was a weakness in their approach it was that not every Blockader understood the extent of co-operation between residents and the visitors. Keeping Blockaders out of the town also kept them out of the picture, and some, in their ignorance, were careless of the hospitality of the townspeople.

Even several years later the bitterness of the 'civil war' still remains in Strahan. Direct action by its nature, will disrupt local life, as it uses the local area as a stage on which to enact the wider conflict. Local people cannot walk away from the scene of the conflict : a protest group has the responsibility to consider this and minimise its impact.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

AN ALLIANCE WITH THE LABOUR MOVEMENT?

INTRODUCTION

The Franklin Campaign saw workers and environmentalists move from antagonism to tentative cooperation. The Campaign began in an atmosphere of mutual distrust and during the Blockade the two groups confronted each other in blockades and counter-blockades. Late in the Campaign some environmentalists turned their attention to developing opposition to the dam among local unions. They prepared a jobs package which outlined alternatives for those expecting employment from the dam. This work produced a brief alliance between unions and environmentalists and the package was used by Gray and Hawke in their compensation negotiations.

The fragile alliance between environmentalists and unions had been difficult to achieve but the effort was worthwhile. The package gave TWS credibility in government circles and widened their base of support.

This chapter looks at both the basis of mistrust between the two groups and at the shared interests that make an alliance between workers and environmentalists both possible and desirable.

STEREOTYPES

Confrontation between environmentalists and workers is reflected in stereotypes that have been fostered about each group.

To many people unions are an aggressive group who pursue their own interests at the expense of 'national unity'. They see union demands coming in 'an endless procession, prodding seemingly passive employers for concessions'.⁽¹⁾ The mass media reinforces this image by frequently presenting unions as the instigators of industrial conflict. This dislike of unions is an attitude held by many who themselves belong to a union. The antipathy is taken a step further by some environmentalists, in their eyes, unions support development and the growth economy and so are the opponents of environmentalists.

A popular view of environmentalists is that they stand in the path of progress and the wealth produced by industrial development. People believe that if environmentalists had their way they would lead us back to the stone age. This view is held by many unionists, who think environmental campaigns threaten their jobs. The mass media support this idea when they portray environmentalists as back-to-nature hippies with airy-fairy ideas.

When each group sees the other in the stereotypes fostered by the powerful and when this suspicion is aggravated by the different class base of each of the movements, there can be little contact between the groups. If environmentalists could see behind the stereotype of a unionist and could show unionists that the stereotype of a greenie is not true, then both groups would find that they have in common a desire to challenge the current assumptions about how to organise our economic system.

Unions : defenders of workers or selfish troublemakers?

Unions are the organisations that have grown up to protect the interests of working people. The basis of their legitimacy is that they represent their members' views. Union officials spend much of their time on routine industrial relations for example ensuring the provision of safer machinery or advising the employees of a conservation group in a dispute with their management committee. Little of the work appears in the media, one seldom reads of disputes settled or new wage rates negotiated without strike action, though these events are common enough.

The unions' role is to act on behalf of their members in disputes but when they perform this job they are seen as disrupting industrial harmony. Conflict is, however, unavoidable; employers try

to improve profits at the expense of wages, they have the power to move their industry to take advantage of cheap labour in the third world, to impose new technologies without consultation, or to persist with unsafe and unhealthy work practices. Such decisions are clearly not in the interests of workers and must lead to conflict. In this conflict it is the employers who have the initiative while, most of the time, unions are 'engaged in essentially defensive or protective operations stimulated by changing circumstances outside their control'.(2)

How unions see their role

Over the years, unions have established a beachhead of legitimacy and sympathy in the community. Moves to protect wages and working conditions have wide support and few can make the public claim that there is no place for unions. Even a Liberal Party leader has said that there would be an outcry if 'someone sought to restrain the activities of the trade union movement going about its legitimate business'.(3)

But many employers do not accept that unions have a right to bargain for workers, and they seek to erode the legitimacy that unions have established. These employers argue that unions threaten the 'national interest' and cry that 'unions are running the country'.

Many unions have a narrow definition of legitimate union business. To them union business is wages and conditions; they try to minimise conflict and seek advantage within the system. Other people in the labour movement believe that unions have a right to be involved in wider social issues. Jack Munday has said that 'the workers' movement, in order to play a meaningful role must engage in all industrial and political, social and moral struggles affecting working people as a whole'.(4) This broad view of union business has a strong tradition in Australia and unions have tackled a wide range of issues over the years: anti-conscription strikes during the first World War; bans on the shipment of pig-iron to Japan in the thirties; and the first Australian national strike, over Medibank, in 1976.(5) It is among these unions which see themselves in conflict with employers and which believe they have a mandate to represent workers in all things that affect them that there is the potential to build worker-environmentalist alliances.

ENVIRONMENTALISM - NEITHER RIGHT NOR LEFT?

Labour and capital continually struggle over investment strategies. Employers fight to reduce production costs and reduce wages through deskilling and automation, so they can increase the return on their investments. Unions look for investment strategies which will create more and better paid jobs, that will increase spending on health and safety, and which promote jobs that are designed to be skilled and interesting.

Environmentalists have no power to influence this debate since they control neither labour nor capital. Neither unions nor employers are likely to stop what they are doing to listen to environmentalists shouting advice from the sidelines. The only way to change economic activity which cause environmental damage is for environmentalists to join with either capital or labour in the struggle over the shape of future investment strategies. But in the past, environmentalists have consciously avoided identifying with either labour or capital claiming that the conflict between left and right is irrelevant.

The green view of politics has two sources. Environmental groups tend to be staffed and supported by the middle class which has little direct experience of the conflict between capital and labour. Further, the vague understandings they gain, give the impression that both sides are interested in material considerations alone whereas environmentalists wish to promote an alternative balance sheet which includes non-material criteria in economic decisions.

In order to increase their bargaining power, with whom should environmentalists ally?

Gains can be made supporting capital. The interests of capital are not monolithic. Fraser, a conservative Prime Minister banned whaling in Australia and stopped sand-mining on Fraser Island because it served his political ends at the time, but investors will not accept any long-term plan that changes the framework of economic considerations. Their assumptions do not favour environmentalism. Conventional economics says that a forest or whale converted to cash today is

worth more than if it is conserved even for a few years : the profit from today's ex-whale can be re-invested and return interest, there is no return on living whales. Professor Charles Birch describes their view: 'Harvest all you can now even to the point of killing off all elephants and whales, and your economic return for all time will be greater than for any program of long-term sustained yield.'(6)

Unions may also be unsympathetic to attempts to bring environmental considerations into economic equations. Some unions will oppose any attempts to move them away from their base of wages and conditions, others may see environmental concerns as a diversion from the main struggle with employers. But those unions which take a broader view of workers interests will want to include environmental and human values in their claims. Actions have already been taken on green issues: the Green Bans, opposition to uranium mining, and to Melbourne's Newport power station.(7) Unions with a broad view know that current investment strategies degrade both the environment and the worker, producing black lung, RSI, and three-fingered timber millers. In the long term, unions are the more promising group for environmentalists to work with in their attempts to change Australian assumptions about 'good economics'.

THE HISTORY OF AN ALLIANCE

The contact between the labour and environment movements in Tasmania shows how good relations between the two groups helped, and antagonism hindered, attempts to change Tasmania's economic direction.

Lake Pedder and the United Tasmania Group

During the campaign to save Lake Pedder in the early 70's there was little opportunity for unionists who opposed the scheme to express themselves politically. At the time Pedder was flooded the right dominated Tasmanian labour. Some unions criticised HEC plans through executive motions but there was little chance to take this opposition further. Although some Pedder campaigners were active in the ALP, few understood its factional nature or its relationship to the labour movement. Among environmentalists in Tasmania there was a belief that distinctions between left and right were irrelevant, both seemed to be pro-development. Environmentalism was seen to transcend the distinction between left and right which was viewed as 'an archaic manifestation of a growth society'.(8)

Because there was a marked similarity between the parliamentary wings of the major Tasmanian parties - each insisting that Pedder was not an issue - Pedder campaigners formed a party of their own. The United Tasmania Group (UTG) contested the state election but failed to win a seat. The appearance of the UTG at the polls alienated supporters of the ALP and cut environmentalists off from those pockets of the labour movement critical of the HEC.

When TWS emerged in the mid-70's, UTG people were important in establishing its direction and style, and the antagonisms between labour and environmentalists which the Pedder campaign had created were brought into the new organisation.

Pedder to Franklin

There was some positive contact between workers and environmentalists during the 70's. Paralleling actions on the mainland, Green Bans were imposed in Battery Point, one of Hobart's oldest suburbs.(9) A Workers Environment Action Group was part of this protest and in 1978 it spawned Tasmanian Environmentalists for Full Employment (EFFE). EFFE had a short, productive life-span. They produced a booklet 'An Energy Efficient Future for Tasmania' which outlined methods for producing electricity and jobs. EFFE also helped to get progressive energy policies onto the ALP books. By early 1980, EFFE had faded away, and from this time until the last crisis stages of the Franklin Campaign there were no environmentalists concentrating on making sustained contact with labour.

ACF dabbled in the economics of hydro-industrialisation in their book 'Power in Tasmania'.(10) This forbidding book, although full of good dirt on the HEC, was inaccessible to non-specialised readers and it lacked specific alternative proposals. Considering this book to have provided all the economic analysis necessary for the campaign, TWS activists turned their attention elsewhere.

Above all, they wanted to win the hearts and minds of Federal politicians and mainland journalists. The mainland audience was not interested in the details of Tasmanian economics, and TWS found that in most of their dealings with the mainland public the broad argument that the dam was ridiculously expensive job-creation was enough to carry their case. Communicating economic alternatives to the labour movement was not made a priority as it was not clear to campaigners how important union support could be.

TASMANIAN UNIONS AND THE FRANKLIN CONFLICT

In a state which often tops the national unemployment averages and which relies on the shaky hope of hydro-industrialisation, local unions struggle to hold their members' jobs. The Gordon-below-Franklin scheme offered, at its peak, around a thousand jobs. Very few of these would have lasted the full ten years construction was expected to take, but as the scheme progressed from road-building and earth-moving, through building and construction work, to the final electrical engineering, many skills would have been required. Every major Tasmanian union would have been involved in some way.

In the late 70's, some officials in unions largely dependent on the HEC, were arguing against the state's continuing reliance on expensive power schemes.(11) But the strength of the ideology of progress and its peculiarly Tasmanian connection with dam building meant that they were unable to maintain their criticism. As the conflict grew, the pressure to maintain members jobs and the leverage applied by supporters of the HEC at union elections silenced progressives. An indication of union support for the HEC can be seen in their acceptance of the HEC's preference for contract labour on the Franklin scheme. In other situations unions had refused to accept contract labour knowing it would lead to an erosion of working conditions; the Dept. of Main Roads had tried to use contract labour some time earlier, and had been faced with a walk-out.

Progressive union officials were forced to lie low through this period of fawning to the HEC. There were no environmentalists to offer practical help in internal power struggles, and TWS preferred to describe the problem in environmental language rather than in economic terms which outlined alternative job strategies. Later, when public criticism of hydro-industrialisation gathered momentum, open links with TWS were politically impossible. For example, a union committee, specifically formed in early 1983 to develop a critique of hydro-industrialisation, and which had close links with environmentalists, found it necessary to begin a pamphlet by saying: 'While Gray, Hawke, and the conservationists have been pushing their own political barrows around the dam issue, very few people have been looking at the reasons why our economy is in such bad shape.'(12)

At the Blockade

By the start of the Blockade, TWS and the unions were entrenched on opposite sides of the political fence. The official TWS attitude to those who would be working at Blockade sites was one of neutrality, and was summed up by Bob Brown in an editorial in 'Wilderness News': 'Our stand is not against the contractors, workers, or police ...'(13)

In the Tasmanian climate of hostility towards the Blockade only one union made a public statement about its relationship to the Blockade. This was the Federated Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Association(FEDFA) which represented drivers of earth-moving equipment on the site. On the day before the Blockade began, Jim Challis, State Secretary of the FEDFA, announced that the union would not allow its members to work under police supervision. He guardedly gave FEDFA support for the dam but said that work would stop if a physical confrontation developed. He said: 'Unless the area is made safe we are not going to work it.'(14)

This message was repeated after reports of confrontation at Warners Landing in January, some drivers, however, were more determined to continue work than their union officials.(15) Generally, workers in the Lower Gordon area watched the antics of greenies with a mixture of amusement and scepticism: the Blockade livened up a day's work without significantly interfering with the tasks at hand.(16)

THE ORGANISATION FOR TASMANIAN DEVELOPMENT

Many people on the West Coast were scared by impending unemployment; Gray and other politicians were offering jobs and blaming environmentalists for Tasmania's economic problems, and TWS was not doing much to counter this. The influx of Blockaders and the focus of national attention on the usually isolated West Coast catalysed the formation of a pro-dam pressure group - the Organisation for Tasmanian Development (OTD). This group was based in Tullah, a hydro town near the HEC's Pieman scheme, an hour-and-a-half by road from the Blockade centre in Strahan.

Although the OTD began as a local reaction to TWS, it soon became the vehicle for expression of non-government pro-dam sentiment throughout Tasmania, superseding the Hydro Employees Action Team (HEAT), a pro-dam lobby group set up in mid-1980. HEAT had brought together senior engineers and blue collar workers at the time Lowe was tempting the advancing environmentalists with the Olga compromise.(17) It would have been in the interests of Gray and the HEC for pro-dam lobbying to be taken up by the OTD - a working class group which was not associated with the government or the HEC and which could be portrayed more easily than HEAT, as representative of majority opinion. OTD organisers were able to tap into the fears of West Coast people about their future. They did not widely publicise criticisms of the substantive arguments against the dam, but relied on slogans like 'Fertilize the South West - Doze in a Greenie'. In the media they were presented as the muscle behind Gray's tough stand, but their reliance on anger and personal abuse won them few points.

The climax of months of tension between environmentalists and many West Coast workers came in late February, as the Federal election approached and a change of government seemed likely. The OTD mobilised for a confrontation with Blockaders. Pam Waud describes how TWS organisers feared this action: 'They would blockade our blockade and get all the publicity for the pro-dam cause. The rumours have been vicious, violent and sickening - the facts almost as threatening. Two hundred Tullah workers given the day off and heading for Strahan; the camp to be invaded; threats that the J-Lec-M would be sunk; and it went on....'(18) The day was tense and characterised by stand-off confrontations which did not go as far as the threats.

BRIDGING THE GAP

The Blockade attracted some environmentalists who had experience of working with unions. They were able to persuade TWS to put some money behind the development of short-term job alternatives for the Franklin workforce and long-term options for the Tasmanian economy. Projects were sought which met the following criteria:

1. The projects must utilise the skills of the Franklin workforce.
2. Planning must already be advanced so that projects could be implemented without delay.
3. Projects must be administered through existing channels.
4. Projects must be positive contributions to the state's economic and social structure.(19)

Tasmanian Government departments had not stopped planning even though they had been starved of funds for years while more than half the State's budget was devoured by the HEC. This meant that there were many projects which fitted the criteria: school building, upgrading of roads and railways, sewage developments, extensions to fishing ports, extending tourist facilities, and re-forestation.

As well as bringing to the campaign new skills of economic analysis, the new researchers were also able to act as go-betweens: through contacts in a national union they were able to meet representatives of several Tasmanian unions who would not have been seen dead with a TWS activist. The union - environmentalist negotiations were delicate but eventually successful. Geoff Coleman said: 'We were aware of inappropriate employment alternatives advocated by environmentalists and employers in the past. A Tasmanian ALP member had seriously proposed that a macrame factory be built to provide work for those unemployed if the dam did not proceed. This was treated with the contempt it deserved but it had the effect of creating automatic suspicion whenever alternative employment was mentioned.'(20)

One outcome of these negotiations and the research effort was a booklet describing alternatives to hydro-industrialisation. This was organised by the union-based 'Jobs for Tasmanians Committee', with support from the environmental researchers. Twenty thousand copies of 'Tasmanians at the Crossroads' were distributed by the labour movement - a significant effort in a state with a labour force of one hundred thousand. 'Tasmanians at the Crossroads' was the first widely-circulated information critical of hydro-industrialisation produced by an organisation other than TWS. It spoke about the conflict in a way Tasmanians were eager to hear, and it prompted the ABC's 'Nationwide' team to spend a whole program discussing the problems of hydro-industrialisation and alternatives to it. This program created such interest that it was shown twice. The development of detailed alternatives to the dam allowed debate on this question among parts of the community which TWS, with its particular style and focus, had chosen to ignore.

THE IMPACT OF THE JOBS PACKAGE

Political Use.

The information in the jobs package was central to the compensation negotiations between Hawke and Gray. Gray had refused to let anyone from the State bureaucracy talk to Federal public servants, and so in order to get the information on which to base a practical compensation offer, Hawke needed the jobs package. It gave an idea what the money could be used for and how much was needed. Fraser had offered \$500 million with no strings attached, but this was seen by many as a bribe. With the jobs package in his hand, Hawke was able to present his compensation offer as a superior economic strategy which fulfilled his election promise by providing new jobs for the Franklin workforce and preserving the Franklin. The last-minute appearance of the jobs package allowed no time for those interested in an alternative economic approach in Tasmania to establish their criticisms and proposals in the minds of the electorate. Because the new economic strategy hadn't been emphasised alongside the threat to World Heritage, hydro-industrialisation ceased to be an issue when the dust of the Franklin conflict settled. Gray, although he lost the battle, was able to continue the war. He was under no obligation to spend the money as set out in the jobs package. In fact, the only proposals which have been implemented are several short-term road works which provided a transition for workers moving from the Franklin to two new hydro schemes on the King and the Henty-Anthony. Some money was spent on irrigation and on airports, but three quarters of the compensation money went to the HEC.

Union support.

TWS's assumption that the dam could be stopped without an alternative employment strategy cost them union support early in the campaign and made the anti-dam struggle that much harder. They made the strategic choice to pursue a campaign of parliamentary pressure with vigour and to put explaining economic alternatives to the unions into the too-hard basket. Both tasks required TWS activists to learn new skills but mainland lobbying seemed more important. For a long time there were no specific proposals to illustrate the TWS critique of hydro-industrialisation. Unionists doubtful about the HEC's vision for Tasmania had to back down when threatened with loss of jobs. Had the alternatives been openly discussed in the labour movement for longer, then these unionists would have had substantial arguments to support their doubts, and they would, perhaps, have been more critical of the HEC's plans. Union support from the start would have strengthened the Tasmanian ALP and made Gray's task during the conflict much harder.

If such an atmosphere had been created, conservative members of the "Jobs for Tasmanians Committee" may not have been in a position to include the promotion of the Henty-Anthony and King dams in the 'Tasmanians at the Crossroads' booklet. This in turn may have kept some political pressure on Gray to spend more of the compensation money on projects recommended in the jobs package.

Although anti-dam activists still have not taken up economic research and labour movement lobbying enthusiastically, there are now environmental activists in the Tasmanian ALP. Woodchip campaigners have made links with timber unions, and the Tasmanian Conservation Trust has published a 'Forest Industry Strategy'.⁽²¹⁾ The work of breaking down stereotypes and suspicions is continuing, but unfortunately it is still not a central part of environment movement strategy.

ACHIEVING ALLIANCES WITH LABOUR(22)

The possibility of alliances between the environment and labour movements exists in the common interests of the two groups; both movements gain from questioning the economics of growth. From their different perspectives each can point to the limitations of the ideology of progress, and together their critiques can provide the basis for better economic models.

Environmentalists have much to gain from forging an alliance with unions. The labour movement can offer the environmentalists the muscle of bans and strikes, and the dissemination of ideas through union networks. Environmentalists may also be able to collect information through these networks. Above all, the labour movement, with its established political apparatus, can provide its allies with access to the political agenda.

Environmentalists have a lot to do before such alliances are commonplace. Unionists may be suspicious of the stereotyped greenie. In the past, environmentalists have made unrealistic and inappropriate demands for union action. Unions have found that the little support they have had from environmentalists comes and goes. They are unlikely to risk hard won gains when they cannot rely on environmentalists support, and when there is little immediate benefit to be gained by taking action.

Sometimes the interests of unionists and environmentalists will not be the same. Unions themselves have different, and sometimes conflicting, short-term interests. Ideology will vary from union to union.

Union officials always have to consider 'the numbers', both inside the union and in forums like the Trades Hall and the ACTU. They are often under pressure from members to support a development solely because it provides jobs. A development that increases membership in a particular union is attractive to the leaders of that union as this increases their power base. Although the union movement as a whole has an interest in questioning economic policies based on the ideology of growth, it is very likely that it will be in the interests of at least one union to promote any given development.

Sometimes employers can drive a wedge between unionists and environmentalists. The demands of environmentalists are often depicted as a threat to the economy. Employers ask their workers to make a choice between 'jobs and trees' - production can continue as it is, or it can cease altogether. The possibility of altering production processes is seldom presented. The environmentalists' critique of economics allows employers to caricature environmentalists as indifferent to unemployment, and opposed to all forestry, all mining, all development.

Building the alliance

Opening useful communication with a union will not be as simple as finding their number in the phone book. The first job will be to find an intermediary who understands environmental issues and who is respected by power brokers in the union, for example, an individual unionist or someone in a labour research or resource centre. Contact can also be made through activity in a union or in the ALP.(23) Such involvement can create useful networks and at least will give environmentalists an understanding of the intricate world of labour politics.

Environmentalists have a lot to learn from labour about political cunning, and a union ally certainly doesn't need an environmentalist telling them what to do. Strikes and bans are well-known tactics but they aren't the only ones used by unions. A request for a strike or a ban will be refused unless there is a context of understanding and support among those who will carry them out.

The first task of environmental activists will be to learn what the union's perspective on the conflict is, and what they are trying to achieve. This will determine how to put the environmental argument, and will indicate what requests can be reasonably made. It will also reveal what environmental campaigners can offer the union. Unions capacity to carry out research is often limited and sometimes environmentalists have access to useful information such as government policy intentions or details of the long-term viability of projects. This research will be enthusiastically received if it is appropriate to the union's current political goals.

Months of hard work building contact can be undone by a careless word to a journalist. In any alliance press releases need to have the approval of both parties. Labour support for an environmental issue will attract the usual criticisms about 'unions running the country' and so unions will want to be cautious about how much the alliance is made public.

ECOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS AND ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES

Just as there is a wide spectrum of union attitudes, from those who are only concerned with wages and conditions, to those who are concerned with many social and political issues; so there is a spectrum of environmental attitudes, from those who seek only to understand and describe ecology, to those who see environmental concerns in a social and economic context.

In the past the social and economic analysis of environmentalists has been simplistic. Environmentalists have concentrated on explaining the ecological costs of development, but they do not have a good track record in explaining the social costs of developments they oppose or the social benefits of their counter-proposals. The community, including those in the labour movement, know that environmentalists reject the ideology of progress, but do not know what is being proposed to take its place. Although environmentalists have studied intricate eco-systems, they have not seen development projects as part of an interlocking economic system. Proposals for alternative employment have often tried to turn bulldozer drivers into cottage craftspeople. Environmentalists have not studied the internally consistent rules by which the present economy is run, understood the constraints on day to day decisions in industry, or taken into account the lives and aspirations of those who do the work. Such an analysis would allow them to challenge the flawed assumptions of the growth economy, and to present realistic and attractive alternatives that are an expression of environmental ideology.

The jobs package produced by Franklin Campaigners initiated discussion of alternative projects, the proposed projects could be implemented immediately, and they gained the support of union officials whose members would have worked on the dam. Without this sort of economic rigour, the proposals of other environmentalists will not attract labour movement support. Although nuclear holocaust or the destruction of ancient Huon pines may be important to individual unionists, they are not yet the stuff of political decisions in the labour movement. Environmentalists must continue to put forward their ecological arguments, but unless they are accompanied by sound economic alternatives unions will not be convinced to join environmentalists and fight for change.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

CONCLUSION

The Franklin Campaign aroused a passion for change in thousands of Australians. The environmentalists had done much of what was necessary for an effective social change campaign. Over six years they built a strong network of activists across Australia and they educated themselves in skills of political action. Then, when they engaged in conflict and ideological struggle with the power groups they were challenging, people rallied to save the river. When the time came to escalate the conflict into a direct action, they formed a coalition with other groups who shared their aims.

The TWS family was a good base for a campaign. The personal support that members drew from each other gave those who were eager but inexperienced a sense of their own strength to act, and gave encouragement to both the experienced and the inexperienced through the ups and downs of campaigning. As well as a sense of personal power, the family created a sense of collective power which generated enthusiasm and maintained morale. This sort of personal and collective power was passed on to Blockaders who were encouraged to form affinity groups and were then taken through techniques that build confidence, unity and mutual support.

TWS knew that there was conflict; that the HEC's vision of dams and their vision of wilderness were mutually exclusive. They knew that to win they would have to do more than be reasonable, see the other sides' point of view and come to a 'gentlemanly' agreement. Unlike many other environmental campaigns, the Campaign was characterised by persistence and a refusal to compromise. Despite the long odds they refused to be diverted from their aim. Although many argued the Olga was the best they could hope for, TWS stood firm, rejected the 'compromise' option and maintained their clear statement of opposition to the HEC. Many times the Campaign seemed to be lost but each time TWS regrouped and continued to fight. While the High Court considered the Franklin case TWS was discussing the strategy they would pursue if the decision went against them.

Where other groups would have balked at a direct action, TWS went ahead and confronted the HEC. Once the decision to proceed was taken TWS entered the direct action unreservedly; protesters trespassed and carried their protest through to jail.

The civil disobedience reinforced the point TWS was trying to make in the wider Campaign: the dam was being built in a National Park which was on the World Heritage List. TWS built an alliance with powerful local people and, having established their base in the area, they were able to stage the Blockade the preparation workshops. The image of consensus and the calm and polite behaviour of those being arrested kept public attention away from issues like law-and-order and concentrated it on the reason for the protest.

Environmental campaigners at the Franklin were in command of more political skills than most other environmental campaigners. They showed considerable logistical skills, staging complex and demanding events like the Blockade and the 83 election effort. The Blockade was the biggest environmental direct action ever seen in Australia. They prepared the public for the confrontation, supplied good facilities for their friends in the media, gathered ample resources, trained participants thoroughly, established friendly relations with the police, and organised a legal support team.

Their systematic and thorough approach was also evident in the wider Campaign. In fundraising, public education, lobbying and media work they set new standards of sophistication for the environment movement. Market research and advertising techniques played a significant role in TWS strategy decisions. Although this shocked purists who believed these techniques implied a loss of integrity, they put TWS in a strong position in the public debate. Where they could see the need for sophistication or a particular skill they tried to include it in their repertoire. For example they taught themselves the intricacies of the parliamentary process and this knowledge paid off in the 83 Federal election. When they realised that they lacked a skill but were unable, for whatever reason, to develop it themselves they brought in people with the expertise they needed.

The Franklin Campaign was aided by some lucky breaks, but TWS's hardwork and thorough approach allowed them to make the most of their good fortune and to see the dam stopped and the river running free.

The Future

Just as TWS activists learnt from and built on the efforts to save Lake Pedder, so campaigners can, looking back, benefit from the experience of the Franklin Campaign and Blockade, keeping the positive elements and strengthening those where TWS was weak.

By building a team which is cohesive and yet avoids being exclusive, and by continually drawing in, not only new members, but new activists. The team can then acquire the skills the campaign needs and encourage individuals both to become specialists and to have a working knowledge of each specialisation.

Future campaigners will have some hard thinking to do about who has power in the group and what structure will control and direct that power. Activists who have not thought about the not-too-enthralling topic of decision-making structures, have not decided how they want power to be distributed in the group. Without a decision-making system they will find it very difficult to work their way through differences of opinion, alternative strategies, the formation of new policies and decisions about tactics. They will find circumstance will make decisions for them.

The consideration of power and structure will come up again when the team forms a coalition with other activist groups. Unless the group is large enough to wage the conflict on their own, and this is less than likely for ambitious undertakings, formation of a coalition will be necessary. The differences between the members of a coalition can be resolved, at least temporarily, by prior negotiation and the cohesion maintained by the decision-making system.

Each member of the coalition should expect to make concessions in the formation of joint policy. Any campaign that is not organised by and recruited from a philosophically cohesive group of people will choose a political strategies that reflect the balance of power between the different factions.

By viewing their struggle in terms of power groups, conflict and ideology, campaigners can build a framework through which to understand their opponents and so predict their likely actions and responses. Because environmental campaigns challenge the status quo so directly, activists need help in order to defeat those with opposing interests. Environmental activists need to judge which power groups are antagonistic, which are indifferent, and which are potential allies, and to make attempts to influence many sources of power.

As in the Franklin Campaign, parliament can be pressured through the electorate, the party branches, influential supporters of the party, the party machine and members in parliament. A similar broad approach can be taken with other power groups especially those with common interests such as the labour movement.

Because the campaign will need to influence many power groups and pressure many sources of power it will need enough strategic flexibility to chose the most appropriate tactic at any time. Activists shouldn't feel it necessary to blockade every environmental atrocity or enter every election. When direct action is necessary, an understanding of the political nature of the legal system will allow the campaign to plan an effective challenge and to maintain tactical flexibility to the reactions of the opposition.

Activists have to deal with the media. The media supports wealthy and powerful groups in society and so is unlikely to promote ideas which threaten those interests. A group that directly challenges those interests is unlikely to do well in a media battle. Recognising this, activists need to work hard to present the campaign's position in a way which cannot be ignored and which gives on-side journalists opportunities to portray the campaign sympathetically. Even if sympathetic coverage is gained over an extended campaign, this should not diminish the caution that activists will have in dealing with the media for, despite its image of impartiality, the mass media is constantly reinforcing the dominant ideology.

All environment campaigns involve ideological struggle; to be successful, activists have to tackle the ideology which underlies policy decisions they are trying to overturn. To do this activists must present environmental ideas and assumptions in a way that people find believable. Successful campaigners should study the ideology they want to challenge so they can expose its inadequacies. They must understand their own ideology well enough to be able to explain it in non-environmental language.

There was a big difference between the Lake-Pedder bushwalkers' polite approach to officialdom in the early 60's and the sophisticated campaign of TWS in the 80's. This growth in power and sophistication was not easily achieved. There was fierce debate and internal conflict, organisers struggled to learn the skills of political action and to develop unity in the Campaign. No-one could say that Franklin Campaigners did not achieve a lot, but the weaknesses and mistakes of the Campaign show that environmentalists can learn at least as much again. The memory of the victory over the dam builders will be an inspiration to activists as they build on the experience and understanding gained in the Franklin Campaign. This process will be as difficult as the transformation the Pedder defeat into the Franklin victory, but the benefits of increased sophistication will be greater environmental victories.



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1. Henry Thoreau, On the Duty of Civil Disobedience, Signet, 1960, p. 228.
2. Tasmanian Parliament, House of Assembly Hansard, Attorney-General's Second Reading Speech, 23 Nov. 1982.
3. Hansard, 24 Nov 1982.

CHAPTER EIGHT - CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND THE COURTS

1. Lincoln Siliakus, Blockade lawyer, taped response to authors questions, 1983.
2. Some examples of this: 'The protest has taken on the appearance of rebellion.' Mercury, 13 Jan. 1983, p.3.; and 'People can raft down the Franklin, so long as they don't step ashore.' Mercury, 15 Jan. 1983.
3. Leonie Patterson & Patricia Lloyd, internal TWS paper, 1983.
4. Franklin Blockade Handbook, TWS, Melbourne, 1982, p.25.
5. Patterson & Lloyd, op. cit.
6. As well as these charges, two protesters were charged with resisting arrest, and five with prejudicing the safety of an aircraft.
7. Mercury, 24 Feb. 1983.
8. K. Warner, 'The dam blockade: some issues relating to organised protest and bail' in M. Sornarajah (ed.), The South West Dam Dispute - the legal and political issues, University of Tasmania, 1983, p. 136.
9. Mercury, 27 Jan. 1983.
10. Age, 3 Feb. 1983; Mercury, 13 April 1983.
11. Siliakus, op. cit.
12. *ibid.*
13. *ibid.*
14. *ibid.*; E.K. Braybrook, 'The law of trespass and demonstrations in the South West area' in M. Sornarajah (ed.), op.cit., p. 124.
15. Mercury, 13 April 1983.
16. Siliakus, op. cit.
17. Warner, op. cit., p.137.
18. Age; Mercury, 2 March 1983.
19. Launceston Examiner, 14 Jan. 1983, p.1.
20. Bruce Lavender, letter to authors.
21. Siliakus, op. cit.
22. *ibid.*
23. Scott Kennedy, 'Civil disobedience and legal strategy', in WIN magazine, 28 Jan. 1979, p.5.
24. Warner, op. cit., p.132.
25. *ibid.*, p.137.
26. *ibid.*, p.139.
27. Alan Cumming, Understanding Nonviolence, reprinted in Groudsweell, Vol.1, No. 3, 1983.
28. Fellowship Magazine, July/August 1977, Philadelphia; WIN, 25 October 1979, p.4.
29. Barbara Hammonds & other 'Karen Silkwoods', conversations with authors.
30. Harry Derkeley, Blockade lawyer, conversation with authors; Warner p.135.

CHAPTER NINE - UNDERSTANDING THE POLICE: THE VALUE OF DIPLOMACY

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2. Mercury, 28 July 1982.
3. Norm Barnwell, letter to authors.
4. "Operation Protection", South Australian Police Journal, October 1983.
5. Mercury, 13 January 1983.
6. *ibid.*
7. Kate Durkin and Annie Jacobs, letters to authors.
8. Quoted in Franklin Blockade, TWS, 1983, p. 84.
9. Mercury, 28 January 1983.
10. Launceston Examiner, 29 January 1983.

11. See Franklin Blockade, pp. 74-79.
12. Greg Sheehan in Franklin Blockade, pp. 74 & 78.
13. Launceston Examiner, 15 January 1983, p.2.
14. "Operation Protection", op. cit.
15. Brenda Parkes, interview with authors.
16. Bruce Lavender, letter to authors.
17. See for example, accounts by Greg Sheehan and Rolly Brown in Franklin Blockade, pp. 74-79.
18. 'Operation Protection', op. cit..

CHAPTER TEN - THE JAIL PROTEST: FURTHER CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

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2. Jim Hagan, The History of the ACTU, Longman Cheshire, 1981, p.226.
3. Saul Alinsky, Rules For Radicals, Random House, New York 1971, pp. 155-158.
4. Franklin Blockade, TWS, 1983, p.9.
5. *ibid.*
6. Mercury, 31.12.82.
7. Age, 30.12.82.
8. Cloward in 'Social Science Research Council' Pamphlet 15 : Theoretical studies in the Social Organisation of the Prison USA, 1960. Ch.2, p.8.
9. *ibid.*
10. Brenda Parkes, TWS Prison Support Team. Interview with authors.
11. *ibid.*
12. Karen Donaldson, Church and Nation, June 22, 1983, p.9.
13. Tony Faithfull, Groundswell, Vol.1, No.3.
14. Karen Donaldson, op. cit.
15. *ibid.*

CHAPTER ELEVEN - INTRODUCTION TO PART THREE: THE WIDER CONFLICT

1. Barry Commoner, The Closing Circle, Cape, London, 1972, pp. 33-48.

CHAPTER TWELVE - PARLIAMENTARY PRESSURE AND THE FRANKLIN CAMPAIGN

1. Jobs for Tasmanians Committee, Tasmanians at the Crossroads, 1983, p.8; Peter Thompson, Power in Tasmania, ACF, 1981, p. 23-25.
2. Roger Green, Battle for the Franklin, ACF/Fontana, 1983, p. 57.
3. Les Southwell, Mountains of Paradise, self-published, 1984, p.21.
4. *ibid.*, p.21.
5. *ibid.*, p.39.
6. Green, op. cit., p.124.
7. *ibid.*, p.125.
8. Southwell, op.cit., p.49.
9. Green, op.cit., p.140.
10. *ibid.*, p.125.
11. *ibid.*, p.212.
12. *ibid.*, p.124.
13. Southwell, op. cit., p.52.
14. Shann Turnbull, Tasmanian Power Options for Industrial Development, Small Business Association for Economic Power, 1981.
15. Green, op. cit., p.146.
16. Southwell, op. cit., p.55.
17. 'Public Attitudes Toward the Damming of the Franklin and the No Dams Campaign', Quantum Market Research, August 1982.
18. Green, op. cit., p.276.
19. *ibid.*, p.264.
20. *ibid.*, p.224-246.

21. *ibid.*, p.280.
22. *ibid.*, p.282.
23. Bob Burton, conversation with authors
24. Green, *op. cit.*, p.283.
25. Southwell, *op. cit.*, p.61.
26. Extract of Chief Justice's judgement, in Sornarajah, The South West Dam Dispute: the legal and political issues, University of Tasmania, 1983, p.22.
27. B. Galligan, 'The Dams Case: a Political Analysis', in Sornarajah, *op. cit.*, p.102.
28. Southwell, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
29. R. Connell, Ruling Class, Ruling Culture, Cambridge University Press, London 1977, pp. 122-6.
30. Galligan, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
31. Jobs for Tasmanians Committee, *op.cit.*, p.5; Thompson, *op. cit.*, p.149-151.
32. Southwell, *op. cit.*, p.34; Green, *op. cit.*, p. 62-65.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN - THE MEDIA AND THE FRANKLIN CAMPAIGN

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2. See Media Ownership in Australia, Margaret Gee Media Group, Melbourne, 1986. (For example, Fairfax and Herald & Weekly times together own 50% of ANM, AMP Insurance is a shareholder in Fairfax, Murdoch has a controlling interest in Ansett, Bic, pastoral coys. etc.)
3. Surveys of coverage of the Roxby Downs and Pine Gap Women's actions were done by Gill Shaw and Claire Runciman as part of the research for this book. (unpublished)
4. First said by Gray in July 1982, reported in the Mercury, 14 October, 1982.
5. e.g. Centralian Advertiser, Alice Springs Star, 17.11.83.
6. Mungo MacCallum in 'How the (South)-west was won', Simply Living, Vol 2, No. 1, pp. 17-18.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN - LOCAL ALLIES

1. Kevin Bailey, in Battle For The Franklin, Roger Green, ACF/Fontana, 1983, p. 291.
2. Tony Murphy, discussion with authors.
3. Harry MacDermott, Franklin Blockade. TWS, 1983, p.47.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN - AN ALLIANCE WITH LABOUR?

1. Ross Martin, Trade Unions in Australia, Penguin, 1975, p.129.
2. *ibid.*, p.129.
3. Leader of the conservative Liberal Party quoted in Tribune, 15 May 1985, p.2.
4. Jack Munday, ACF Newsletter, Dec 83, p.16. (Munday was NSW Secretary of the BLF during the Sydney Green Bans, and is an ACF Councillor.)
5. Cupper and Hearn, in Australian Labour Relations Readings, ed. Ford et al., 1980, p.50.
6. Habitat, Vol. 8, No. 4, Aug 1980, ACF, p. 25.
7. Cupper and Hearn, p.50.
8. Bob Burton, letter to authors. He is also the source of much of the historical information in this section.
9. see Hardman and Manning, Green Bans, ACF, 1976.
10. Peter Thompson, Power in Tasmania, ACF, 1976.
11. Notably in the Electrical Trades Union, the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union and the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemens Association. Thanks to Keith Tarlo for the background to this section.
12. The Jobs for Tasmanians Committee, Tasmanians at the Crossroads, 1983, p.3.
13. Wilderness News, TWS, Aug 82.
14. Mercury, 14 Dec 82.
15. Mercury, 25 Jan 83.
16. Authors conversations with workers at Gordon River HEC camp, Jan 83.
17. For more on HEAT and other pressure groups see: Green, Battle for the Franklin, p.171. & Southwell, Mountains of Paradise, p.50.
18. Franklin Blockade, TWS, 1983, p.104.
19. 'Immediate Non-Hydro Employment for the Gordon-Below-Franklin Workforce - A Preliminary Report.', TWS, 1983, p.1.

20. Geoff Coleman, 'TWS/Union Relations in the Franklin Dispute', presented to CCV Sustainable Forestry Economics Seminar, Aug 83, unpublished.

21. John Miller & Keith Tarlo, Forest Industry Strategy for Tasmania, Tasmanian Conservation Trust, 1985.

22. Thanks to Geoff Coleman for many of the ideas in this section.

23. Activists in environment groups could start by joining the Australian Social Welfare Union which represents them.



PART I: ONE VOICE, ONE MIND, ONE PEOPLE?

Chapter 4 - Preparing People for a Protest.

The content of the Franklin preparation workshops was largely derived from the exercises and ideas described in **RESOURCE MANUAL FOR A LIVING REVOLUTION** (Coover et al, New Society Publishers, Philadelphia 1978). This book covers the range of MNS activity in almost overwhelming detail. For many Australian readers the US language is a problem, but beneath this and the fervour for MNS ideology are some good ideas. The bibliography for Part II includes some other training manuals. The **FRANKLIN BLOCKADE HANDBOOK** (TWS, 1982) is still available and gives a clear idea of the preparation for the Blockade.

The changing role of preparation for civil disobedience actions is discussed in **THE NONVIOLENT ACTIVIST** (Vol. 3, No. 2, March 1986, War Register League, New York). Articles show that some US activists are trying to make 'training' more appropriate to the needs of particular actions, while retaining a strong commitment to a 'nonviolence' approach.

The attitude to the purpose of the Blockade taken by trainers at the Franklin was much influenced by Alan Cummings' **UNDERSTANDING NONVIOLENCE** (op. cit.). This pamphlet was written after the author's involvement in the 1981 Springbok Tour of New Zealand. It gives a simple rationale for nonviolent civil disobedience and explains the dynamics of such actions from a nonviolence perspective.

Chapter 4 - Stopping Work?

There are many accounts of other civil disobedience and mass protest campaigns. Many of these are collations of participants impressions or the first reactions of a single eye-witness. As such they give an idea of the exhilaration of participation in mass protest, but are often short on analysis or the detail required for analysis.

THE FRANKLIN BLOCKADE (TWS, 1983) is excellent impressionistic record of the protest, including evocative photos to eye-witness accounts. Unfortunately, it occasionally lets excitement over-shadow reality, and this, perhaps, is a warning to readers of other on-the-spot accounts.

Another book in this style, **BY BATONS & BARBED WIRE** (Tom Newnham, Real Pictures, NZ, 1981) covers the Springbok Tour of 1981. Among the bloody photos and stories of street-fighting are some interesting comments on the organisational structure of the protest group and on police motivations.

GREENHAM COMMON: WOMEN AT THE WIRE (Barbara Harford & Sarah Hopkins (eds.), Womens Press, London 1984) is a mix of participants accounts and analysis of the development of ideas of nonviolence and protest tactics at Greenham.

In 'Womens' Actions for Peace' (in **ARENA**, No. 66, 1984) Michelle Braid & Phillipa Rothfield discuss the relationship between womens actions at Pine Gap & Greenham and the peace movement as a whole. While endorsing these actions as independent feminist activity they argue for more critical evaluation of their effectiveness and significance.

Another campaign related to rivers & hydro schemes - in Norway in the early 80's - is discussed by Thomas Mathiesen in 'Civil Disobedience at 70 degrees North' (**CONTEMPORARY CRISES**, 7, Holland, 1983). This is an analysis of the way protest is diverted and corroded by media selectivity and pressure which forces an issue into the courts. When this article was written, protesters were facing large fines which discouraged mass civil disobedience, and media coverage of a court decision, which declared the project legal, was emphasising the opinion that the case was closed. The conflict continues!

Chapter 6 - Consensus: Resolving the Differences?

There are many books written about meeting procedures, but little has been written about the issues of selecting approach and structure for a particular organisation.

At one extreme, the procedure of the traditional meeting is set out in **THE LAW & PROCEDURE OF MEETINGS IN AUSTRALIA & NZ** (P.E. Joske, Law Book Co., Sydney, 1976).

The consensus model is explored in **BUILDING UNITED JUDGEMENT** (Center for Conflict Resolution, Madison USA, 1981). This book is a collection of ideas for making a consensus procedure work.

One article which does try to evaluate the pros and cons of consensus and voting procedures and to throw out some of the ideological weight which hangs on both is 'Consensus - Let's Vote on it' (Howard Ryan, **CHAIN REACTION**, 37, Mar-Apr 1984, **FOE**)

'The Tyranny of Structurelessness' (Joreen, in **SECOND WAVE**, Vol.2, No.1) is a 'classic' essay on the problems of an aversion to all forms of structure. It can be found in many feminist anthologies.

PART II - CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE: THE STRENGTH OF THE BLOCKADE.

Although much has been written about the moral imperative for civil disobedience, we have been able to find very little written about the practical use of the technique. Henry David Thoreau's **ON THE DUTY OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE** is a typical example of moral encouragement. Thoreau argues that people must act according to their beliefs and disregard the laws if necessary. In particular he discusses certain nineteenth century tax laws and slavery laws, justifying his own civil disobedience.

Gene Sharpe, in his **METHODS OF NON VIOLENT ACTION** (Volume 3 of **THE POLITICS ON NON VIOLENT ACTION**, Porter Sargent, 1983) says explicitly that the book will not discuss the strategy or tactics of civil disobedience. Because of this, his extensive case studies provide little help to the modern activist. In his book **SOCIAL POWER AND POLITICAL FREEDOM** (Porter Sargent 1980) Sharpe again discusses civil disobedience, but again the activist might be disappointed. Much of the discussion focusses on questions which are at best tangential to current debates on civil disobedience. For example, he discusses the question: 'Is organised civil disobedience justifiable in a democracy?!!'

The **WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE MANUAL** (E.Hedeman (ed.), WRL, New York 1981) provides more practical assistance. It includes a chapter 'Civil Disobedience Organising' - a recipe book-style overviewing outlining what civil disobedience is, its purposes and timing, dangers, planning and preparation. It gives a few examples of types of protest, and discusses the roles of arrest, court, lawyers and jail in civil disobedience.

Many of the handbooks produced for civil disobedience protests in the USA have useful sections on the legal system, and the type of information that should be made available to protesters. One example is **BLOCKADE THE BOMB MAKERS; CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE CAMPAIGN HANDBOOK** (June 14, 1982. C.D.Campaign, 339 Lafayette St. N.Y. 10012). This handbook contains articles on extending noncooperation beyond initial law-breaking.

Some of the civil rights literature from the USA provides some interesting comparisons with the Franklin material. Steven E. Barkan's discussion of 'Legal Control of the Southern Civil Rights Movement' (**AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW** August 1984, Volume 49, No.4, p. 552-565), reveals similarities between early civil rights direct actions and the Franklin blockade. The relationship between the State and Federal legal systems is one example: In the USA, the Federal legal system protected black protesters from white violence. At the state and local levels the law served as an effective instrument for preserving the status quo, but the defeat of the campaign was averted by US Supreme Court intervention.

Chapter 8 - Civil Disobedience and the Courts.

An anthology of political analyses and discussions of the legal issues surrounding the Franklin dispute can be found in **THE SOUTH-WEST DAMS DISPUTE; THE POLITICAL AND LEGAL ISSUES** (Sornarajah (ed.), The University of Tasmania Press, 1983). Two articles are relevant to civil disobedience, examining the issues around trespass and bail. These are 'The dam blockade: some issues relating to organised protest and bail'; and 'The law of protest and demonstrations in the South-West area'.

In 'Civil disobedience and Legal Strategy' (WIN Magazine, 28 January, 1979) Scott Kenedy discusses the role of court proceedings following major civil disobedience protests in the USA. He discusses issues such as whether to plead guilty or non-guilty, and whether legal victory always means strategic victory for the campaign. He suggests that many civil disobedience protest movements suffer 'death by trial', getting caught up in expensive, time consuming and divisive court battles.

Chapter 9 - Understanding the Police: The Value of Diplomacy.

To judge by 'Operation Protection' and other articles in the **POLICE JOURNAL** (1983) the police in Australia have a more sophisticated understanding of the dynamics of civil disobedience than have Australian activists. This particular issue of the journal is devoted to an evaluation of the police role at the Roxby Downs Blockade. The journal is highly recommended, for anyone wishing to understand police planning and administration, and their perceptions of their role in civil disobedience.

Chapter 10 - The Jail Protest: Further Civil Disobedience.

In 'Criminal Justice Reform: A critique' (in D. Chappell and P. Wilson (ed.) **THE AUSTRALIAN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM** 2nd. edit. 1977), D. Brown discusses the prison system in relation to the interests of the capitalist system, and explores the possibility of reform. Brown's article is a useful introduction to the area of crime and criminal justice in Australia.

The Australian criminal justice system is further explored in **LAW AND ORDER IN AUSTRALIA** by P. Ward and G. Woods (Angus and Robertson 1972). The book discusses the historical roots of the Australia's white criminal-justice system.

The links between the legal system and social control are extensively covered in the sociological literature. W. Chamblis 'A Sociological Analysis of the Law of Vagrancy' (**SOCIAL PROBLEMS**, 1964, volume 12, NO.167-77) is an excellent case study illustrates the link between ruling class interests and the creation of new laws.

'The Political Economy of Punishment' by J. Braithwaite (in E.L. Wheelwright and K. Buckley (eds.) **ESSAYS IN THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF AUSTRALIAN CAPITALISM** volume 4, 1980), links social control to economic power groups. He shows that jumps in the imprisonment rate in Australia coincide with major crises in Australian capitalism. The article includes a set of references to material on the topic of social control and the legal system. The author provides clear examples of the processes by which the image of deviance is linked to social-change groups, and protesters.

Descriptions of prisons and prisoners are also relatively easy to unearth. G. Rude, **PROTEST AND PUNISHMENT** (Clarendon press, Oxford 1978), provides an historical account of imprisonment, and deportation from Britain, of protest groups. The book includes details of the imprisonment of Luddites, Chartists and various Scottish and Irish nationalist groups.

A.K. Bottomley, **DECISIONS IN THE PENAL PROCESS** (Martin Robertson, 1973), discusses the use of the jails by the state and the general pattern of discretion in making internal decisions. He argues that security and control are not compatible with rehabilitation.

D.Biles, 'Who Goes to Prison?' in D.Edgar (ed.) SOCIAL CHANGE IN AUSTRALIAN; READINGS IN SOCIOLOGY (Cheshire, Melbourne, 1974) and D.Biles, 'Prisons and Prisoners' in D.Biles, (ed.) 'CRIME AND JUSTICE IN AUSTRALIA (Australian Institute of Criminology and Sun Books, Canberra, 1977) both provide background information on prisons and prisoners in Australia.

Barbara Deming's PRISON NOTES (Beacon Press 1966) is an excellent account of the month thirty civil rights marchers spent in jail in a southern US city. It is written from a strong nonviolence perspective.

G.Zdenkowski and D.Brown, THE PRISON STRUGGLE (Penguin, Ringwood Vic. Ch. 14, 1984) is particularly useful for people trying to identify existing currents and forces within the prison reform movement. The authors discuss the potential for prison reformers to forge alliances with unions and the left wing of the ALP.

A useful collection of US literature on Prisons is Cloward (ed.) SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL PAMPHLET 15, (1960). Chapter 15 is especially useful in discussing the induction process to prison, and inmate hierarchy. Chapter 1 discusses the rituals by which prisoners are stripped of their former identity.

H.Garfinkel's 'Conditions of successful Degradation Ceremonies' (AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY volume 61, March 1956: 421ff) is a classic study of the conditions under which individuals can be given new and degraded identities.

THE STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT (P.G. Zimbardo et. al. Stanford, 1971). Reports an experiment in which a group of middle-class male students in the USA were put into a simulated prison. The study shows the power of social context in shaping and reinforcing identity: how even people with no reason to feel guilt or shame can be reduced to accepting a 'prisoner' identity. A film is available of the experiment.

Ward and Kassebaum's WOMENS' PRISON (Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1965) deals with a women's jail. Kassebaum and Ward show how decision-making processes are mystified and how anxiety is continually reinforced by apparently inconsistent and meaningless rules.

For those interested in civil liberties issues there is a wealth of material. One place to begin a search is CIVIL LIBERTY NEWSLETTER, another is ALTERNATIVE CRIMINOLOGY JOURNAL.

PART III - THE WIDER CONFLICT.

Chapter 12 - Parliamentary Pressure and the Franklin Campaign.

Sophisticated analyses of the role of social movements in modern society are provided by Offe, Mandel and Keane. In CONTRADICTIONS OF THE WELFARE STATE (J.Keane (ed.) MIT 1984) Offe provides an excellent analysis is not easily accessible for those unused to reading social theory.

Emandel in 'An Interview' (THESIS ELEVEN 1983, No.7) discusses the role of the Green Party in Germany arguing that the weakness of social movements is their incapacity to fight in terms of overall social solutions. Their strength he argues, is their single-issue dynamic.

J.Keane in 'Civil Society and the Peace Movement in Britain' (THESIS ELEVEN 1984, No.8) discusses the potential for social movements to achieve change, and the difficulty of creating unity in a heterogeneous group. Keane argues that shared single issues are experienced differently. The challenge is to reinterpret the issue so that a wide range of people can respond to it.

Beresford, Grover, Lee and Dempsey and Power analyse different aspects of the environment movement. M.Beresford in 'Doomsayers and Eco-nuts: A critique of the Ecology Movement' (POLITICS XII(1) May, 1977, pp98-106.) thoroughly critiques most of the ecology movement. The author argues that the ecology movement cannot analyse people's relationship to the environment because of the

lack of a fundamental challenge to capitalist power relations. The article is useful in clarifying the possibilities and limitations of change from within a capitalist society.

J. Grover's 'A View of the Politico-Environment Movement' (MINING REVIEW August, 1979, p11-12) is an establishment critique of the environment movement. The author takes the view that the environment movement is an attempt by the wealthy to protect their own interests at the expense of 'the working man'. Useful for finding out what the other side thinks.

In 'Some Ethical Decision Criteria with regard to Procreation' (ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS spring 1979, volume 1, No.1) D.C. Lee raises the question of freedom of choice, drawing a distinction between oppression and a government's duty to enforce responsibility. He argues that governments have a duty to enforce responsibility where not doing so threatens security, survival and justice.

R. Dempsey and J. Power in 'The Politics of Environmental Control' (in Mayer and Nelson, eds., AUSTRALIAN POLITICS Chesire 1973) argue that the "wider the significance of an environmental problem, the greater are the political difficulties entailed in tackling it" (p.616). Dempsey and Power raise the question of eco-fascism and the extent to which control over individuals is desirable.

Analysis of the Franklin dispute which we found helpful include B. Martin's 'Environmentalism and Electoralism' (THE ECOLOGIST volume 14, No. 3, 1984). Martin sets out the limitations of electoral strategies in social change. It is easy to read but lacks class analysis. For example Martin makes the debatable claim that success in the labour movement disempowers the grass roots. The articles is recommended for anyone planning an electoral strategy.

J. Warhurst in 'Single Issue Politics: the impact of conservation and anti-abortion groups' (CURRENT AFFAIRS BULLETIN VOLUME 16, No.2, July 1983:19-31) discusses the reaction of political parties to the National South-West Coalition and the Right to Life Association of Victoria. Warhurst argues that single issue groups take election workers away from the major parties, that they exacerbate divisions within the parties, and sometimes influence voters.

A.K> Salleh in 'Wither the Green Machine?' (AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY, May 1984, p15-17) discusses the limitations of electoral strategy. A good brief discussion of the Franklin campaign. Salleh argues that the constitutional drama over Commonwealth-State relations in resource management, will be replayed and holds 'exciting possibilities' for the future.

Penny Figgia in 'Out of the wilderness for the Wilderness Issue' (in FIGHTING FOR WILDERNESS, J. Mosely, J. Messer (eds.) ACF/Fontana, 1984) assesses the claim that the Franklin campaign fundamentally changed the politics of winning wilderness in Australia. She argues that many of the same battles still remain to be fought. She views the TWS style as a 'grass roots approach to an elite-based strategy.'

THE SOUTH-WEST DAMS DISPUTE; THE LEGAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES (Sornarajah ed., The University of Tasmania Pres., 1983) is a set of detailed analysis of the legal and political issues.

Galligan's article 'The Dams Case: A political analysis' sets out the constitutional issues very clearly. Bates' article 'The Aftermath of Lake Pedder' puts the Franklin Dam case in its historical context. Bates outlines the roles of the various commissions and committees, he describes the development of the conservationists challenge to the HEC and the growth of pro-dam forces in Tasmania.

For our history of the Franklin Campaign we have drawn on Les Southwell: MOUNTAINS OF PARADISE (self-published, Victoria, 1983), Roger Green's BATTLE FOR THE FRANKLIN (ACF/Fontana, 1983), and Peter Thompson's POWER IN TASMANIA (ACF 1981). Southwell's book is a combination of magnificent colour photos of the South West and a history of Tasmanian environmental politics since the 1900's. His writing shows the bitterness of the Pedder loss, and gives an erratic but interesting background to the Franklin campaign. Green describes his book as a 'rough draft of history' it certainly is that. It's edited interviews with selected participants are of limited use.

The **SOUTH WEST BOOK** (Helen Gee and Janet Fenton, eds., ACF 1979.) is a resource book covering, historical biological and political aspects of Tasmania's South West.

The literature on pressure groups is huge, we have listed some sources which are readily obtainable in Australia. **THE POLITICS OF THE POWERLESS; A STUDY OF THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACIAL DISCRIMINATION** (B.W. Heineman Jr. OUP London, 1972) is a case study of a 'failure': CARD did not survive, nor did it achieve its goals. The book isolates some of the causes of failure, particularly the problems of internal divisions and inflated goals.

THE POLITICS OF ELECTORAL PRESSURE; A STUDY IN THE HISTORY OF VICTORIAN AGITATIONS (D.A. Hamer, The Harvester Press Ltd. 1977) is a case study of attempts to use electoral pressure in nineteenth century England. Despite historical distance some valuable material is included. See especially chapter 3; 'Types of Electoral Action' which discusses independent candidature, abstaining from voting, organising bloc votes, pledges to abstain from voting and playing off the parties against each other.

THE POLITICS OF PATRIOTISM; THE PRESSURE GROUP ACTIVITIES OF THE RETURNED SERVICEMEN'S LEAGUE (G.L. Kristainson, ANU Press Canberra, 1966) is a case study of a successful pressure group. It provides a framework for evaluation. Few new insights into politics will be found. But it is an Australian case study.

S.E. Finer's **ANONYMOUS EMPIRE; A STUDY OF THE LOBBY IN GREAT BRITAIN** (Pall Mall, 1966) is referred to by most of the case studies in the bibliography. It provides useful background material and an introduction to the terminology used in discussing pressure groups. Finer sets out what he sees as the characteristics of an efficient lobby group.

J.J. Richardson and A.G. Jordan in **GOVERNING UNDER PRESSURE; THE POLICY PROCESS IN A POST-PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY** (Robertson, 1979). Critically examines the consequences of trying to govern democratically. Democratic government is presented as a defensive action in which governments give something to all powerful groups and end up with irrational policies which please no-one. A sobering analysis with some beautifully chosen case studies.

Rivers captures the flavour of pressure group politics in **POLITICS BY PRESSURE** (P. Rivers, Harrap, London, 1974.) He claims that the relationship between the public service and pressure groups 'displays many features of a protracted love affair: secret meeting - often furtive - constant give and take, occasional quarrels, therapeutic reconciliations and mutual dependence.' (p.12) The idea of mutual dependence makes the book worth reading.

INTEREST GROUPS AND PUBLIC POLICY (R. Scott, Macmillan, 1980) is an edited collection of case studies of eight interest groups in Australia, which have tried to influence public policy. The analyses are limited, but they introduce a wide range of campaigns in Australian politics.

W.A. Gamson in **THE STRATEGY OF SOCIAL PROTEST** (The Dorsey Press, USA 1975) lists a number of choices social change groups make, and then goes on to analyse their chances of success having made those choices. This is a frustrating book because no attempt is made to explain why making one decision is more likely to lead to success than another. For example, Gamson's statistical manipulations allow him to say that 'groups which use no violence but who experience arrest are almost uniformly unsuccessful'. Strategists will find it virtually impossible to draw any lessons from such statements.

Another area well covered in the literature is Australian political parties. **POLITICAL PARTIES IN AUSTRALIA** (G. Starr, K. Richmond, G. Maddox Heinemann Educational Australia, 1978) includes a useful bibliography, and chapters on all parties in Australia. Histories, internal structure and election platforms of the parties are outlined and examined.

L.F. Crisp's **AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT** (Longmans Melbourne, 1973) is an Australian classic. The first section of the book focusses on the Constitution, including the High Court and changing interpretations of the Constitution. In later chapters Crisp discusses the electorate and Commonwealth electoral Law; pressure and interest groups; and the Labor and Liberal Parties. A comprehensive introduction to Australian politics.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE AUSTRALIAN LIBERAL PARTY (D.M. White, Malin Books Vic, 1978) includes outlines of Liberal Party platforms, and discussions of Liberalism. White goes behind the platform to examine the assumptions on which it is based.

THE ALP. A SHORT HISTORY OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY (B. Mckinlay, Drummond/Heineman, 1980). From its beginnings in the 1890's to the fall of the Whitlam government.

In THE AUSTRALIAN PARTY SYSTEM (George Allen and Unwin, Sydney 1983) Dean Jaensch describes the patterns of conflict, competition and collaboration which make up the party system. Chapter 5 outlines the internal politics of parties and their factions. In subsequent chapters Jaensch formulation of policy and practice; and stability and change in Australian politics.

H. Mayer and H. Nelson (eds.) AUSTRALIAN POLITICS: A THIRD READER, Cheshire Melbourne, 1973. Includes articles on all the parties from a variety of perspectives; on the electoral system; the constitution and federalism; and political culture in Australia. A timeless collection of articles on Australian politics.

R. W. Connell in RULING CLASS, RULING CULTURE: STUDIES OF CONFLICT, POWER AND HEGEMONY IN AUSTRALIAN LIFE (Cambridge University Press, 1977) describes the structure of the ruling class in Australia. He analyses the ruling class, presenting it as not monolithic but as a group fraught with internal conflict. This does not mean that, if threatened, the ruling class cannot mobilise state power, but it does mean that in many instances parts of the ruling class can be played off against each other. Connell outlines the major Australian companies and how they are related, and who the rich families are and how they are related to the Liberal Party. The book helps to crystallise patterns of relations in the Australian class structure, the role of the State and the processes by which these patterns are reproduced. Well worth reading it is available at most Australian libraries.

Material on electoral strategies and campaigning is difficult to find. One source is CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS; THE JOURNAL OF POLITICAL ACTION. This is an American journal with articles on such topics as electoral targeting for the do-it-yourself campaign; and direct mail political campaigns. Each issue also reviews books on campaigns and elections. Many of the articles are of limited relevance outside the US, but there is much an Australian activist will find useful.

Chapter 13 - Events Into Images: The media's interpretation of the Franklin Campaign

'Well of course, people don't actually read newspapers. They get into them like a hot bath'

This quote can be found in a collection of essays about Marshall McLuhan edited by G.E. Stearn (MARSHALL McLUHAN - HOT AND COOL, Penguin, 1968). McLuhan's basic idea is that the mass media has provided a new environment which alters the way people react to events. This in turn alters the lives of individuals.

For activists who want to analyse the content of mass media coverage Raymond Williams' COMMUNICATIONS (Chatto and Windus, London, 1966) provides some great ideas on how this can be done. He demonstrates how news and types of news can be divided into categories for analysis, he discusses the importance of headlines and the presentation of a story, pictures, and the distribution of news in a paper.

A more traditional approach is taken by P. Emmert and W.D. Brooks (eds.) in METHODS OF RESEARCH IN COMMUNICATION (Houghton Mifflin co. Boston, 1970). This book provides a very thorough coverage of research methods and tools. Topics covered include: content analysis, semantic differentiation, multivariate analysis, stylistic analysis and rating scales.

More appropriate for people who just want to know a bit about the mass media is Denis McQuail's TOWARDS A SOCIOLOGY OF MASS COMMUNICATION (Collier/Macmillan, 1969). McQuail describes a variety of approaches to studying the mass media, drawing out some of the implications of each approach.

A reader edited by McQuail *SOCIOLOGY OF MASS COMMUNICATIONS* (Collier/Macmillan 1969) includes a variety of useful sources. For example, Oliver Brghelin's contribution, 'Structural Analysis and Mass Communication', argues that analysis must include not only the content of coverage, but also its form and style.

F. De Saussure (*COURSE IN GENERAL LINGUISTICS*, McGraw Hill, N.Y. 1966) and P.N. (Campbell) *REHETORIC; A STUDY OF THE COMMUNICATIVE AND AESTHETIC DIMENSIONS OF LANGUAGE*, Dickenson, Calif. 1972) provide a background in linguistics for a sophisticated evaluation of communications.

On a more down to earth level, Bill Bonney and Helen Wilson in *AUSTRALIA'S COMMERCIAL MEDIA* (Macmillan, Australia, 1983) devote a chapter to the problems of studying the mass media. They discuss separating fact from subjective evaluation, selection of sample, studying what is omitted, and studying audiences and producers.

For our analysis of the ownership and control of the mass media in Australia we obtained information from: Bill Bonney and Helen Wilson *AUSTRALIA COMMERCIAL MEDIA* (Macmillan Aust. 1983); Henry Rosenbloom *POLITICS AND THE MEDIA* (Scribe, Aust. 1978); Humphry McQueen *AUSTRALIA'S MEDIA MONOPOLIES* (Widescope, Aust. 1977); Brian White *WHITE ON THE MEDIA* (Cassell, Aust. 1975); and *MEDIA OWNERSHIP IN AUSTRALIA* 1986 (Information Australia, 1986).

Tom Burns in 'The organisation of public opinion' (in Curran, Gurevitch and Woollacott eds. *MASS COMMUNICATION AND SOCIETY* OUP/Arnold, 1977) examines the relationship between public opinion and press broadcasting agencies. The paper discusses the history of the notion of 'freedom of the press' as the keystone of democracy. He argues that the constraints on information imposed by broadcasting and the press result in a narrow range of cultural and political content.

In the same collection of articles Oliver Boyd-Barrett ('Media imperialism: towards and international framework for analysis of media systems') discusses the role of pressure from interests outside the country in which a media system operates. He outlines international ownership structures.

John Downing analysis media coverage of industrial, conflict, racism and sexism in *THE MEDIA MACHINE* (Pluto Press, 1980). Although an English book it illustrates, through case studies, how the media select information, interpret events and shape public opinion and ultimately reinforce the status quo.

The distortion of reality in media representation is the theme of Peter Golding's 'News media and the management of social change' (in E. Katz and T. Szecsko eds. *MASS MEDIA AND SOCIAL CHANGE* Sage, 1981). Golding described the process by which news is planned, gathered, selected and presented. He discusses bias, objectivity and ideology, especially in terms of the missing dimensions of news coverage.

In the same book an article by Gaye Tuchman: 'Myth and the consciousness industry', analysis news as myth creation. This is of particular relevance for activists wanting to incorporate the mass media into a campaign. For example, she notes the media structures news in a way which blames groups or individuals who precipitate action which is defined as disruptive.

Stuart Hall in 'Culture, the media and the ideological effect' (in Curran, Gurevitch and Woollacott eds. *op.cit.*) discusses the concealment of reality and the transformation of the real through ideological forms. He discusses the non-coercive power of cultural institutions such as the mass media, and their legitimating role.

Bill Bonney and Helen Wilson (*op.cit.*) devote a chapter to the marketing of news. This includes a discussion of news value, marketability, and how the actions of individuals become news.

Steven Chibnall in *LAW-AND-ORDER NEWS* (Tavistock, London, 1977) argues that a news reporter creates 'stories' by selecting out fragments of information from a mass of few data. News is therefore seen as an account of an event rather than intrinsic to the event itself. Chibnall argues that in newspaper discourse legitimacy is only available to those who respect the rule of law.

Karl Erik Rosengren ('Mass media and social change: some current approaches' in Katz and Szecsko op.cit.) discusses the notions of the media as moulders and mirrors of public opinion, thereby opening up the question of the relationship between media content and structures.

Influencing public opinion is also the theme of David Chaney in 'Public opinion and social change: the social rhetoric of documentary, the concept of news' (also in Katz and Szecsko op.cit.). Chaney asserts that the mass media and public opinion are inter-dependent. While questioning the documentaries in social change. He then sets out the limitations of the mass media as a forum of public discourse.

Peter Dahlgren in 'T.V. news and the suppression of reflexivity' and Elizabeth Noelle-Neuman in 'Rules of selective perception and the concept of public opinion' (both in Katz and Szecsko op.cit.) discuss viewers' perceptions and television as a socialiser. Noelle-Neuman argues that the mass media are agents for social change, but only under certain conditions. Dahlgren is less optimistic, arguing that viewer consciousness is situated in a relation of subordination and dependence. Collective behaviour he says is represented as threatening and is portrayed as unreason.

Armand Mattelart in *MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND THE CONTROL OF CULTURE* (translated by M. Chanan, Harvester Press, G.B. 1979) provides some detailed case studies of the use of media campaigns to promote intentional change. He discusses the Television Workshop (of Sesame Street fame), a campaign to promote the myth of the 'Brazilian miracle', and the anti-communist media battle carried out by US corporate and political interests in Chile against Allende.

Brain White (op.cit.) provides some Australian information of a similar sort by analysing how politicians in Australia have used the mass media to create images. His analysis shows what gains and loses points in the Australian media stakes.

Denis McQuail in 'The influence and effects of the mass media' (in Curran, Gurevitch and Woolacott (eds.), op.cit.) discusses the social influence of various media. The discussion includes the capacity of groups to use the media to achieve given objectives, and the likely unintended consequences. The paper outlines factors important in achieving influence, and argues that the mass media is an instrument of social power. A case study of the indoctrination and training of US servicemen illustrates MacQuail's case.

Humphrey Mc Queen's book *AUSTRALIA'S MEDIA MONOPOLIES* (Widescope, Aust. 1977) includes an annotated bibliography with many more useful entries.

Margaret Gee provides several aids to campaigners in a media battle. Most important is *MARGARET GEE'S MEDIA GUIDE* (information Australia/Margaret Gee Media). Updated every four months, this essential guide to newspapers, magazines, radio and television lists editors, journalists and their area of interest, phone numbers and their contact information.

Margaret Gee also publishes Iola Mathews' *HOW TO USE THE MEDIA IN AUSTRALIA*, which, though it has little analysis of the role of the media in shaping news, has some good practical advice about how; journalists work, and *MEDIA OWNERSHIP IN AUSTRALIA* (op.cit.) which is a yearly listing of the corporate empires of Australia's media barons - what they own and who owns them.

Chapter 15 - An Alliance With Labour

Broad-mandate unionism in Australia is discussed by Hay, Cupper and Hearn, and Silverman. P.R. Hay ('Political Strikes: Three Burning Questions', *JOURNAL OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS*, March, 1978) examines the on-going debate about 'political strikes' in Australia. He discusses the importance of legitimacy when unions strike on 'non-industrial' issues.

L. Cupper and J. Hearn ('Australian Union Involvement in Non-Industrials issues: The Newport Dispute 1971-1978' in G.W. Ford, J.M. Hearn and R.D. Lansbury (eds.) *AUSTRALIAN LABOUR RELATIONS; READINGS*, 3rd. ed., Macmillan 1980) provide a case study of broad-mandate unionism. The article

focuses on the relationship between politicians, employers, environmentalists, unions and government committees. The authors describe the pressures exerted on unions to confine themselves to industrial issues.

In 'Political strikes in Australia', S. Silverman (in J.E. Isaac and G.W. Ford (eds.) AUSTRALIAN LABOUR RELATIONS; READINGS 2nd. ed., Sun Books 1971, ch.3) lists the major non-industrial issues that Australian unions were involved in up to the early 1960's

M.A. Haskell ('Green Bans: Worker Control and the Urban Environment' INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS VOLUME 16, No.2, May 1977) points to the lack of unity among workers on the issue of Green Bans. Haskell assesses the possibilities and limitations of Green Bans, discussing their accomplishments so far.

J. Munday's GREEN BANS AND BEYOND (Angus and Robertson, Aust., 1981) is a history of the Green Bans campaigns in Sydney, as experienced by Jack Munday. An inspiring book which should convince greens that the labour movement includes potential allies.

In GREEN BANS (ACF, 1974), Marion Hardman and Peter Manning present a mix of photos, history and personal recollection capturing the excitement of the Sydney campaigns.

The literature on trade unions in Australia is large, but the relationship between the unions and the ecology movement is not a frequent theme.

TRADE UNIONS IN AUSTRALIA (Penguin 1975) Ross Martin provides a useful introduction to the role of trade unions and the structure of union organisations.

D. Rawson's A HANDBOOK OF AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATIONS (ANU 1977) lists unions and trade union federations such as the ACTU, and outlines their affiliations with the ALP. It gives the addresses and size of each union. In UNIONS AND UNIONISTS IN AUSTRALIA (George Allen and Unwin, Aust. 1978) Rawson outlines the legal framework and affiliations with the ALP and ACTU. Chapter 5 describes the types of political actions unions may undertake. Chapter 7 looks specifically at strikes, including 'political' strikes.

POWER AND CONFLICT IN AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNIONS (K. Cole, Pelican Victoria, 1982) is a collection of articles on the trade unions' relationship to the mass media, sources of industrial conflict, unions and the labour party, the Federal-State framework of industrial relations, the power of the ACTU, and government regulation of unions.

In a HISTORY OF TRADE UNIONISM IN AUSTRALIA (Macmillan Aust. 1967) J.T. Sutcliffe covers unionism in Australia between 1800 and 1920. Useful for understanding the history of recurring issues in industrial relations

A debate between Jack Munday and George Polites is presented UNION POWER (Ann Turner ed. Heineman Educational Australia, 1975). The debate discusses whether trade unions are justified in acting as pressure groups in areas outside their immediate economic interests. Both sides of the argument are presented clearly and with obvious commitment.

From an environmentalist's point of view, the issues which form the basis of alliances with unions are treated in several ways.

Andre Gorz in ECOLOGY AS POLITICS () discusses the possibility of a socialism which has a base in environmentally sound and individually controlled activity. He has coined the term 'ecofascism' to describe a society in which rules and regulations for environmental protection are rigidly enforced by an elite. These themes are also developed from an anarchist perspective by Murray Bookchin in TOWARD AN ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY (Black Rose, Montreal 1980). While interesting reading neither writer provides much day-to-day guidance for dealing with unions.

Of more help are Richard Kazis and Richard Grossman in FEAR AT WORK; JOB BLACKMAIL, LABOR and the ENVIRONMENT (The Pilgrim Press, New York 1982). This book examines the arguments used to keep workers and environmentalists apart, and documents the fallacy of the claims that environment protection legislation is the cause of inflation, unemployment and falls in productivity.

Many environment groups and union-based researchers produce analyses of the political economy of particular issues. For the Franklin campaign, Peter Thompon produced **POWER IN TASMANIA** (ACF 1981). This book, as we argued in the text fell short of the campaign's need for accessible economic analysis and for the development of specific alternative employment proposals.

Since the Franklin Campaign, the nature conservation movement has produced some much better work in this area. This includes the **FOREST INDUSTRY STRATEGY FOR TASMANIA** (J. Miller & K. Tarlo, TCT, 1985) and the work of Margaret Blakers, Peter Christoff et al, for the East Gippsland Coalition.

