

The 2007 Peacebus.com prospectus

by Graeme Dustan

The year 2006 brought stress to the cyanide criminals of this land, and Peacebus.com is planning to add to it during the next spin of Mother Earth around Father Sun.

Last year in the companionship with the good folk from the Nimbin Environment Centre, Peacebus.com bore witness to the hazards of the bulk transport of cyanide for the gold mining industry with protest actions in Nimbin, Kyogle and Casino. In companionship with the Queensland Activist Road Trip, it bore witness to the mass water poisoning crimes of the Orica corporation (biggest cyanide maker in Australia, third biggest in the world) at the gates of their cyanide plant in Gladstone, Queensland. In November and in association with the G20 protests in Melbourne, over a hundred Lake Cowal defenders occupied the head office of Orica. Peacebus.com missed that one, but at a distance I rejoiced at the evidence that the tide running against cyanide criminals is much much bigger than the waves made by this old man and his aging dog and van. Tell me dear readers, if you were getting these kind of signals, would you put your money into new gold mine projects in Oz at this time? Probably not, and your intuition would be confirmed by reading the business news and observing this paradox: record gold prices and Barrick Gold, the Canadian based transnational with its toxic claws in the earth at Lake Cowal, openly touting for new projects, but no takers. This is how the world changes: not with a bang but a cringe of investors. The next step in the campaign to ban cyanide gold



mining forever, I reckon, is the blockade of cyanide transports.

This year Peacebus.com intends to be party to the stopping of at least one cyanide freight train, and the rail line through the Richmond Valley is the target area. For sure, stopping a cyanide freight will put the willies up the gold miners and their corporate courtiers in Macquarie Street. Such a protest action will not only add pressure to the demand that they reveal the amount of secret cyanide approved for transport on the rail, it will show how hopelessly inadequate their emergency response will be in the event of a spill and signal their vulnerability to future blockades of this kind. This is the truth: the cyanide, in excess of 100,000 tonnes a year, is bound to poison water, if not from a spill along its route from Gladstone to the far flung gold mines in NSW, NT and WA, then inevitably when it gets to a mine site. Water is the issue of our times and gold miners are the most profligate of water poisoners.

All along the watch line, there are concerned citizens wanting to be heard and eco-activists wanting to strike on this issue. In Nambour, a major centre for green activism in south Queensland, the rail goes through the heart of the

town; in the Blue Mountains it goes through the catchment of most of Sydney's water; in Sydney itself the cyanide containers go by road from Chullora through Bankstown and Auburn to Parramatta. And in the Rainbow Region the cyanide freights go through Kyogle and Casino and the headwaters of the Richmond River. So exposed and so ripe for blockading! The PR mills of the gold miners will continue to crank and churn. Let 'em. A cyanide freight blockade, just one, will be the writing on the wall: the cyanide era is over!

Just how, where and when this will be accomplished, I do not know at this time. 'Twould be good to accomplish it before the NSW state elections in March and make visible the corporate corruption of the Carr-Macquarie Bank-Iemma government. But no hurry really, just quiet determination and the confidence that comes from knowing that where there is a will, there will be a way.

Stopping a cyanide transport will also be a shot across the bows for the uranium industry, already secretive and cautious about its transports and now planning to move more and more tonnes of radioactivity through our towns and waterways. What prescience I have suggests that taking local responsibility for restricting and preventing the transports of toxic cargoes through watersheds is a whole new strategy and direction for eco-activism. And we Rainbow Region folk will be its pioneers.

If any reader has ideas and/or the desire to help on this campaign, please contact me by email, by phone (expect both to be tapped), by note, by secret meeting or by secret hand sign. Or just do it!



Behind the news bites

by Dave Christmas

On Saturday 18th November I purchased, as I do every weekend, the Sydney Morning Herald. Upon opening the Good Weekend magazine, my attention was drawn to an article written by Dr Karl S. Kruszelnicki. It was in the column entitled "Myth Conceptions" on page 17, with the sub heading "Is man making the Earth hotter?"

In this article Karl makes the point that if you were to believe the popular press you might make the assumption that scientists cannot agree on the outcomes of Global Warming. He then points out that a French scientist Joseph Fourier wrote one of the first papers on greenhouse gases in 1824. That's right, over 180 years ago!

Joseph reasoned that the sun throws its light/heat upon Earth, which warms and in turn radiates some of this heat back into space. If earth had no atmosphere the average surface temperature would be minus 150C (same as the moon). But the natural greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere block some of this heat and radiate it back to Earth, lifting the Earth's temperature by some 300C to a more pleasant 150C.

He then states that since modern industrialization carbon dioxide levels in our atmosphere have risen by 30% from about 280ppm to around 368ppm. Which has raised the average global temperature by 0.60C and the sea level by about 20cm.

In 2004 Dr Naomi Oreskes from the University of California analysed 928 scientific papers discussing "climate change" that had been published in peer-reviewed journals between 1993 and 2003. She found that not one disagreed with the consensus position, even though they may have disagreed in some of the minor details.

Dr Karl then questioned why almost half of the articles published in the non-scientific press put forward the idea that scientists are deeply divided over the fundamental concepts of the greenhouse effect?

The answer, according to



the world's most prestigious and deeply conservative society, the UK's Royal Society, is that huge company's that make their profits from the burning of fossil fuels, put forward deliberate misinformation.

In September 2006 Bob Ward the Royal Society's manager for policy communication wrote to Nick Thomas, the director of corporate affairs for ExxonMobil in the UK. In this letter Ward asked why ExxonMobil paid millions of dollars to groups that "misrepresented the science of climate change by outright denial of the evidence" Dr Karl states that such a strongly worded letter is very unusual from such a conservative group, but it does reflect that consensus has been reached: things are hotting up.

Another news bite that almost brought tears to my eyes was published in "G" magazine, <www.gmagazine.com.au>. This was the first edition of an environmentally aware magazine published for the Australian "green" market. In a column entitled "Enviro-explosives", it makes the claim that British arms manufacturer BAE Systems is designing "environmentally friendly" weapons! These include "reduced lead" bullets, "reduced smoke"

grenades and rockets with fewer toxins.

At first I thought this was a bit of a joke and to be honest a part of me still wants to believe it is. But according to Debbie Allen BAE Systems' Director of social responsibility (it still sounds like a joke) told the UK's Sunday Times "Weapons are still going to be used and when they are, we try to make them as safe for the user as possible, to limit the collateral damage and to impact as little as possible on the environment"

Symon Hill from "Campaign Against Arms Trade" described the policy as laughable. He told the Sunday Times "BAE Systems is determined to try to make itself look ethical but they make weapons to kill people and it's utterly ridiculous to suggest they are environmentally friendly"

BAE Systems policy is reportedly endorsed by Britain's Ministry of Defence, which "Backed the concept of green munitions." Not to be outdone, the US army already has its own sustainability web site. <www.sustainability.army.mil/> Source AFP.

Isn't it amazing how many businesses are now jumping on the "Green Bandwagon"? Now that it's becoming fashionable.

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