ENVIRONMENTALISTS AND THEIR POLITICS:

AN ANALYSIS OF PROTEST STRATEGY IN THE POLITICS OF SOME AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENTALISTS.

BY

BAHRIN BIN OTHMAN KAMARUL, LL.B. (MELB.)

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts of the Australian National University.

September, 1976.
This thesis is all my own work and all sources used have been acknowledged.

(Bahrin Bin Othman Kamarul)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Dr. Thelma Hunter for supervising the writing of this thesis in a way I found most helpful. I would also like to thank Dr. Len Hume and Dr. Roger Scott for encouraging me to embark upon and complete the work for a Masters degree. Thanks are also due to Miss Julie Clifford, Ms Claire Seczawa and Miss Sheryl Peattie who between them managed to type this thesis. And lastly, but not least, gratitude is owed to my wife, Anna Maria, who helped me in many ways.

B.B.O.K.
SYNOPSIS

A feature of the politics of "environmental quality" in Australia is the adoption of protest and other forms of direct action by some Australian environmentalists. The thesis is, firstly, a critical examination of the explanations often given for this phenomenon and, secondly, an attempt to provide a political explanation for protest strategy.

It is argued that much of the analysis of protest in the environmental movement has relied on psychological, class, ideological or institutional explanations. As a consequence, the tendency has been to regard protest either as irrational and 'deviant' or as idealistic and humane. This thesis, on the other hand, attempts to show that protest strategy can be rational and purposive and a normal occurrence in the politics of any large discontented group.

To demonstrate the purposiveness and normality of protest in the Australian environmental movement, the thesis develops four profiles of Australian environmentalists: Management-Oriented Conservationists, Morally-Responsible Scientists, Radical Environmentalists and Environmental Pragmatists. These profiles are constructed from an examination of the public writings of a number of prominent Australian environmentalists and based on their conception of the environmental 'problem', their goals,
their conception of the role of environmentalists and the level of trust they have for the political system.

The thesis concludes that protest strategy is a function of particular configurations of attitudes towards the 'problem' and its solution and orientations towards the political system. Protest may therefore be interpreted as purposive and regarded as a normal part of the politics of any significant group discontented with the political system.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: ................................................. ii
SYNOPSIS: .............................................................. iii
INTRODUCTION: ........................................................... 1
PART ONE: CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF EXPLANATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST ................. 10

Chapter

I. CLASS AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL EXPLANATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST ......................... 11
   Environmental concern as the ideology of middle-class interest and status ................ 12
   Environmentalists as irrational, extreme and simplistic ........................................ 14
   Environmental Protest as Emotional, Extreme and Expressive .................................. 20
   Some Critical Comments .............................................. 27

II. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST AS 'HUMANE' AND 'DEMOCRATIC' ............................................ 40
   The Transformation of Industrial Society ................................................................. 41
   'Critical Science' as Basis of Environmental Action .................................................. 46
   Environmental Protest: An attempt to Humanize and Democratize 'Technocracy' .......... 51
   The Search for 'Community', New Lifestyle and Politics ........................................... 54

III. PROTEST POLITICS AS A REFLECTION OF THE SCIENTIFIC 'PROFESSIONAL-DILEMMA' .............. 66
   Scientists and their 'Professional Dilemma' ............................................................ 67
   Outsider-Scientists and the Environmental 'Problem' ............................................... 71
   The Political Outlook of Scientists ....... 75
   The Politics of "Outsider" Scientist-Environmentalists ............................................... 80
   A Summary and Some Comments ................................................................. 84
## PART TWO: POLITICAL PROFILES OF SOME PROMINENT AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENTALISTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Environmentalists</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protest Action: Definitions and Problems of Analysis</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towards a Positive Analysis of Protest</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. MANAGEMENT-ORIENTED CONSERVATIONISTS</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Problem Conceived as Endangered Resources</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solution: Scientific Management</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in Professionals and Government</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Concluding Comments</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. THE MORALLY-RESPONSIBLE SCIENTISTS</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem: Possible Collapse of the Natural Environment</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solution: Socially and Morally Responsible Scientists</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Confidence in Governments and Key Institutions</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Institutionalized Political Strategy</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socially Responsible Scientists and Mass Action</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. THE RADICAL ENVIRONMENTALISTS</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Problem Seen as a 'Crisis' of Civilization</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Quest for Moral and Institutional Reform</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distrust of Political Authorities, Institutions and Procedures</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological and Tactical Justifications For Mass Action</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Concluding Remarks</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII.</td>
<td>THE ENVIRONMENTAL PRAGMATISTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The 'Problem' Conceived as Threats to Aesthetic and Recreational Amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conservation as Requiring Scientific and Moral and Social Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government May and Ultimately Needs to be Trusted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political Compromise and Bargaining as a Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some Observable Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CONCLUSIONS: SOME CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

In the quest for 'environmental quality' some Australian environmentalists have, in the late 1960's and early 1970's expanded the range of issues of concern and adopted, in addition to conventional forms of political activity, more direct forms of political action. For this group, the concern primarily for conservation of wild-life, wilderness and man-made artifacts such as old buildings has broadened into a concern for abating pollution of the air, water and land and the maintenance and enhancement of the 'environment' generally.¹ This development was accompanied by a broadening of the types of political activity advocated and adopted. Now included in their political activities is the advocacy and adoption of non-conventional type of political action such as protests, demonstrations and other forms of direct mass action.²

Previously, environmentalists have lobbied governments through associations such as the Australian Conservation Foundation which has continuing interaction with officials and regular access to governments. Others have come up with proposals for legislation.³ Litigation was resorted to by other groups to advance the cause. The case of re Bruce Kent and others, an action to have the building of the Black Mountain Tower in Canberra, A.C.T. legally disallowed, is an example of such action.⁴ Many others have participated in
Senate Committee hearings on Water and Air Pollution.\(^5\)
These conventional forms of political activities still continue.

However, other environmentalists have involved themselves in mass and direct action. Many groups and individuals have participated in recycling activities, disseminated information, collected signatures, organized petitions, held conferences and rallies, marched and 'satin'. Environmentalists have protested and demonstrated on a variety of issues.\(^6\) Some of the more well known 'flashpoints' between environmentalists and private companies and government authorities are the Lake Pedder issue in Tasmania, the Clutha issue in New South Wales, the Black Mountain Tower controversy in Canberra, A.C.T., the Myall Lakes protest in New South Wales, the Little Desert and Westernport issues in Victoria and the Colong Caves controversy in New South Wales.\(^7\) The question is why have some environmentalists in Australia advocated and adopted protest and other forms of direct action to advance the cause? It will be shown in this thesis that there are a variety of explanations advanced for the emerging phenomenon of environmental protest. It will be argued, however, that much of the analysis has relied on psychological, class cultural or institutional explanations. As a consequence, there is a tendency to regard protest either as irrational and 'deviant' or essentially idealistic and humane. It will be argued, therefore, that while these explanations contain elements of validity, it
would be an oversimplification to use only one or a combination of them to supply an overall interpretation of the support for, advocacy of and participation in protest and other forms of direct action by some Australian environmentalists.

This thesis is an attempt to establish the relevance of the political dimension in explaining protest in the politics of environmentalists and an attempt to show that protest strategy can be purposive, rational and a normal occurrence in the politics of any large discontented group. It will be concerned to demonstrate that the political strategies of environmentalists may be a function of their conception of the 'problem' and the roles that environmentalists should play and their assessment of the political system.

Given these aims, the thesis will examine the public writings of a range of Australian environmentalists for the following, (a) their views on the nature of the 'problem', its urgency and the solutions needed for it, (b) what they regard as being the appropriate roles for environmentalists, (c) their evaluations of and orientations towards the political system, the extent to which they trust or distrust Australian political institutions and procedures. On the basis of such an examination the thesis will construct profiles of environmental activists. The relationships between the advocates' conception of the 'problem', their role and the political system and their
preferred political strategies will then be drawn from these profiles.

This study will explore the argument that some environmentalists advocate direct mass action because such action is consistent with their view on the nature of the 'environmental problem', their role and the political system within which they have to operate. Mass action is consistent with a broad concept of the environmental 'problem' which sees the need for urgent and comprehensive social, economic and cultural changes and the idea that environmentalists need to agitate. It is also consistent with a lack of trust in the existing political institutions and rules of the game to produce changes needed to solve the 'problem'.

The aim of the study is to suggest that the advocacy and use of protest can be seen as a deliberate strategy. Mass action is advocated by some environmentalists with a view toward creating political resources to enable them to achieve their objectives within the existing political system. It will suggest the possibility of analysing environmental protests in terms of rational and purposive political behaviour. Such protests may then be envisaged as a significant and normal aspect of politics among groups which are dissatisfied with the conventional and institutionalized channels of political influence and not as 'deviant' or 'abnormal'. Such an analysis will nevertheless leave room for the psycho-social, ideological and
institutional explanations for the occurrence of protests and other forms of direct action in environmental politics.

Using the above approach, it may then be possible to explain the emergence of mass action in Australian environmental politics as reflecting two developments, (a) The broadening definition of the environmental problem and widening definition of 'environmental quality' and (b) the loss of confidence in the Australian political system, its institutions and procedures in some environmental activists.

The organisation of the study will be as follows: It will be divided into three parts. Part I will be a critical examination of various schemes advanced to explain the phenomenon of protest in the politics of 'environmental quality' in Australia in the 1970's. Chapter I examines the psycho-social explanations for environmental protest. Chapter II looks at the approach that regards protest activities of environmentalists as reflecting an ideology of 'community involvement' and 'participatory democracy'. And Chapter III examines the theory that protest politics by environmentalists is a reflection of 'outsider' politics that has emerged as a consequence of natural scientists becoming politicised but desiring, at the same time, to remain above the compromises and bargains of conventional politics.

Part II of the study will attempt to analyse protest politics in terms of a rational and purposive
political action. Chapter IV will define the key terms and concepts involved in the study and provide a fuller exposition of the analytical framework upon which this study is based. Chapters V, VI, VII and VIII will attempt to demonstrate some relationships between the views of environmentalists on the environmental 'problem', their beliefs about political system and their expressed preferences with regard to political strategies by developing four profiles of environmentalists. The four profiles are: 1. the Management-Oriented Conservationists, 2. the Morally-Responsible Scientists, 3. the Radical Environmentalists, 4. the Environmental-Pragmatist. This is followed by a concluding chapter that will summarize the findings and the arguments of the study.

A number of caveats have to be mentioned in relation to the scope of the present study. 1. Very little or no account will be taken of the historical dimension of the Australian environmental movement. Undoubtedly, the recent pattern of environmental politics reflects some continuities of past efforts in Australia towards conservation and preservation. An analysis of such continuities is obviously necessary. There are excellent examples of analysis of past environmental politics and policy, for instance, those by Barrett, and Hancock. From these studies historical parallels and comparisons can be drawn. However, such an enterprise would involve more than the confines of this study will allow. 2. Little attempt will be made to relate the choice of strategies by environmentalists
to 'objective' factors such as the amount of 'influence resources' which they can mobilise and use to exert influence. Lipsky,\textsuperscript{10} for example, suggests that protest activities are resorted to mainly by relatively 'powerless' groups such as the poor because they lack other forms of political resources. It may well be that such 'objective' factors limit the choices that can be made by environmentalists. However, it is possible to argue that the choice of political strategies will reflect, at least partially, the perceptions and attitudes of the supporters and activists of the environmental movement. 3. Little or no assessment will be made by this study of the impact and consequences of mass political activity and protest strategy of Australian environmental activists. Such analysis have been conducted by Peres, Dempsey, Power and Reid.\textsuperscript{11} Their assessment is essentially that protest politics are ineffective in gaining for environmentalists tangible results, with the exceptions of a few narrow 'preservation' objectives. And Reid\textsuperscript{12} argues that such activities is protentially violence generating.

However, accepting the above limitations, the present study may still be a useful enterprise in that it will explain the internal logic and describe the underlying orientation of a type of political action. It may also help in identifying a strand of the Australian political culture and although it can be only a minority political culture it may have wider implications for the future.
FOOTNOTES: INTRODUCTION

1 For a description and analysis of these changes, see Robert Dempsey and John Power, "The Politics of the Environment" in Amos Rapoport (ed), Australia as Human Setting, (Angus and Robertson, 1972)

Robert Dempsey, Local Elections: The New Politics Reviewed, (Planning Research Centre, University of Sydney, 1971),


4 The politics of the case is examined by W.K. Hancock, The Battle of Black Mountain, (Australian National University, 1974).

5 For examples, the Australian Senate hearings on water and air pollution; see the Senate Select Committee Report on Air Pollution, (Government Printers, 1970) and Senate Select Committee on Water Pollution, Water Pollution in Australia: Report From Senate Committee, (Government Printers, 1970).

6 Some of these have been analysed by Peres, op.cit., R. Dempsey, (ed), The Politics of Finding Out, (Cheshire 1974), and Centre for Continuing Education, Australian National University, op.cit.

7 Some analytical models used in explaining these events will be examined in Part I of this study.

8 The rational view of protest politics is suggested by a variety of studies. For a general review of literature which stresses the rational, purposive and cognitive properties of radical dissidence, see Sandor Halebsky, "New Perspectives of Political Radicalism" Journal of Political and Military Sociology, 1974, Vol. 2, Spring, pp. 113-124


9 See B. Barrett, *The Inner Suburbs, The Evolution of an Industrial Era*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1971), and


12 G. Reid, *op.cit.*
PART ONE

CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF EXPLANATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST.
CHAPTER I

THE CLASS AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL EXPLANATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST

Much of the analysis of environmental politics and protest contains negative images of environmentalists. These images are discernible in those studies that use essentially the class model of environmental politics or the psycho-social explanations for the phenomenon of protest and mass action.

One such image is that of the environmentalist as a relatively affluent and materially secure middle-class individual. His concern for the environment reflects his middle-class view of the world. He is preoccupied with aesthetic and moral issues because he is no longer faced with the problems of material survival of the poorer class. Another image is that of the environmentalist as the individual with personal anxieties and paranoid feelings. Environmental change is perceived as constituting a 'crisis' or a 'disaster'. Environmentalism appeals to him because its outlook is pessimistic and its principles simplistic. For such an individual, environmentalism is an outlet for displacing psychological tensions.
These negative images can be constructed from various analytical themes contained in a range of interpretive studies on environmental politics in the United States and other industrially advanced countries. It will be shown that environmental politics in Australia are similarly explained.

This chapter will give an account of the themes and explanations on which the above images are based. It will be argued that such explanations appear to have a number of weaknesses in providing a satisfactory interpretation of non-conventional politics of the environment.

Environmental concern as the ideology of middle-class interest and status

One commonly held view regards the concern for the environment as reflecting a middle-class and affluent view of the world. It is argued that the beliefs and values underlying environmentalism advance and justify the middle-class lifestyle.

The self-serving character of environmentalism is a theme postulated by Wildavsky in relation to environmentalists generally and in the United States in particular. He contends that;

"The revolutionaries of contemporary America do not seek to redistribute privilege from those who have it to those who do not...The goal of this white, radical privileged elite is clear: a society purged by them of the values, tastes and preferences and policies desired by the mass of Americans."
Similarly Beckerman suggests that increased concern with the environment is a function of rising affluence. He argues that:

"...as people become richer the environment moves up in their ranking of priorities ... the middle classes, who mainly work in pleasant surroundings and who possess, in their homes, the goods to satisfy most of their needs, turn their attention to other, more external, aspects of the quality of life ... Furthermore, it is likely that the middle-class opposition to growth reflects their sense that economic growth also brings a loss of various privileges".2

Another variation of the theme is the argument that different individuals and groups adopt the environmental concern as a means of advancing their economic and political interests. Sachs suggests that economic and political gains are more significant as a basis for environmentalism than a genuine concern for the environment.3

Many groups stand to gain from the concern and they include; (a) the 'diversionists', whose concern is to divert the political preoccupations towards environmental disruption and away from other burning international issues but stopping short of digging too deeply into the socio-political context of environmental disruption; (b) 'big business', or some of it, which sees additional pretext for the spending of public funds in such a way as to increase private profits; and (c) the 'neo-malthusians', who find the environmental concern an excellent pretext for
advocating keeping the underdeveloped countries from industrialising.

The middle-class explanation for environmental concern and politics is also suggested for Australian environmentalists.

Samuel for example argues;

"To be concrete, it is simply a reflection of the upper-middle income status and private preoccupations of a speaker who declares that 'we' have plenty of material possessions and what counts from here on is 'the environment'. The upper-middle income man may indeed have sufficient housing and transport, gadgetry and sufficient clothing and food to gratify his tastes, so that his principal concerns are now whether the view from his house is uncluttered by wires and the air around unfouled by smells."

Similarly, Power argues that the members of the middle-class have become interested in local politics relating to the amenities and the environment of the old inner-suburbs in Melbourne and Sydney because "it is the members of the middle-class that are beginning to feel the brunt of redevelopment." He points out that "one does not have to be a student of Machiavelli to appreciate the political fact that men react much more strongly to the loss of accustomed benefits than to the failure of authorities to deliver promised ones."

Environmentalists as irrational, extreme and simplistic

One theme in the analysis of environmentalism in Australia is the view that its activists have characteristically emotional and irrational motivations.
Their quest for 'environmental quality' is regarded as the result of personality disturbance or maladjustment and that the environmental cause appeals to them not because it provides a logical or valid perspective but because it provides the outlet for their feelings of guilt, fear and extremism. The commitment to the cause is seen as primarily an emotional response with little philosophical roots.

Ray, for example, regards most ecology activists generally and in Australia as "cranks", manifesting a neurotic sense of insecurity and misanthropy. He suggests that:

"...'misanthropy' is treated as a form of personality disturbance or maladjustment ... It is interesting therefore to note that there could be few more specifically misanthropic utterances than 'people are pollution' - which is, of course the slogan of Zero Population Growth Movement."8

Also stressing the irrational element in the environmental movement is Samuel who argues that "the ecologists - or more strictly the collection of people jumping on the band-wagon of anti-pollution - are the new prophets of doom."9

It would seem that the irrationalistic theme reflects a common position in the interpretation of environmental politics generally both in the United States and in other advanced countries. Environmentalism is seen not as providing a solution for a viable and wholesome natural environment but, more significantly,
as the outlet for other psychological and social needs. Olson sums up this approach when he suggests that the appeal of environmental arguments "owes more to the social and psychological stresses of modern life than to the environmental degradation that they normally invoke."\textsuperscript{10}

Olson et al.\textsuperscript{11} suggest that the movement appeals primarily to "freaks", defined as "any person holding extremely strong views in a particular dimension."\textsuperscript{12} There are four kinds of freaks. First, the 'ecofreak' who is characterised by an intense, uncompromising and moving devotion to a lovely natural environment; secondly, the 'sociofreak' who puts stable group relationships above most other objectives; thirdly, the 'psychofreak' who has an abhorrence for the motives, consciousness, and habits of mind associated with economic growth, and this abhorrence is manifested by the preference for astrology, mysticism, tarot, witchcraft, Eastern religions and 'mind-blowing' or conscious-changing drugs; and fourthly, the 'safety-freak' who will go to remarkable lengths to avoid risks of great loss.

Olson et al. are concerned to maintain that the term 'freak' is not used perjoratively and that the eccentricity of the value-judgements of the 'freaks' does not make them wrong. They may even deserve respect. At the same time, however, they suggest that belief in
prophecies of ultimate ecological doom and a love for the natural environment alone do not logically entail opposition to economic growth. It is extremism, that is, putting these 'freak' values above all other objectives, that consistently lead individuals to a no-growth policy. Environmental concern is seen therefore, as the product of such extremism which, in turn, is the product of social and psychological stresses of modern life.

In explaining the popularity of the environmental cause, Beckerman stresses that its strength does not lie in the validity of its arguments. Instead, the appeal is emotional. He maintains that a basic emotion underlying the susceptibility of individuals to environmentalism is guilt.

"It is easy to understand, and hence to forgive, this tendency for scientists to be highly critical of some of the uses to which applied science and technology has been put. The scientific community probably has a sort of guilt complex concerning certain scientific developments over the last two or three decades, notably the atom bomb, and also the increasing knowledge of even more destructive ways of wiping out mankind as a result of 'progress' in the biological and botanical sciences."

Beckerman also suggests that the other middle-class individuals support the movement partly because they also "feel guilty about their relative affluence now than has been the case in the past." The mass media on the other hand, contributes to the significance of the environmental concern as a public issue by meeting the public penchant for the morbid, the sense of
imminence of disaster and the sense that they are living on the edge of a precipice. According to Beckerman, "catastrophe is always good news."\(^1\)

Also emphasising the irrational psycho-social motivations of environmental concern is Enzensberger.\(^2\) He argues that at the basis of the confused alliance that constitutes the ecological movement are a great number of socio-psychological needs in which are included hopes of conversion and redemption, delight in the collapse of things, feelings of guilt and resignation, escapism and hostility to civilisation.

And finally, Maddox contends that a central feature of the environmental cause is the "doomsday syndrome." Its hallmark is excessive gloom, the dedication to the view that "the worst will always happen."\(^3\) He calls the movement the "doomsday movement."

Another theme in the analysis of environmental politics is the idea that environmentalism appeals to its advocates and supporters because it provides either an oversimplified and often misguided view of social, economic and scientific issues or pseudo-solutions to a complex situation. This allows the aims, goals and principles of environmentalism to become the vehicles for the expression of and solution to emotional and psychological frustration.
The theme is illustrated by Maddox who contends that the environmental view is an oversimplification of the issues involved;

"The questions which these latter day doomsday men have raised are subtle and interesting; the spirit in which they are asked is usually too jaundiced for intellectual comfort. Too often, reality is over-simplified or even ignored."\(^{20}\)

In explaining the popularity of the movement generally in Australia and elsewhere, a variation on the above theme is often used. It is the view that environmentalists are drawn to the movement by its cheap rhetoric. As Seddon contends;

"The environmental protest movement has occasioned much cheap rhetoric... Fear, guilt, self-righteousness and hate are the emotions commonly exploited by cheap rhetoric..."\(^{21}\)

Passmore maintains that much of the attack levelled by environmentalists on science is based on a misunderstanding of the nature of the scientific effort.\(^{22}\) Such a 'revolt' is an attack on disciplined thinking. It revives occultism, with its doctrines of 'hidden truths' to be revealed by magical means and its demand for instant gratification in every area of human life. He points out that environmental philosophy contains elements of the quest for the 'perfectibility of man'. This is an unrealistic and, at the same time, an elitist philosophy.\(^{23}\) Passmore, therefore, looks at environmentalism as not only anti-scientific but also Utopian and elitist.
Much of the socio-psychological explanations for environmental protest can be subsumed under two of Smelser's types of collective action, namely, the 'craze response' and the "hostile outburst."\textsuperscript{24}

A 'craze' is defined as a "mobilization for action based on a positive wish-fulfilment."\textsuperscript{25} It can occur in the economic, political, expressive, and religious spheres. An example of a 'craze' in the political sphere is the 'bandwagon' effect of a political issue. At the expressive level, there are fashions and fads in popular philosophies and arts. At the religious level there is the phenomenon of 'revivalism', which involves the redefinition of religious methods not amounting to a challenge to basic religious values.

The implication of the model seems to be that such beliefs are an 'illusion'. By this is meant, not that the belief is false, but that it is a belief which "attempts to create a more satisfying reality".\textsuperscript{26} Politics based on such an 'illusion' assures the activists an imminent improvement in their conditions. It is characterised by an eager and optimistic assessment of the probabilities, with a tendency to offer blind hope, quick relief and easy escape.\textsuperscript{27}

The explanations for Australian environmental politics which can be subsumed under the model of
the 'craze' include; the band-wagon effect hypothesis, the middle-class fad and the characterisation of the environmental beliefs as a 'doomsday syndrome', oversimplified and misguided.

The second type of collective behaviour which defines, for some writers, environmental protest in Australia is the 'hostile outburst'. This is defined by Smelser as "mobilisation for action under a hostile belief". Smelser maintains that such outbursts are frequently adjuncts of larger-scale social movements. On occasions reform movements, normally peaceful, may erupt into violence. On other occasions revolutionary movements, because they challenge the legitimacy of the power wielders, are frequently accompanied by violence. That outbursts of hostility should frequently accompany social movements is to be expected, for hostility is a component of the beliefs that guide such movements.

Hostile beliefs involve, typically, the creation of a symbol which arouses uniformly and exclusively unfavourable feelings towards the object under attack and the assignment of a whole variety of events to the operation of this force or object.

It has also been suggested that environmental politics is basically a "moral crusade and protest." According to Wilkinson, a feature of this type of crusade or protest is:
"...its ideological amorphousness and ambiguity. These movements are concerned above all with great issues: the averting of nuclear war, the ending of the war in Vietnam, ending school segregation in the United States, the opposing of apartheid and so on. Beyond these commitments to generalised aims there is no common ideological consensus within the movements, either on the means by which such aims are to be realised, or upon a general programme of social and political reforms. In the case of moral protest movements it is easier to tell what they are 'against' than what they are 'for'."30

The emotional basis of such a protest is often what Davies has called the 'moral indignation affect.'31 Moral indignation differs from ordinary indignation in that there is an added element of "disinterestedness: the reformer is usually not directly or personally affected by the conduct he condemns ... The transgression, then, is primarily moral, though it may be mixed with other forms of distress, loss or pain... the target of the hostility is more likely to be a conceptual group than real individuals with whom the individual comes into close regular contact."32

The social base of such politics, as has been pointed by Parkin, tend to be the middle-class and the young.33 The politics is characteristically 'expressive'. This is the politics of those who "do not seek to change the institutions of the social order or its objective character. The tension and unrest out of which they emerge are not focused upon some objective social change which the movements collectively seeks to achieve. Instead they are
released in some type of expressive behaviour which, however, in becoming crystallised, may have profound effects in the personalities and the character of the social order."\(^3^4\)

The politics of the environment in Australia is negatively interpreted by this approach. The interpretation takes the form of three related themes; the unrealistic and ineffective character of environmental politics; its authoritarian orientation; and the destructive tendency of its protests and other forms of direct action which border on the violent.

One argument is that environmental politics is Utopian in character. As Peres argues;

"The arguments and advocacy are quite familiar to political scientists at least in form and mode if not in substance. Political scientists are quite used to those who proclaim gloom and travail now, Utopia later. The Utopia will only come, however, if man accepts either the revelations of the visionaries or the hard-headed inescapable ascription of his true interests offered by the more scientifically-oriented analysis... indeed, it is rather like reading the socialist literature of fifty or sixty years ago."\(^3^5\)

Peres contends that to be politically effective environmentalists have to balance their visionary ideology with cohesive organisation and this requires the translating of general objectives to organisational goals. He argues that there are indications of reluctance to compromise visionary ideology within the Australian environmental movement, and therefore, holds little hope for the
chances of environmental activists in achieving tangible gains.³⁶

Dempsey, examining the significance of the 'environmental' issue in local elections in 1971 in New South Wales, contends that the strategy of political action by its advocates is ineffective.

"One of the problems in establishing relevance in the political arena is to demonstrate some difference between you and your opponent. Here the environmentalists take completely the opposite tack: they seem bent on establishing a sentimentalised consensus in public discourse."³⁷

Dempsey and Power,³⁸ in a subsequent article, argue that this political style, the quest for sentimentalised consensus in public discourse, is characteristically American and its use in Australian politics will lead to ineffective political mobilisation. One example of this style is the undiscriminating compilation of enormous lists of demands for government to regulate all sorts of behaviour that the environmentalists may consider to have affected the environment adversely. This often leads to their being out-maneuvered by unresponsive and uncaring governments. Such manoeuvres include either the announcing of apparently tough and resolute measures which soon lapse into innocuousness if not outright desuetude or making the measures so complex and hedged with safeguards for the interests of those alleged to be polluters that they are rendered unenforceable.
A second theme is the characterisation of the politics of environmentalists as illiberal and authoritarian in orientation. Dempsey and Power cite the proposal by Ehrlich (a leading environmentalist) for a Planetary Regime which could control the development, administration, conservation and the distribution of all natural resources and which would have the power to enforce the agreed limits of each nation's population growth. They argue that we might yet see the rise of an authoritarian mass movement of ecological concern because the orientation of environmentalists is towards pressurising governments and international agencies "to formulate policies aimed at determining who will be allowed to procreate and when; who will be sterilised or forced to carry contraceptives beneath their skins; and how those who resist should be punished."

The authoritarian orientation of environmentalists is also suggested by Passmore. He argues that many environmental arguments rest on the implausible assumption that the authoritarian state would be ruled by ecologist-kings.

The third theme is the view that the tendency of environmental politics is towards extremism and violence.

Walsh, for example, describes the meetings of environmentalists as "evangelical" in character. He contends that;
"Dr Ehrlich's meetings (in Australia) have something of the atmosphere of a revivalist meeting. He is just preaching another sort of evangelism, this time secular, to the already converted."

And Reid, in reviewing the use of protest as a political strategy in Australia, refers to its use by environmentalists. He argues that protest is often motivated by people who have relatively limited political power, that is, people who are, of necessity or by choice, outside the established parliamentary party political framework. He suggests that the dynamics of protest organisation tend towards the use of violence. It is contended that;

"Unquestionably, a great deal of change can be achieved by peaceful protest. But whilst the means are not violent they are however, time consuming, and they test the patience of participants. As they do not achieve rapid change, they frequently become unacceptable to the modern radical ... lawful protest, as well as unlawful protest, is likely to provoke violence ... and the danger of exercising violence in protest situations ... is that violence begets greater violence."

The recurring interpretive themes contained in the studies examined in this chapter may be summarized as follows.

1. That individuals and groups involved in the environmental cause tend to be from the relatively affluent and secure middle class. 2. The most susceptible to the cause tend to be those who have personality disturbances or those who are irrationally or pathologically fearful about social changes and the future. 3. The environmental cause appeals because it is,
(a) anti-scientific, (b) provides simplistic solutions to complex socio-economic problems; and (c) provides social objects onto which to focus hostility.

4. Environmentalism is moralistic and lacks a programme of social action. 5. Its politics is authoritarian in orientation in that it involves 'expertise' as the basis of societal decision-making and advocates severe punishment for those who do not conform with environmental principles. 6. Protests and demonstrations enable the expression of dissatisfaction of moral indignation but they are ineffective in gaining concrete political gains. This is because its strategy is one of creating widespread consensus and participation, not one of bargaining and negotiation with other political groups in the community.

Some Critical Comments

There are two dimensions which the studies outlined above are concerned to explain. The first is the explanation for the ideological commitment of individuals to the beliefs, aims and values of environmentalism; the question of who believes in them, for what reasons and with what consequences. The second is the explanation for the choice of the type of political acitivity; the question of what mode of politics and its consequences. It is argued in this section, that the studies have highlighted and explained many aspects of the environmental protest
phenomenon. They have nevertheless raised a number of difficulties and leave much that needs to be explained if there is to be a fuller understanding of environmental politics.

In explaining the commitment to the environmental ideology, two categories of explanations have been used, 'strain theory' of ideological commitment and 'interest' or 'materialist' theory. Both these approaches raise difficulties.

The 'strain theory' explains ideological commitment as a chronic effort by individuals to correct socio-psychological disequilibrium, as a symbolic outlet for emotional disturbances. Examples of this theory include the explanations that the springs to the environmental commitment lie in the misanthropy, sense of insecurity, paranoia, guilt and sense of gloom that the participants of the movement have. While not denying completely the validity of these explanations, it is argued that such explanations raise the following difficulties.

First, such an approach explains what type of personality is susceptible to the appeals of environmentalism, but it does not explain adequately how and why it is these individuals are attracted to the ideas and principles of environmentalism and not other competing beliefs and principles.
Secondly, by their tendency to hypothesise unconscious or irrational elements as the 'real' motives behind the commitment, these psychological explanations deny the validity of the environmentalists' own explanations of their motives for believing in environmental principles. This implies the superior knowledge of the observer. This is problematic and should not be assumed as it appears to be.

And thirdly, the emphasis on the non-rational motivations, even on the pathological traits of the leaders of the movement, has led to the neglect of the situational conditions out of which the movement arises and is sustained. It can be argued that a fuller understanding of the environmental commitment will need to take into account the social, political and economic situation to which the environmentalists are responding. (This argument will be examined in Chapter Two of the thesis).

The second category of explanations has as its basic model the Marxian theory of ideology which sees ideas as weapons of individuals, groups, classes or parties in their competition to institutionalise their view of the world and justify their economic privileges. The arguments which emphasize the middle-classness of environmental values, the relative affluence of their advocates and see the advocacy of the cause as advancing and justifying this relatively affluent lifestyle, are different
variations of the 'interest' and 'materialist' theory.

A major difficulty with these explanations is that they overemphasise the 'rationality' of the environmentalists by assuming rather than demonstrating, that they are conscious of their interest and calculatedly pursue it. The difficulty here is the reverse of the shortcoming of the strain theory. The assumption of 'rationality' has often not been demonstrated.

A second weakness in these explanations is that they do not explain why it is that many individuals who belong to the same economic class as the environmentalists do not share the same beliefs and values but may even be opposed to them. They seem to lack an adequate analysis of motivations of the environmentalists. They also do not seem to accord with the complex and relatively open variety of human wants.

The negative analysis of environmental politics also poses difficulties. This arises from the difficulty in accepting without qualifications the image of politics and the political system that these writers have. The image can be described as a gradualist, pluralistic and instrumental view of the political process; the view that the political output is the result of bargaining and negotiation
between groups working within the institutional framework and abiding by the 'rules of the game'.\textsuperscript{48} Such an image is illustrated for example by Reid who defines politics in the following way:

"I see politics to be a human activity in which people, singly and collectively, in pursuit of the satisfaction of their individual or group interests, engage in conflict with other people or groups pursuing other interests. But the conflict that is politics takes place in the context of reconciliations and compromise rather than a context of violence and physical repression. Politics is a peaceful pursuit..."\textsuperscript{49}

Dempsey and Walsh also see effective politics primarily in the context of the existing political party framework. Dempsey argues that the idea in political party politics is to demonstrate some difference between one's group and its opponents.\textsuperscript{50} And Walsh suggests that the political ineffectiveness of environmentalists can be explained by their non-acceptance of the "rules of the game" of the two-party system. He points out that in such a system, "for a political issue to exist... there has to be a difference of opinion between the parties. This can hardly be said of the environmental issue at the moment".\textsuperscript{51}

Peres also emphasizes the importance of compromise and bargain in the political process.\textsuperscript{52} He suggests to environmentalists that "in the short term,...environmentalists will have to trade, to bargain, to compromise with ecological values, truths
and certainty. To play this kind of game at all environmentalists need political resources. If they want to persuade people to yield a present benefit they must be able to offer an equal, if not greater, value in return.\textsuperscript{53}

While not wishing to raise the rather vexed debate between the pluralist and the elitist views of the Australian political system,\textsuperscript{54} it is argued that basing the analysis of environmental politics on this model would raise at least two basic difficulties.

First, such a view rules out the possibility that a "mobilisation of bias" exists within the political system. By this is meant;

"a set of predominant values, beliefs, rituals, and institutional procedures ("rules of the game") that operate systematically and consistently to the benefit of certain groups at the expense of others. Those who benefit are placed in a preferred position to defend their vested interests. More often than not, the 'status quo defenders' are a minority or elite group within the population in question.\textsuperscript{55}

And as Walsh concedes;

"The hip-pocket nerve remains one of the great political handicaps for the eco-nuts, being more sensitive than appeals to high blown ideals."\textsuperscript{57}

It is arguable, therefore, that given the bias of the system, the adoption of conventional political strategies would have resulted in the total
ineffectiveness of environmental groups. Consequently alternative modes may have to be resorted to.

Secondly, and more importantly, the pluralistic view of the Australian political system may not be shared by the environmentalists themselves. They may perceive the Australian political process as reflecting a pattern of elitist politics. Indeed such a perception seems to be widely shared by environmentalists. (This will be developed further in Part II of the thesis). The important point is that what is critical for a fuller understanding of the character of environmental politics is the subjective perception of environmental activists. Whilst this perception may not describe the reality of the political system, it will provide a clue to the connection between the political thinking of environmentalists and their action.

The protest politics of environmentalist is viewed by the studies outlined in this chapter, as being primarily "expressive." Environmentalists are consequently seen as being ineffective in terms of bringing about concrete changes in the physical environment or the norms governing social behaviour. However, it is argued that such an interpretation has weaknesses.

1. It rules out the possibility that the political activity of environmentalists is related to their goals and objectives. It will be shown in
the subsequent chapters of this study that the
definition of the environmental 'problem' can be
narrow as well as very broad. The instrumental
value of any political activity will depend upon
the scope of the 'problem' and the necessary remedies.
It is possible to argue that protest and direct mass
action by some environmentalists is instrumental in
the light of: a) Their wide definition of the
'environmental problem'; b) their role concept­
ions; c) their broad goals of changing social
values and attitudes.

2. One of the assumptions of the view taken in
this interpretation is that the rejection of convent­
ional forms of politics such as working through
political parties and established pressure groups is
irrational. It is assumed that it is the individuals
rather than the political system which is at fault.
However, there seems to be no compelling reason to
accept without question the notion that the political
system, its institutions and procedures are completely
open, fair and unbiased. It will be argued in Part II
of the thesis that the rejection of conventional
political strategies is based at least partly on the
feeling and belief that the political system is biased
and possibly hostile to the environmental cause.
FOOTNOTES:  CHAPTER I

1 Aron Wildavsky, The Revolt against the Masses, (Basic Books, New York 1971) p. 29.


3 Ignacy Sachs, "Approaches to a political economy of environment" Social Science Information Vol. 10 No. 5, 1971. The hypocritical stance of environmentalists in relation to the underdeveloped countries is also argued by John Passmore, "Removing the Rubbish; Reflections on the Ecological Craze" in Encounter, April 1974, p. 23.


6 Ibid. p. 60.


8 Ibid. p. 3.


12 Ibid. p. 231.

13 Ibid. p. 240.

14 Beckerman, op.cit. p. 37.

15 Ibid. p. 40.
See also Vincent Buckley. Viewing the environmental concern as a movement of religious awareness, Buckley sees guilt as an important underlying motive. "On the level of personal commitment to worthwhile ends, the whole concern with ecology, conservation and pollution is very likely necessary to a society which so recently accepted one or other doctrine of original sin; it thus fulfills a gap. But it is also used and used increasingly, to induce personal as well as social guilt..." in Henry Mayer and Helen Nelson (eds) Australian Politics: A Third Reader (Cheshire, Melbourne, 1973) p. 626.


Ibid. p. 1.


Ibid. p. 171. The characteristics of a positive wish-fulfilment belief are as follows:

(a) It has an element of a 'hysterical belief', a belief empowering an ambiguous element in the environment with a generalised power to threaten and destroy. An example of such a belief is premonitions of disaster.
(b) It consists of anxiety and fears about specific events, objects and situations.
(c) The belief that there are generalised forces which can counter and overcome the negative forces implicit in anxiety.

The 'craze' typically arises in situations of ambiguity and the 'wish-fulfilment belief' serves to give structure to such ambiguous situations and to provide panaceas to overcome them. The ambiguity can relate to the
level of rewards to be expected from an existing allocation of resources, or the ambiguity as to the level of reward to be expected from alternative modes of allocation.


*Smelser, op. cit*. p. 226. 'Hostile beliefs' have the following features; (a) They contain 'hysterical beliefs', a belief empowering an ambiguous element in the environment with a generalised power to threaten and destroy, anxiety and fears, and 'wish-fulfilment belief', that there are generalised forces which can counter and overcome the negative forces. (b) Involves a fusion of anxiety, resulting in a generalised belief that some agent or agents are responsible for the anxiety-producing state of affairs. (c) Involves a desire to punish, remove, damage or restrict the responsible agent. This has a generalised component of aggression which is focussed on specific objects which are selected as the objects of hysterical fear. (d) It involves wish-fulfilment of two sorts. (i) an exaggerated ability of the attackers to punish or harm the agent of evil; and (ii) an exaggerated ability, therefore, to remove the evils which have been ascribed to this agent. In other words, a generalised sense of omnipotence.

The model "moral crusade and protest" is suggested by Paul Wilkinson *Social Movements* (London, MacMillan 1971). Such a use is made by Robert Dempsey and John Power "The Politics of the Environment" *op. cit*.


John Passmore, "Removing the Rubbish", p. 17. The authoritarian tendency is also argued by Peter Samuel in the "Economics of Pollution" in Robert Dempsey, (ed) *The Politics of Finding Out*, "There is a definite authoritarian element in some conservationist thinking." p. 160.


This categorisation is adopted from Clifford Geertz, "Ideology as Cultural System" in David Apter, (ed) *Ideology and Discontent* The Free Press, Clencoe, 1964. The subsequent discussion on the weaknesses of the two approaches relies heavily on this article.

The basic model here is Freudian which views human thought as a reflection of socio-psychological mechanisms. Public issues are seen as displaced private troubles.

The Marxian model is well enough known as not to require further elaboration.

Gordon Reid, *In Appleyard*, *op. cit.* p. 159.


Maximilian Walsh, *op. cit.* p. 156.

Leon Peres, *op. cit.*

*Ibid*, p. 149.

It is, of course, possible to take the view that both models have little explanatory power for the functioning of the Australian political system. See, for example, Hugh Emy, "The Roots of Australian Politics: A Critique of a Culture" *Politics* VII, 1972, pp. 12-30.


CHAPTER II

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST AS HUMANE AND DEMOCRATIC ACTION

One set of studies on environmental politics explains the non-conventional political activities of environmentalists as 'humanistic', 'democratic' and 'morally responsible' action. It is suggested that environmental action has to be seen in the context of the transformation of industrial society into a 'post-industrial' one. Environmentalists are seen as the individuals who are concerned with a range of problems associated with this process of transformation. Environmental action can be seen as attempts by these individuals to humanize, democratize or render more socially responsible the emerging 'technocracy' involved in the process of post-industrialization. The politics of the 'grass-roots' and 'direct-action' which often accompany environmental politics is seen as being consistent with these individuals' humane and democratic ideology.

This chapter will outline the 'humanistic' and 'democratic' explanation advanced for environmental action in industrial countries generally as well as specifically for the Australian politics of environmental quality.
The Transformation of Industrial Society

Various models have been offered to describe the state into which industrial society is being transformed. It includes 'technological', 'technocratic', 'scientific', 'knowledgeable', and 'post-industrial society'. They postulate the centrality of scientific knowledge as a critical resource in that society. In such a society, science takes up a large share of societal effort for its promotion and maintenance. Davies defines 'knowledgeable society' in the following way;

"A society may be called 'knowledgeable' when it has a preponderant investment of people and resources in 'knowledge industries'; when its leading institutions rely heavily on the new technology of knowledge' in their decision-making; when the 'knowledge explosion' discommodes man by man most of its professional people; or when 'scientific knowledge' can and does contribute substantially to public policy."

The 'post-industrial' society proposed by Bell stresses the role of science in generating self-sustaining innovation and growth. The transformation of industrial society into 'post-industrial' is associated with structural changes, shifts in the bases of power and privileges and modes of access to them. Its thrust is to bring more and more scientific knowledge into government and public affairs, creating a new order of complexity, and engendering difficult choices and options and possibilities on the future.
Various problems are increasingly faced by a society where science and technology is emerging as the critical resource and where government has become an ally of the self-sustaining scientific revolution.

First, the question of ordering the socio-economic priorities for science and technology and its uses. On one hand, there is the powerful influence of the notion that science is an unmitigated blessing and that the problems which affect man will go on yielding to the constant accumulation of scientific knowledge. On the other hand, there are those who are sceptical of science and critical of the uncontrolled growth of technological innovation and the assumption that 'technological fixes' can solve the world's economic and social problems and eliminate the causes of conflict and war. This group sees as the major task for science the control over social fallout or unplanned, unanticipated and undesirable side-effects of technological 'progress'.

As Rubenstein observes;

"We are now perhaps observing a reaction against science for science's sake, both big and little, and a greater concern with the social payoff or a development orientation. There are many social problems, such as environment control, urban transport, public health, poverty and housing, for which a major technological input seems essential and we are probably now witnessing a significant re-ordering of priorities and at the very least, a greater consciousness about the need for deliberate monitoring of change and the creation of suitable mechanisms to reflect on these multifaceted problems."
In the making of these choices, the creation of a scientific system of social accounts which can better appraise achievements, needs and shortcomings and clarify goals and priorities does not necessarily make it any easier. The effect of better information, more rigorous rationality and theoretical analyses, is a greater awareness of the problems, costs and benefits of alternative policies for the different groups in the community.\(^8\)

The second set of issues relates to the question of how social decisions are to be made and by whom. As Apter points out, in 'scientific' society, only the professional role based on scientific skill, is durable as a basis of achieving power and prestige. This results in the society which divides the scientific elite from the rest of the community.\(^9\) Such a bifurcation in the community raises what Williams calls the 'technocracy-participation' dilemma.\(^10\) He quotes a Times editorial for a statement of the dilemma;

"Many advanced states are experiencing, within themselves, the same kind of gap between public opinion and the machinery of government. A paradox of the modern technological society is revealed: the society creates problems so complex that they can be handled only by those with specialist and intricate knowledge, and at the same time it produces people who are in general more highly educated and inquiring than previous generations. It centralises decision-making but spreads the desire to make decisions. How can a democracy, in this predicament, satisfy both the need for greater efficiency and the need for wider participation?"\(^{11}\)
As Bell points out, in 'post-industrial' society effective power passes from the legislative and parliamentary bodies to the executive. In such a situation, the majority rule concept becomes questionable. Even the pluralist-group theory of democracy becomes obsolete. The end result of the situation is conflict between those who accept the inevitability of the passing of power to the 'establishment' and those who want to reassert what they consider basic principles and practice of popular democracy. This engenders the search for alternative solutions to the 'technocracy-participation' dilemma.

A third set of problems relate to the promotion of social 'solidarity', that is, the binding of the community together, and the formation of individual 'identity', that is, organising the role personalities of the maturing adult.

Apter argues that previously ideologies helped to perform these two functions of creating solidarity and providing modes of personality. With the rise of the scientific 'establishment' both functions of ideology are undermined in relation to the 'disestablished' groups. This leads to mutually antagonistic and, in many ways, lonely groups in society. The major source of this situation lies in the undermining of the elaborate rhetoric which often disguises low status and gives it dignity through titles and other
job descriptions. It is undermined by the emergence of the meritocratic ideology based on science. As Apter points out "science is a well defined ideology possessing norms of empiricism, predictability and rationality as guides to conduct. This is also true for the social sciences. Scientific norms are increasingly accepted as guides to social conduct.

The trend points towards planning, calculation and rationalistic goals. This ideology expresses itself in the concept of 'meritocracy' which becomes the ideology of the 'establishment'. On the other hand, for the 'disestablished' there is the ideology of 'unreason', which they devoutly defend. "The disestablished clings to unreason, their orientation to the world around them will fall apart and in the process their world will disappear." And for the truly superfluous individuals, there is only generalized hatred both towards self and others.

In other words, in an increasingly scientific society, Apter postulates an increasing problem of creating a sense of community between individuals and groups in society and an acute problem for individual identity, sense of dignity and sense of worth in the non-members of the establishment.

The transformation of industrial society into a post-industrial one, with its attendant conflicts and tensions, has been taken by many writers, sometimes impliedly, as the setting in which to analyse the politics of the environment.
In this context, the politics of the environment can be seen as a set of positive responses to the wide range of problems and tensions posed by this process of transformation. It is suggested that the development of environmental concern can be seen in terms of the different positions and reactions taken by different social groups towards these difficulties. The essential argument of the approach is that environmentalists consist of diverse groups such as scientists, humanists, and the politically aware and active. The groups are becoming conscious of a range of problems and negative by-products emerging out of the greater intertwining of science and technology and government and industry. Out of this increasing awareness arise attempts to articulate misgivings, to formulate alternative goals and direction, and to partake in political activity of varying types to bring about the realization of these goals.

'Critical Science' as Basis of Environmental Action

Encel maintains that 'science' has been severely damaged by its subjection to the demands of economic growth, industrial technology and militarism. The pathological manifestations of this damage include, its loss of autonomy, fragmentation, overemphasis on quantifiable 'objective' phenomena, distortion of the educational process and social irresponsibility.
One result has been the growing resistance among many educated people to 'science' as they know it. This takes the form of questioning some of the assumptions on which much of science has been conducted in the past. For example, in the 1950's and 60's support for science was based on "two related sets of assumptions: firstly, that the systematic pursuit of knowledge and research would always lead to increasing payoffs in the form of technological innovation. Secondly, that increased investment in R & D would lead to a corresponding rise in the rate of economic growth. Behind these two interrelated arguments lurks a further and deeper assumption: that a high rate of economic growth is a good thing for society."18

In recent years, the relation between science and technology is viewed by many in a more pessimistic perspective. The problem for science and technology is not so much that of putting it to use but one of controlling its impact on society.

The challenge to the simple-minded approach to science is interpreted by Encel as a sign of a greater awareness of the problems which have resulted from the rapid pace of technical change. This awareness is the basis of the concern and action in Australia in issues like "the future of the Great Barrier Reef, of ecological effects of extensive programmes of water conservation, of the massive destruction of native tree
It is suggested by Encel that scientists are in a better position than anyone else to appreciate and predict the consequences of scientific research and technology. Environmental concern emerges from this greater awareness. It represents a keener appreciation by scientists of their social responsibility in the decision-making process in society. According to Encel, such a stance is in keeping with the traditional role of science, that is, the questioning of established orthodoxy and established belief and authority.

Ravetz, sees the evolution of a new perspective in science which he termed 'critical science' as a mainspring to the emergence of environmental action. 'Critical science' has arisen in the context of the problems associated with the industrialization of science. Ravetz suggests that the industrialization of science has brought about a loss of morale among scientists whose assumptions and view of science still reflect that of 'academic' science. In academic science, scientists are motivated by the assurance that their scientific activity will have a general but diffuse social benefit. Their social practice and self-awareness is based on the ethic of the search for truth. They tend to work in the context of an autonomous community of gentlemen with
a particularly refined sort of personal property attached to their work. The industrialization of science destroys much of this.\textsuperscript{22}

In addition to the loss of morale in the scientific community there is also the growing awareness that the scientific endeavour is no longer morally innocent. As Ravetz points out,

"Thus first the Bomb, and more recently through the involvement in runaway technology, the world of science has been faced with genuinely moral problems. They concern the responsibility of an individual for the immediate and remote effect of his actions. Such problems are difficult if not insoluble. The inherited working ethics of science offer no guidance: and the traditional claim of benefit for humanity, in its realisation, produced this darker side. Whatever else will happen to ideology of science, it will never again claim innocence."\textsuperscript{23}

The rapid transformation of the social activity of science, which rendered its traditional ethics obsolete and its ideology hollow, has caught many scientists in a personal tragedy. There arises an awareness of the need for understanding and intellectual and moral leadership capable of adapting the best heritage of science to the tasks of the present and the future. This resulted in the emergence of 'critical science'.

"Instead of isolated individuals sacrificing their leisure and interrupting their regular research for engagement in practical problems, we now see the emergence of scientific schools of a sort. In them collaborative research of the highest quality is done as part of practical projects involving the discovery, analysis and criticisms of the different sorts of damage inflicted on man and nature by runaway technology, followed by their public exposure and campaigns for their abolition."\textsuperscript{24}
Critical science emerges therefore from a state of dissatisfaction on the part of many scientists with the role into which science has been placed. This is accompanied by the realization that the work of scientific criticism is largely futile unless scientific research is followed by public exposure and campaigning. As a consequence, critical science is inevitably and essentially political.

However, in their struggles for the exposure and correction of practices damaging to the environment, critical scientists have evolved a new style of politics. As Ravetz points out:

"Its style of politics is not that of the modern mass movement or even that of 'pressure groups' representing a particular constituency with a distinct set of interests; it is more like the politics of the Enlightenment, where a small minority use reason, argument and a mixture of political tactics to rouse public concern on matters of human welfare."\(^25\)

The style of politics is therefore the rejection of the conventional and pluralistic mode. It attempts instead to create a political strategy which it regards as more appropriate to the ends.

The thrust of Encel's and Ravetz's argument is that the concern for the environment amongst scientists has come from those who have become aware of a range of negative by-products of science and technology as currently practised. This is combined with their awareness that scientists have some moral and political responsibility
for such a state of affairs. It is believed that they can and should take steps to provide solutions to the situation. Environmental politics is the expression of this awareness and belief.

Consequently the characteristic style of their politics is neither the politics of a mass movement nor the conventional politics of 'pressure group' activities.

Environmental Protest: An attempt to Humanize and Democratize 'Technocracy'

Anderson argues that one of the mainsprings for environmental protest is the feeling in many individuals and groups that the increasing centrality of science and technology has brought about the dehumanization of people in that society. Such a state develops as social institutions increasingly acquire the characteristics of machines, a process described as bureaucratization and rationalization. Many believe that the machinery is out of control, "that the massive technological system of which we are all a part has taken a life of its own, is spinning mindlessly and destructively onward with no regard for human purpose, and is indeed forcing human beings to become increasingly machinelike themselves - adapting people to the service of the system." 26
Anderson argues that an important goal of environmentalists is the 'humanization of technology' by which is meant "the insistence that technology can and must be evaluated in terms of its contribution to human experience."\textsuperscript{27} By understanding this idea, Anderson adds, we should begin to see how humanists may have something different in mind when they employ such terms as 'pollution' 'environmental deterioration' or 'ecological' crisis. They are concerned with issues beyond the physical, material and quantifiable consequences of the misuse of technology.

This humanist goal is coupled with the belief that the task of articulating a new vision of human purpose of adapting technology more suitably to human needs is inevitably political. It is political because it opens up the question of how a technological society is to be run and whether technology must inevitably lead to technocracy. The solution offered by environmentalists is a form of 'technological democracy', that is, the arrangement whereby the major issues of technological planning will be articulated by political leaders and will be dealt with openly as the critical questions of public policy. However, it is believed that for such a democracy to function there must be a high level of public awareness not only of scientific knowledge but also of a sense of 'self' and 'environment'. 
Environmental action can be seen therefore as having two functions. One, to raise the public awareness in matters scientific, the sense of self and the environment. And two, to take some aspects away from technocratic decision-making agencies and bring them into the arena of public politics, "by creating public discussions where there was none before, to make political issues of matters previously classified as non-political."²⁸

Environmental politics, therefore, raises a new kind of issue. Based on the belief that technology should be humanized, it opens up the fundamental question of how a technological society should be run. It raises the basic questions about technological policy and challenges decisions made by technological fiat. Anderson argues that so far, environmentalists have of necessity, tended previously to emphasize survival issues, but they now concern themselves also with the questions of aesthetics, higher needs, human experience, and the integration of technology with social purpose.

The need to live up to humanistic values is given by Birrell, as a basis for its mass following and direct action.²⁹ Referring to the rise of the environmental concern in the United States, he argues that "The environmental issue can be interpreted as another manifestation of the large scale involvement of middle-class liberals, and particularly their college-age children,
in social issues since the 1960's.  

These are individuals who are responsive to humanistic values inherent in liberalism and have sufficient confidence or autonomy to try living up to these values.

Apart from the humanistic motives Birell points to three features of the environmental outlook to account for its attractiveness. (i) Environmentalism provides a basis for a fundamental attack on the system (ii) It offers, at the same time, a new style of life which can be visibly contrasted with the conventional such as growing and eating organic food, using recycled products, etc; and (iii) It has intellectual plausibility given the alarming facts of international population expansion, diminishing non-renewable resources and so on.

As a consequence, the politics of the environment tends to depart from the conventional mode of bargaining and negotiating. Much of the environmentalists' effort is directed toward increasing the public awareness of the problems and trying to move these issues out of the backrooms of the bureaucracy into the glare of public debate by sustained research and attention-grabbing activism.

The Search for 'Community', New Life-Style and Politics

Jakubowicz, argues that the concern for the environment is associated with the fact that Australia,
like other industrialized societies, is entering the first stages of post-industrial society. As part of this process, is the appearance over the last decade or more, of a new group of people that has been referred to as the 'new middle-class'. This consists of people who are "freed from the day to day job insecurity of the manual worker, and from the entrepreneurial responsibility of the classic middle class. They tend to have salaried jobs in large corporations, the public service or universities."\(^3\)

Jakubowicz suggests that there is developing in this class a concern for 'life-space' and social amenities in the inner suburbs of Australia's large cities. This concern takes the form of not just the protection of physical property, but the development of a new kind of life-style to be based on a sense of 'community'. As Jakubowicz points out, the resident action groups in these situations have stressed in their political campaigns not only general conservation of the areas but the importance of creating 'communities' in them. He argues that much of the politics of the inner-surburban middle-class is inspired by the need to have territory and space in which they can create a community similar in kind to the old extended family network but built from groups of nuclear families thus providing a "defensive bulwark against the more authoritarian society."\(^3\)
The appearance of these resident groups has also changed the nature of politics in local government. Their experience of the political process has made these groups sceptical of the traditional type of 'machine politics' practised by the politicians belonging to the major political parties, such as the Australian Labor Party. In 'machine politics', political activity centres around authoritarian and hierarchical organizations. Those involved learn 'to play the game hard and for keeps' through learning organizational management, manipulation and electoral shenanigans to ensure success. The major objective of such politics is to run Town Hall so as to control jobs which in turn control the votes. Politics is seen essentially in material terms of jobs and favours.

The resident action activists have evolved instead a different type of politics. They have operated by relying on their professional expertise and using this directly on the professional decision-makers and by bringing large numbers of people into direct participation in campaigns and demonstrations on different issues. Their political ethic reflects a professional ethic, inter alia, the acceptance of "rational discourse and debate to resolve conflict and the assumption that issues will be decided accordingly, on the weight of evidence." Also, attempts are made to involve residents in the financial and
planning commitments of the Councils through committees and consultation. This encouragement of citizen participation in the decision-making process of the community, it is argued, is in keeping with their anti-authoritarian ideology.

The politics of the environment is seen by Little as reflecting a new perspective in politics. Its core is the redefinition of politics. According to this definition everything that matters is political. It rejects the accepted boundaries of politics which concern itself mainly with material and economic issues, "taxes, subsidies, loan allocations, wages and strikes, the Wool Board, the Securities Inquiry, mineral exploration, education grants, natural gas." Politics redefined would include matters relating to self-identity and awareness (or consciousness) and such questions as life-style, aesthetic preferences, and moral questions. These are regarded as being the central political questions.

According to this new perspective, politics is seen not just as an instrument for advancing material and economic interest, but as a way of understanding self and society and developing 'self-identity'. Such a perspective shifts the emphasis of politics from "nuts-and-bolts and facts-and-figures politics where the leading theme is economic aggrandizement and other goals
tag along behind keeping up as best as they can, to self-reflectiveness; welfare and zero population growth, peace ... The goals are conserving ones and have to pass a stricter test of 'humaneness' ... and the means must match: spontaneous and protean in organisation, and non-hierarchical."37

The redefinition of politics, it seems, requires a new stratgey. In its development, Little argues, "The strategy of protest have taught the lesson best. There are examples of viable local-community schemes, not so specialized on publicity skills and opposition, in the inner suburbs of Melbourne and Sydney. A new localism. But most learning about participation has been from moratorium marches, sit-ins, the burning of draft-cards."38

It is contended that the chief attraction of this political orientation is its promise to bring more people into politics. There are risks and pitfalls, such as righteous intolerance, emotional manipulation and gamesmanship, wooliness and instability. But the aim is to foster politics which is more cooperative and human, a politics of the whole person reflecting the autonomous individual and a politics of maximum respons- iveness. It is politics aimed at breaking the phenomenon of political apathy and passive citizenship.
A Summary and some Critical Comments

The studies examined in this chapter suggest a number of explanatory themes.

(1) The intertwining of science, technology, government and science has a wide variety of negative by-products, both intended and unintended, and gives rise to a range of social and political tensions.

(2) Individuals and groups such as scientists, professionals, students and humanists, experience and perceive these tensions, although they do so from different positions and with a variety of reactions.

(3) Environmentalism represents a wide variety of concerns including, damage done to the morale and integrity of science; the 'dehumanization' of social and political institutions; the impoverishment of social and political life; and the damage done to the physical and aesthetic environment.

(4) That environmentalism is not anti-science. It is partly scientifically based and represents an attempt to make science more socially responsible.

(5) It is moralistic in so far as environmentalists insist that questions on the uses of science and technology are always in part a moral and political question.
(6) It is democratic in orientation in that environmentalists regard as desirable the wider citizen participation in societal decisions about science and technology. That protest and other forms of direct action is consistent with the democratic goals of some environmentalists.

(7) It is humanistic, in that, environmentalists are concerned with the problems of 'personal identity' and the loss of the sense of 'community'.

These themes imply, first, that the susceptibility of individuals and groups to the environmental cause is not due primarily to their irrational anxieties and personality disturbances but due to their experience of a problem situation or problem situations. Secondly, that environmental arguments appeal not primarily because of the paranoid and simplistic arguments but because of their moral persuasiveness and intellectual plausibility. And thirdly, that environmental politics is not only expressive of moral indignation but also purposeful in that it attempts to redefine politics, to bring awareness and rationality into public discourse and greater public participation into the political process.

A valuable feature of explanations summarized in this chapter is their emphasis on the belief-centred basis of environmental political activity and the logical relationship between the goals of environmentalists and the type of political action.
However, in stressing the rational and goal-oriented nature of environmental political activity, certain aspects of the movement are left unexamined and unexplained.

First, there is the class-based nature of environmental group membership and outlook. There appears to be some evidence of the dominance of the professional middle-class in environmental political activity. The protection of interests that underlie environmental political activity include, amongst other things, social amenities for the professional middle-class residential suburbs and their recreational facilities in the form of wilderness, wildlife and fishing.

And, secondly, there is little examination of the consequences of environmental political activity. It has been pointed out in Chapter one that often environmentalists are out-maneuvered by governments. These conclude in apparently tough and resolute legislation which soon lapses into innocuousness or legislation so complex and hedged with safeguards for the interests of alleged polluters that it becomes difficult to enforce.
FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER II

1. The model 'post-industrial' society was articulated by Daniel Bell. See his "Notes on the Post-Industrial Society" Nos. I and II., The Public Interest, 1967, No. 6 and No. 7.


3. 'Science' here is taken to include the social as well as the natural sciences, and the technology refers to such social technologies as systems analysis, as well as the more usual engineering categories. The centrality of science bearing on all areas of social activity is also emphasised by Lakoff in his 'scientific' society. "Scientific society makes its appearance when a mature industrial society is able to devote a substantial share of its resources to costly projects in science and technology which bear on the entire spectrum of social concerns including industrial productivity, while extending to all areas as well". op. cit., p. 56.

4. Alan F. Davies, op. cit., p. 3.

5. A summary of the model and its implications in Australia is succinctly outlined by Colin L. Rubenstein "Science Affairs and Australian Politics", Paper presented at the Australian Political Studies Association Conference, at Monash University, Melbourne, August 1971. A 'post-industrial' society has the following characteristics: (i) The dominance of the service economy where the majority of people employed are not involved in the production of food, clothing, houses, automobiles and other tangible goods, (ii) the rise of the professional and technical class constituted by the 'new men' who are scientists, mathematicians, the economists, and men of computer technology, reflecting a change in the kind of work and organisation in such a society around knowledge. This group, on the political level, serves as advisors, experts, and technocrats, (iii) the centrality of 'theoretical knowledge, as opposed to empirical knowledge, which becomes the 'new property' making the university and research institute the key institutions as sources and gatekeepers to knowledge. These define the sense, spirit and areas of conflict in advance of society; and
such theoretical knowledge is harnessed to promote self-sustaining technological growth, to anticipate the future through conscious planning, and to reduce the lead time from invention to innovation and production. The creation of a new intellectual technology, including game theory and simulation, systems analysis, linear programming and information theory assist in the future orientation of decision-making and the evaluation of alternative courses of action.


7 Colin L. Rubenstein, op. cit., p. 4.

8 "The irony is that the more planning there is in society, the more there are open group conflicts. Planning sets up a special locus of decision, which becomes a visible point at which pressures can be applied. Communal choice out of the discordance of individual personal preferences - necessarily sharpens value conflicts." Daniel Bell, op. cit., p. 102. Alan F. Davies disagrees with this view. Davies postulates the 'erosion of politics' hypothesis. He argues that "expanded knowledge allows the realm of technical competence to increase and reduce the scope of normative and political conflict, and it allows political leaders to delegate areas of political decisions to experts, so that 'value and power' decisions have moved up the decision making." op. cit., p. 11. Part of this disagreement can be resolved by ascertaining the meanings of 'open politics' used in the contexts of their arguments. But it can be argued against Davies that because politics have 'moved up' does not mean that it has been eroded; it might have been displaced but the conflicts still remain to be resolved, although the nature of the conflict resolution may take a different form.


11 Ibid, p. 29.

12 Bell, op. cit., p. 108.
This problem is raised by Apter, op. cit., While 'alienation' is not new, very complex and constitutes a major theme in the social sciences, see for example, Robert Nisbet, *The Sociological Tradition*, (London, Heinemann, 1970,) Apter argues that such a problem is accentuated in society dominated by science.

Apter, op. cit., Ideology is defined by Apter, as a set of 'general ideas which links particular actions and mundane practices with a wider set of meanings and by doing so, lends more honourable and dignified complexion to social conduct... It helps to make explicit the moral basis of action. p. 16.

15 Ibid, p. 40

16 Ibid, p. 37


19 Ibid.


21 Industrialized science has the following features:
   (i) The dominance of capital intensive research, and its consequences in the concentration of power in a small section of the community. (ii) The interpenetration of the science and industry with the loss of boundaries which enabled different values to work, with the appropriate codes of behaviour different and ideals to exist. (iii) Science is large in size, both in particular units and the aggregate, with the consequent loss of networks of informal personal contacts binding the scientific community. (iv) Brought into science is the instability and sense of rapid but uncontrolled change, characteristic of the world of industry and trade. Ibid, p. 31.

22 Ibid, p. 38.

23 Ibid, p. 65.


Ibid, p. 115.

Ibid, p. 120


Ibid, p. 258.


Ibid, p. 344.


Ibid, p. 102-3

Ibid, p. 110

Ibid, p. 120

CHAPTER III

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST AS A REFLECTION OF THE SCIENTIFIC 'PROFESSIONAL-DILEMMA'

One feature of environmental politics is the deep involvement of many scientists. Consequently, it has been suggested that one approach to the understanding of the environmental protest phenomenon is to view it as the politics of dissident scientists. It is argued that the scientists' involvement in the movement have arisen because as a profession, scientists, like many other professions, are facing a dilemma about the discrepancy between what they actually do and their cherished self-image. As a consequence, many of them have opted to involve themselves in the 'outsider' concerns and issues, that is, those concerns critical of the scientific 'establishment' as well as established political institutions and processes. However, it is also suggested that 'outsider' scientists tend to be ambivalent about their political involvement. Hence their politics reflect, on one hand, their desire to be involved and, on the other hand, not wanting to compromise and submit to 'the rules of the game'. The consequence is the politics of direct action.
This chapter is an examination of the scientists' 'professional-dilemma' explanation for environmental protest.

Scientists and their 'Professional Dilemma'

King\(^1\) suggests that scientists, not unlike other 'professionals',\(^2\) are currently facing a crisis. The crisis is in part one of public confidence. He states that:

"The professions in fact ask a great deal of the lay public. They seek to convince it that the work they do is vital to its well-being; while at the same time they insist on being allowed to determine by themselves and without interference from laymen how their work is to be done, what qualifications are needed to do it properly, and when it is being well done or badly done. There are signs that the lay public's forebearance is beginning to crumble."\(^3\)

However, the other aspect of the crisis is internal to the professions, the problem of identity. As King explains:

"The professions are essentially occupations which have developed a heightened self-consciousness and an acute awareness of their social distinctiveness... A profession experiences what we might call an 'identity crisis' when its objective situation begins to place demands upon its members which run counter to the collective image it tries to impress upon them."\(^4\)

Thus the crisis for the professions is both external, in the form of maintaining its 'status in the eyes of the laymen, and internal in the form of establishing or preserving a coherent and distinctive identity.
The profession of natural scientists\(^5\) seems to be facing such a crisis. On the one hand, because natural scientists now play a variety of roles such as researchers in government, military and industrial bureaucracies; as advisers to government agencies; as administrators of research, for example, defence research; as strategists for military organizations; and as diplomats for government in, for example, disarmament negotiations, they have become exposed to a wide range of political pressures as they were in the past to economic and religious pressures. Their autonomy is being threatened from a number of directions. They come from employers who employ scientists for their expertise but seek to dictate how and for what purposes it should be used; from governments which have accepted broad responsibility for defining social needs and purposes and setting them in order of priority, and seek to direct scientific expertise to secure their realization; and from the public which no longer hesitates to articulate its wants and needs and to judge for itself whether the scientists are satisfying it. On the other hand, some scientists are questioning whether their roles and the scope of their authority are consistent with the shared conception of the character of their expertise.

To resolve such a 'dilemma', that is, satisfying the demands made by the different groups in society on the profession and, at the same time, maintaining the values and the self-image of researchers as having
autonomy to advance specialized knowledge which ultimately is for the benefit of the community, the profession, according to King, has three strategies which are sometimes adopted by other professional individuals when faced by a similar crisis.\textsuperscript{6}

(i) He may tacitly surrender his authority to lay down the general lines along which his work is to be done and be satisfied with the autonomy granted him with respect to the detailed implementation of policy in the field. In other words, he narrows his claim to expertise to cover only the field of his effective autonomy.

(ii) An alternative is to expand its effective power beyond its traditionally recognised expertise and so regain a voice in the formulation of broad policies.

(iii) The professional can revise the profession's conception of their expertise to include political and administrative skills and to provide a broader basis for the legitimation for the exercise of political and administrative authority.

However, as King argues, these are not without many practical difficulties. Also, "a scientist who like F.A. Lindemann (later Lord Cherwell), becomes deeply involved in party politics is likely to suffer the
disapprobation of the scientific community and to compromise his scientific standing - witness Snow's account of him as a 'court politician'. On the other hand, the scientist who depends solely upon his standing within the scientific community to give weight to his opinion on public matters is likely to find it difficult to get through to politicians".\(^7\)

For those who seek political influence without becoming embroiled in party politics have two other alternatives. (i) They can remain outside the machinery of government and from pressure groups to influence its operation and (ii) they can seek entry into the governing elite via the administrative rather than the political structure.\(^8\)

According to Werskey,\(^9\) recent developments have shown that some scientists now feel themselves obliged to take up defensive positions and to resort again to the concerns of 'outsider' politics although scientists are now less excluded from positions of administrative and political influence. The concern for the 'environment' emerging from the 1960's is regarded by Werskey as an example of this inclination.

Werskey doubts whether such 'outsiders' will be able to persuade the scientific community at large to by-pass 'insider' channels in favour of other types of action. However, it is quite possible that "in the near future some dissident scientists will begin to emigrate from their relatively secure professional
enclaves, into the wider and more problematic world of radical politics. And some may even go further than that by opting out of science altogether."

The politics of the 'environment', it is argued, reflects, to a large degree, the attempt by a group of scientists to resolve their dilemma which has arisen from an awareness of the divergence between what in fact scientists do and the cherished image of themselves. But other factors such as the intermingling of scientific expertise and political judgement in environmental questions, make the environmental 'problem' a logical issue for scientists to be involved in.

Outsider-Scientists and the Environmental 'Problem'

It is logical that environmental politics should involve a significant number of scientists such as biologists, ecologists, chemists and geologists, as many environmental issues involve questions which have both scientific and political aspects. As Weinberg points out, the scientists are involved because of the "trans-scientific" nature of the issues. These are issues which "arise in the course of the interaction of science or technology, or the attempts to deal with the social problems through the procedures of science." Weinberg proposes the term trans-scientific, however, because although these questions are epistemologically speaking questions of fact and can be stated in the language of science, they are in practice unanswerable by science
alone; they transcend science. They are questions which "could conceivably be answered according to strict scientific canons if enough time and money were spent on them, but to do so would be impractical."\textsuperscript{13} On these questions, scientific facts and political judgement become intermingled. But these are issues which the scientists are in a better position to appreciate and get involved in than the layman. Hence their prominence in such issues.

Caldwell calls some of the issues relating to the environment, 'biopolitical' issues.\textsuperscript{14} According to him, biopolitics are "political efforts to reconcile biological facts and popular values - notably ethical values - in the formulation of public policies."\textsuperscript{15} It includes;

(i) the environmental, such as its impairment as a consequence of deliberate or inadvertent human action, the most dramatic example of which being radio-active fallout, and

(ii) physiological; issues relating to individual human behaviour as the use of cigarettes, tranquilizers, narcotics and alcohol. The point about these issues is the special role that scientists can and do play in their formulation and solution.

If the environmental issue attracts scientists, it seems more likely that such scientists come from a 'smallish minority' that Perl calls the "New Critics".\textsuperscript{16}
These are scientists; students, teachers and researchers, who have begun new efforts to stop nuclear arms race, control pollution and change the goals and structure of science and technology. Deeply embedded in their support is a "new and critical examination of the political relationship between the scientific community, the community and the national government."¹⁷

Perl points out that the "New Critics" see two desperate technological problems - the destruction of the natural environment by technological progress and the threat to world peace and human survival produced by the existing levels of nuclear armament and weapons. These, Perl admits, are not new problems, but he argues that the "New Critics" have added the crucial ingredients of "Political understanding, political responsibility, and political action. If the normal response of the scientific community to the two problems has been to examine what should be done technologically to prevent or repair the damage, the "New Critics" include further questions such as: What is the political environment that allows pollution? And what is the political responsibility of the scientific community?"¹⁸

The "New Critics" are critical not only of the existing political institutions but also of the "scientific establishment". By the "scientific establishment" is meant those prominent men in science and engineering who are involved in the administration of universities,
professional societies and research institutions and who provide scientific advisers to the government. The "New Critics" believe that these men have been compromised by the fact that in order to effectively obtain funds from government they must maintain friendly relations with both the legislative and executive branches of government and consequently they cannot be expected to challenge the government in major military and technological decisions.

A basic difference between the 'Insiders' wing and the 'Outsiders' wing of the scientific establishment is also suggested by Price.¹⁹ He defines the 'Insiders' as the "eminent scientists (and their professional allies among the engineers and physicians) who hold important positions of influence in government, and in the institutional structure by which government and science are now so closely connected".²⁰ As Insiders they are likely to accept the subordination of science to the priorities and value system established by the dominant political tradition as interpreted by government. On the other hand, 'Outsiders' are those who prefer to appear as independent critics of the current government policy. Such Outsiders are less willing to accept the validity of the traditional political ethos, or the necessity of science to be subordinated to a system of organised authority based on traditional values.

Wersky²¹ also argues that the concern for the environment is likely to come from the Outsiders.
Some scientists now feel themselves obliged to take up defensive positions and resort again to the concerns of 'outsider' politics. During the mid and late 1960's the successes of science and technology were themselves called into question, if only because they appeared to threaten the existence of 'post-industrial' society; for example, new advances in chemical, biological and nuclear warfare; higher levels of pollution; and the unforeseen social and economic consequences of pursuing industrial growth for its own sake.\textsuperscript{22}

The Political Outlook of Scientists

It has been suggested by Gilpin, Apter, Wood and Price\textsuperscript{23} that while scientists might differ on specific political issues, as is expected of any group of individuals, those who have become politically active have tended to display widely-shared attitudes, beliefs and assumptions about politics. Such an outlook has its roots in their common situation, that is, their scientific training and practice. They have tended, it would appear, to approach politics from a 'scientific' standpoint.

Firstly, scientists became involved in political action, for a large part, out of a sense of social responsibility for the discovery of truth and its dissemination. They regard themselves as having no responsibility concerning society's utilization of that knowledge. With the increasing intertwining between science, government, the military and industry, particularly since the second World War, such a view became more and more difficult to sustain. Damaging to their self-image of disinterested searchers for truth are their activities in
a wide range of social tasks including military research. Political involvement has sprung from an awareness of the scientists' part that they have a responsibility for their scientific activities and can no longer leave to society alone, the task of assuring that scientific advance will be beneficial to that society or indeed mankind.²⁴

It has also arisen because scientists share the doubt that many people are increasingly having about the ability of representative institutions to do their job responsibly as many of the issues they face depend upon new scientific discoveries and these are too complicated for the politicians to comprehend.²⁵

As Apter points out, science "can become alienated by its own success. It does not like to be a pawn in the politician's game."²⁶ And hence the scientific 'outsiders' who become unwilling to fit into a system whose ends are determined by a prescientific culture and whose institutions are still dominated by men trained in the legal or theological or philosophical assumptions of that culture.²⁷

The politicization of the scientists is however not without an element of ambivalence. Apter argues that on the whole, the scientific personality is a modest one, particularly at the top.²⁸ But, at the same time as he resents the popular notion that he is somewhat different from other people, "the scientist believes that he carries
with him in the political arena certain unique habits of mind which lend him advantage in understanding politics".\textsuperscript{29} He comes to believe this when he compares his own successes of solving scientific problems through cooperation with his colleagues with the failure of many politicians and statesman in solving theirs. The scientists tends to believe that he, in contrast to the statesmen, "has learned to rid himself of those intellectual impediments which prevent the (statesmen) from reaching out for 'bold and imaginative' solutions to political problems..."\textsuperscript{30} As Wood points out the scientist's self-image is that of 'nature's agent'\textsuperscript{31} and their faith in their own utility takes the form of the belief in the innocence of scientific inquiry or the belief in the beneficial sweep of science such as in the area of national security, conquest of disease and public welfare or in the conviction that scientists are especially endowed to bring order and sense to the political process.

The belief in the failure of the politician is combined with the belief that "scientific advance is taking mankind into a new period of history where the old rules of the statesmen no longer apply... they envision the development of a new set of political rules based on the facts of a truly scientific age".\textsuperscript{32} They are also likely to believe that the methods of science, by their steady progress from the physical to the biological to the social sciences, are moving towards an ability to solve even our political problems, and that scientists
as such have an obligation to take political action to that end". To the scientists, problem-solving in politics has suffered not so much because of the difference between its subject-matter and the subject-matter of science but because the politicians have not utilized the proper methods. The scientists believes that the scientific method and the scientific community can solve political problems where the statesmen have failed. And he is convinced that something can be and should be done to resolve major public issues.

Secondly, the scientist tends to be, on the whole, optimistic. The scientific individual believes "a priori, that there is a solution to be found to every problem and he expects to find the solution to 'political problems' just as he would expect to find the solution to a problem in physics". He tends to reject the notion that some problems admit to no final solutions.

There is also the scientist's quest for certitude. Psychologically the scientist is committed to the discovery of the truth, even though science as an activity has often functioned as organized scepticism and that scientific discoveries are continuously destroying previously accepted certainties. "His is the search for the permanent; he seeks constantly to flee from the lawless and the contingent to the world of law and predictibility".

Not only does the scientist seek for a final solution. He finds intolerable the world of practical compromise in which the politician or the administrator
operates and accepts. He finds unacceptable problems with which one learns to live rather than solve. "In the scientist's view, the reason for the failure must lie with man's method of dealing with the problem and not with the nature of the problem itself".36

Apart from his quest for certainty and his confidence that reason and new methods can solve man's problems he is convinced that "something which is theoretically possible is also most likely to be politically possible".37 He subscribes to the notion that as the social world is man's creation it must be within man's power to change those things which are contrary to his communal interest, providing only that he is willing to use his reason. It is the responsibility of the scientist to educate the community the necessity of trying to resolve what are only seemingly intractable problems.

The scientist has a theoretical-experimental approach to solving social problems. If something is theoretically possible, the scientist would maintain that it should not be ruled out on grounds of political impracticability alone. Instead he assumes that the "necessity of finding some solutions should compel men to try alternative approaches until one which works is found".38

The scientist, as a political animal, tends also to have faith in the efficacy of 'ideas' as an agency for change and believes that every reasonable man can be moved by the 'logic of the facts'. It has been observed that "scientists tend to believe that political conflict can be settled if men have a clear
understanding of the facts and issues involved. Politics should emulate science where disputes are settled by explanation and not by persuasion. Whereas the politician often seeks to persuade an opponent through appeals to passion, the threat of force, and the use of force, the scientists tends to assume there is one truth to which all reasonable men will accede once its nature has been explained.39

The Politics of "Outsider" Scientist-Environmentalists

The involvement of scientists in the environmental cause can therefore have multiple roots. Some of these factors are negative. Politicians and representative political institutions are seen by scientists as being unaware of the problems confronting the community and indeed mankind. Even if politicians are aware, they are thought of by scientists as being incapable of solving these problems through their non-scientific methods. Also, to some scientists a large part of the scientific 'establishment' is regarded as having compromised themselves with the legislative and executive branches of government and is therefore unable to provide the necessary critical outlook. On the other hand, there are the positive factors. Scientists' involvement in politics has arisen out of a sense of responsibility for the social consequences of their work and knowledge and the belief that they possess the necessary expertise to cope with a wide range of problems.
However, as the scientist-environmentalists are, or prefer to be, 'outsiders' of the 'establishment' and as they share a common political outlook, their politics tend to display some characteristic patterns.

First, there is an ambivalent quality about the political involvement of the 'outsider-scientists'. He appreciates the need and desires to participate in political life. At the same time he is often repelled by the requirements of success in politics. His scientific outlook makes some of the rules of the game of politics unacceptable. For this reason, his own activities undertaken to bring about policy changes have often been described by him as being 'apolitical' or 'non-political'. His scientific outlook inclines him to look for new alternatives in the modes of political conduct.

Secondly, his assumptions about the political world and the conviction that there must be a final solution to any political problem tend to make the scientist unwilling to compromise and persistent in his course of action. As it has been pointed out, "For the scientist the failure to achieve a political goal tends to represent a temporary defeat in his battle against unreason rather than stimulate a rethinking of his fundamental political position".20

Thirdly, the scientist tends to stress the importance of 'information' and 'explanation' as a
political strategy. Such an approach is consistent with the scientist's view that a reasonable man will accept a particular position if its logic and rationality is explained to him. Such a strategy also highlights the special role of the scientist as an 'expert'. As an expert, he has a special skill as well as a special responsibility of informing the public of the likely consequences of research developments so that decisions about them can be made.  

Finally, there is often a stress on the openness of the decision-making process. According to Price, this is part of the manifestation of the scientists' persistent faith in the Enlightenment and their faith "in an oversimplified version of Jefferson's ideas about political machinery... Their ideal would be an egalitarian democracy, with all issues decided by the votes of private citizens who have not been corrupted by service in the bureaucracy, and all of whom are earnestly studying science. The ideal has been depicted - with an admission of the lack of realism but still an ideal - a system of electronic communication in which every citizen would watch and listen to a Congressional Debate and then registers his vote instantaneously in a national referendum".  

The stress on open decision-making leads many non-establishment scientists to using new approaches in attempting to bring about changes in the technological directions of government policy. These include,
(a) Grass roots political activities in which the individual scientists become involved with local and special interest political forces, such as a preference being partly based on a general distrust of the efficacy of working through national political parties, (b) dramatic public education on technical issues; going beyond the normal scientific communication channels into the mass media, the holding of news conferences, speaking at public rallies, and holding protest meetings and public marches; and (c) direct action; mainly by students, such as stopping research activities relating to military research.43

It is the belief of these scientists that such non-institutionalized methods of politics, especially dramatic public education, will be more effective in bringing about changes in political decision-making than working through the institutionalized avenues of political influence.

The politics of the scientist-environmentalist tends therefore to display what has been called the "oppositional syndrome" without, however, the tendency toward "uncivility."44 It is politics akin to the politics of "intellectuals" in the less developed countries which tends to take the form of "opposition of politicians excluded or withdrawn from the constitutional order, who accepted neither the rules nor the ends of the prevailing system".45 Such politics would involve journalism, public meetings, demonstrations and processions and civil
disobedience rather than the politics of political parties, of conventional pressure groups or bureaucratic politics.

A Summary and some comments

The approach examined in this chapter may be summarized as follows. It is suggested that the involvement is one of the responses to a 'professional dilemma'. However, such a concern is more likely to attract those who are or regarded themselves as being 'outside' the 'scientific establishment'. Such an involvement is characterized by a strong element of ambivalence. While their sense of social responsibility impels them towards political participation, they hold the institutionalized procedures of politics in disdain. They tend to believe that scientific method should be applicable to the political world just as well as it is applicable to natural phenomenon. They tend also to have the attitudes and beliefs of (a) optimism, (b) a penchant for certitude, (c) the belief that social problems will yield to the scientific method, and (d) the belief that one should persist with a problem until the solution is found.

Their politics stress the importance of 'information', 'expertise' and public education and openness of decision-making. They regard the established political institutions as unsatisfactory. They tend to believe that grass-root politics and public education will ultimately be more effective than working within the 'inside' channels of political influence.
The approach argues that the involvement in environmental politics is a way for some scientists to establish or preserve their self-image of being 'responsible' and the notion that what they do is ultimately beneficial to the community as a whole. It is contended that their preference for grass-root politics and public education is not necessarily based on a lack of appreciation of the complexity of the political process but that it is more consistent with their idea of a better political world.

Assessment of the 'Outsider' mode of politics adopted by some scientists is mixed. One view regards it as simplistic and ineffective. However, others have regarded it as ultimately the only effective way of bringing about radical change.

It has been argued that when the prestige of science is high and orthodox political channels are open to scientific practitioners, the influence of the 'outsiders' is unlikely to be significant. Sir Solly Zuckerman suggests that,

"There is a certain ... naivety in the assumption that you can ... stay away over there ... shouting this message at some people who are presumed to be somewhere else and doing the wrong thing, and also they are going to listen. They won't". 

On the other hand, the "New Critics" that Perl referred to, believe that the approach is becoming more effective. Their 1969 campaign to stop ABM, which used extensively the grass-roots political activity and dramatic public education (it failed for the lack of only
one anti-ABM vote in the United States Senate) is regarded by the "New Critics" as a demonstration of its increased effectiveness, due to the closeness of the vote.

The important point, however, is that the adoption of direct action arises, not necessarily out of a lack of awareness of the complex nature of the political process, nor out of a lack of political resources. Instead, it can arise out of a conviction that the nature of political persuasion ought to change. The adoption of a direct political strategy is consistent with that belief.

The most valuable aspect of the approach is its emphasis on the subjective orientations and conceptions of the political actors and the consistency between political beliefs and political strategy. However, a basic limitation of this approach is that while it highlights these aspects of environmental politics, it is inadequate to be used as a general explanatory model of the Australian environmental politics. It takes little or no account of the non-scientists involved in the movement. However, it will be argued that valuable parallels can be drawn from it. These will be observed in the concluding chapter of this study.
FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER III


Professionalism is defined here by King in terms of a process. "Professionalization, then, involves an occupation in a search for the rationale for the particular identity it claims for itself which is sufficiently convincing to win the assent of both its members and its clients. The professionalizing occupation has to persuade its members to see themselves as a profession, i.e. as wielders of authority, and those it serves to see themselves as clients, i.e. as being subject to this authority.: King, op. cit. p. 41.

2 King, op. cit. p. 35.

3 Ibid, p. 36.

4 The meaning of 'scientist' is the definition given by Robert Gilpin in American Scientists and Nuclear Weapons Policy, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1962). "By 'scientist' we shall mean those persons who are scientists according to the public image". p. 7. It is therefore not restricted only to persons whose task it is to discover new knowledge in the natural world.

5 Michael King, op. cit. p. 44.

6 Ibid, p. 67.

7 Ibid, pp. 67-68.


12 Ibid, p. 211. Examples of such questions are (i) The question of the biological effects of low-level radiation insults: To get the answers of 95% confidence levels, it would require by direct experiments on mice, 8,000,000,000 mice. The number is so staggeringly large that, as a matter of
practicality, the question is unanswerable by direct scientific investigation. (ii) The calculating of the probability of a castastrophic reactor accident directly would require the building of let's say 1,000 reactors, operating them for 10,000 years and tabulating their operating histories - which is not practical. Most other calculations are suspect because the total predictability is so small.


15 Ibid, p. 3.


17 Ibid, p. 63.

18 Idem


20 Ibid, p. 83

21 Paul G. Werskey, op. cit.

22 Ibid, p. 246.


25 This is argued by Don Price, op. cit., p. 57.

26 David Apter, p. 32.


28 David Apter, loc. cit.,

29 Robert Gilpin, op. cit., p. 4.

30 ibid., p. 32.


33 Don Price, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
34 Robert Gilpin, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
35 Idem.
36 Idem.
37 Idem.
38 Idem.
40 *Ibid.*, p. 34
42 Don Price, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
43 See Perl, *op. cit.*
45 *Ibid*, p. 217
46 Werskey, *op. cit.*, 247.
47 Perl, *op. cit.*
PART TWO

POLITICAL PROFILES OF SOME PROMINENT AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENTALISTS
CHAPTER IV
THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The basic problem to be explained in this study is why it is that some environmentalists in Australia adopt protest or direct action strategy in attempting to influence governments and other groups in the community. Consequently, the terms "environmentalist" and "protest" need to be clarified. This chapter will examine the difficulties of providing precise definitions for these terms. It will, however, attempt to clarify the meanings of these terms as used in the present study. It will also outline the positive and political explanation for the development of protests and other forms of direct action by discontented groups such as environmentalists.

Types of Environmentalists

Attempting to define and identify types of "environmentalists", Dempsey and Power\(^1\) suggest that the "environmentalist" may be defined as those who express a concern for the "quality of the environment". They also suggest that there are two types of "environmentalists", the traditional conservationist and the ecological environmentalist. The traditional
conservationist concerns himself with a variety of problem areas. It includes derelict land, soil conservation, conservation of the countryside, national parks and forests and the preservation of a wide range of human artifacts. A characteristic of the traditional conservationist is that he tends to view these problem areas as discrete and clearly bounded and does not concern himself with the interrelations between them. On the other hand, the ecological environmentalist tends to view the problems of the environment in systematic, ecological terms.

Other writers have pointed to the problem of identifying the meaning of an "environmentalist". A basic difficulty is the several different connotations that words like "conservation" and "environmental quality" have. Also conservation and environmentalism have not been rooted in explicit and fully developed ideological concepts. Instead, they have grown out of the necessities and desires to deal with narrowly defined problems.

A further difficulty in identifying environmentalists is that the "environmental problem" or "crisis" need not be defined in terms of concrete observable phenomena or "objective" conditions like physical suffering, disease or chemical or biological changes. A "problem situation" may exist, even though it is objectively trivial, if it represents something important to a group
of actors. It is important, therefore, to define the problem of the "environment" in terms of a perceived phenomenon.

Rapoport, in conceptualizing the nature of the notions of environmental "problem" and "quality", stresses their relativistic status. He points out that the problem with the environment lies not only in its objective conditions but depends on how it is perceived. The result is one "of a variable definition of what constitutes a desirable or undesirable environment".

Rapoport suggests, therefore, two aspects of the environmental problem. The simpler one is related to aspects such as air and water pollution, the consequences of overpopulation, depletion of resources, radiation and thermal pollution, and the like. He calls this aspect the material and biochemical aspects of the physical environment. The more complex one is related to the less-easily definable and more variable qualities of the natural and man-made environment which gives satisfaction to people. It includes the sensory qualities of the environment in all its modalities; the effects on human feelings, behaviour and performance; the effects of the physical environment on the social, physiological and other environments; and so on. He calls this the psychological and socio-cultural aspects of the physical environment.

Brenner, on the other hand, suggests that the
environmental "problem" exists at three levels. In order of concreteness, they are: (a) the physical conditions itself; (b) the system of beliefs and institutions that created them; and (c) the dominant doctrines and theories which explain social reality and direct collective behaviour.

The first category, the physical conditions, is the most tangible. It involves pollution both as health hazard and as social disamenity. It is a health hazard when potentially injurious by-products (chemical and biological) that are created by industry and population concentration are introduced into the air, the water and the soil. Examples of such pollution includes, the discharge of noxious wastes from a paper mill into a stream; or the auto emission of sulphur oxides or nitrogen dioxide into the atmosphere; or the use of lakes and harbours as receptacles for poorly treated sewerage. The social disamenity dimension refers to the enormous discomfort that result from congestion, noise and unsightliness that emerge from population densities such as the cities or the destruction of the urban centres by the motor vehicles or the condition of mass transportation and the despoilation of the landscape - whether by billboards, arbitrary road construction or overconcentration. Brenner suggests that the social disamenity is much more difficult to measure because it involves a high element of subjectivity. It involves such questions as "what is a 'good life'?" and "what is
'aesthetically' acceptable?". Another facet of the first category is resource depletion. This involves the idea that the earth's natural resources are finite and are, therefore, likely to be exhausted if current increasing levels of exploitation are maintained.

The second category, the system of beliefs and institutions, relates to the widespread and deepening estrangement from formal organizations which make up the institutional environment. This can take the form of alienation from the efficiency-minded bureaucracies whose emphasis on standardization and specialization is seen as reflecting the industrial order's requirements for routine and efficient performance. It can also take the form of disaffection from the dominant values and institutions of society. More specifically it may involve the feeling in individuals that the existing political forms and institutions are unresponsive to the requirements of its citizens. It also involves the feeling that bureaucratic organization of government has become an impediment to imagination and innovation. It is felt that governmental organizations, rigid in their conception of mission, have become poor instruments of implementing new policies.

And finally, in the third category, are the dominant doctrines and theories. This includes institutional and cultural biases of society. Such biases can exist at two levels. Bias can exist at the level of popular beliefs about the unqualified virtues of growth,
progress and technology; the centrality of material goods in the "good" life; and status generating type of consumption. Bias can also exist in the more formal analytical knowledge of political and economic theorists. These theorists, in their writings, help to fashion over time the frame of reference in which people develop their collective understanding of reality. As an example of such theories is the theory of incremental process of decision-making which downplays the possibility of or encourages skepticism of broad designs and plans for change.

As there are different levels of the "environmental problem", the solutions for maintaining "environmental quality" also vary in scope and comprehensiveness. The following are different types of solutions to the "problem".¹⁰

(i) **Preservation.** This solution involves the preservation from change or destruction selected or all natural systems, plants and animals. It takes the form of calling for the non-use of selected natural landscapes such as forests, coral reefs or mountains and the protection of species of wildlife. The demand for preservation can also include the preservation of man-made artifacts such as old buildings, machinery and sometimes entire landscapes.

(ii) **Conservation.** Unlike preservation, the conservation solution does not involve the non-use of natural resources such as minerals, water, air, forests and wildlife. It involves either the moderation of use
or the greater efficiency of utilization of the resources to ensure the continuity of supply of such resources. This solution demands either the adoption of scientific and efficient management principles in the use of resources or the adoption of parsimony in everyday consumption behaviour and lifestyle.

(iii) The No-Growth Society Solution. This solution involves limiting the growth of society. Two basic demands are zero population growth and zero economic growth. The demand for zero population growth is based on the premise that the most important causative factor for environmental deterioration is the increasing size and concentration of population. The stabilization of the human population at the national and global level is suggested as the solution for the environmental problem.

The demand for zero economic growth is less clear in meaning. It can mean the reduction of the rate of growth in the quantity of "material" goods such as motor cars, televisions and washing machines. But it can also mean the reduction of the total economic output of society which includes both material and non-material goods and services.

(iv) The adoption of Ecological Principles and Ethics. This solution involves changing radically society's values and lifestyle, particularly those values that relate to the man/nature relationship. It involves the adoption of a more responsible attitude towards the natural environment. The view that nature is there to be
mastered and subjugated for human purposes is to be rejected. Instead, the solution advocates the value of living in harmony with natural processes and capacity.

(v) "Debureaucratization" and "Democratization"
The meanings of the terms vary. However, the basic idea is that decision-making in society should not be left to "experts" located in hierarchically structured organizations. It is against decision-making based on the assumption of the superiority of those higher up in the organizational hierarchy. The demand is for an open style of decision-making involving the community or those affected by such decisions.

An environmentalist can then be defined as any person who expresses concern about the deterioration of the quality of the environment and advocates some form of collective action to remedy such a situation. However, given that their conception of the "environmental problem" differ and they advocate a variety of solutions, it seems necessary to differentiate between types of environmentalists. The following seems a useful classification.

(i) **Preservationists** are those who see the problem of the environment in terms of the deterioration of physical and biological landscapes natural and man-made. Their proposed solution will involve the preservation or the non-use of these objects or systems.
(ii) **Conservationists** are those who are also concerned with the biological and physical aspect of the environment. However, their main concern is to put the environment and its resources to "proper" or "economic" use. They are not averse to interfering with the natural ecosystem but they usually insist on its proper and scientific "management".

(iii) **No-Growthers** are those who advocate zero population growth or zero economic growth or the slowing down of growth generally as a solution to the environmental problem.

(iv) **Cultural Environmentalists** are those who see the problem of the environment as necessarily including the cultural dimension. As part of the environmental problem is the dominant set of values relating to the man/nature relationship. Cultural environmentalists reject the mastery of man over nature assumption in favour of harmony with nature principle.

(v) **Moral-Political Environmentalists** are concerned primarily with the system of beliefs and institutions in society as well as its dominant doctrines, theories and biases. For the moral-political environmentalists, the solution to the environmental problem lies in fundamental changes in the political and institutional framework of society towards greater debureaucratization and democracy.
Protest Action: Definition and Problems of Analysis

Protest is defined by Wilson as "the use of negative inducements (threats) that rely, for the effect, on sanctions which require mass action or response".\textsuperscript{12} The forms of protest include the "verbal", such as issuing denunciatory statements, mounting a campaign of adverse publicity, submitting petitions and memorials, holding mass meetings and sending deputations to comfort the other groups; the "physical", such as picketing and sit-down strikes and marches; "economic" protests which involve boycotts or the threat of boycotts; and the "political" protest, the threat or use of voting reprisals.

Lipsky\textsuperscript{13} points out, however, the conceiving protest as Wilson does, exclusively in terms of negative inducements unnecessarily limits the applicability of the concept. It is argued that some protests offer positive inducements such as offering the opportunity to promote the justice of a cause.

Lipsky defines protest as "a mode of political action oriented toward objection to one or more policies or conditions, characterized by showmanship or display of an unconventional nature, and undertaken to obtain rewards from political or economic systems while working within the system".\textsuperscript{14}

Duncan, on the other hand, regards protest as a point in a continuum of political activity taken by a dominated party to bring about a change in the relationship to the dominating party.\textsuperscript{15}
He suggests the following continuum involving an increasing component of force;\textsuperscript{16}

Apathy: passive acceptance of the situation with no attempt to change.

Resistance: behaviour marked by an unwillingness to co-operate.

Protest: activity which attempts to bring about changes in the system through the use of unconventional display of symbolic force.

Riot: a relatively spontaneous form of violent behaviour directed against the dominant party or its symbols.

Subversion: covert behaviour which attempts to undermine the aspects of the dominant party which are inconsistent with the ideals of the dominated.

Rebellion: overt behaviour which attempts the overthrow or replacement of the dominant party.

Revolution: behaviour which attempts the complete restructuring of the situation.

Protest activity may be defined then as a form of political behaviour which expresses dissent or grievance by some means involving mass action or response often by showmanship or display of an unconventional nature, against unsatisfactory policies or conditions, undertaken to obtain political or economic rewards. It need not involve the use of force although violence can sometimes be an unexpected element.\textsuperscript{17}

An important element in the definition of protest action is its extension beyond conventional forms of political activity such as the ballot, working through
established channels of political influence such as formal pressure groups and political parties and working through government institutions. There is little, if at all, by way of continuous interaction with or regular access to public officials. As Jackson points out, protest is "any form of political action which registers dissatisfaction with or opposition to the procedural consensus established by society without calling for the total destruction or transformation of its political system."\(^{18}\)

One major problem with the definition and analysis of protest is the confusion often made between protest and political violence.\(^{19}\) Protest is often not differentiated from other types of collective action such as mass hysteria, crowd panic and uncontrolled outbursts. It is also not clearly distinguished from related kinds of political phenomena such as internal wars and revolutions.\(^{20}\)

A second problem is the bias against protest action that exists in its analysis. As Parekh points out there exists a tendency to attribute to protesters antisocial motives or the using of society for private ends.\(^{21}\) There is also a tendency to view collective behaviour such as protest as irrational.\(^{22}\) Such behaviour is often viewed as being abnormal or deviant. It is seen as reflecting individual frustration and isolation. Halebsky suggests that the bias is the result of an over-reliance on such theories as the theory of mass society; various forms of frustration-agression hypothesis, related mobility and migration models; the theory of authoritarian personality;
status theory; and the theory of political alienation. However, he also points out that there is recently the emergence of a contrary and distinctive view of protest action which stresses instead the rational, purposive and cognitive properties of such action.

Towards a Positive Analysis of Protest.

According to Halebsky:

"... there has emerged a vigorous body of research and theory that has helped initiate a critical reassessment that provides much greater stress on the purposive and cognitive qualities; the social structural and cultural origins, and in a sense, on the ordinariness of support for political dissidence. As a total body of work these efforts point to the necessity of interpreting radical or dissident political behaviour in terms of its roots in social structural, political, cultural and ideological factors. They focus more on the circumstances, shared experience, common purposes and behaviour of collectivities than on isolated individuals. Dissidence is perceived as part of a broader condition of group and class conflict, struggles over power, and differences over societal policy, among other considerations."24

Such an approach directs analysis of dissident action towards a number of directions. It requires attention to the role of ideology and group consciousness or the spread of new conceptions of reality as the basis of such action. Similarly, analysis has to look to altered government effectiveness, the growth of dissident leadership, declining legitimacy of established leadership and parties, rather than changed individual and group circumstances to account for dissident action. The analysis will focus on those variables relied on to interpret moderate
forms of political behaviour such as political socialization, communication, interpersonal associations, individual assessments of the political system and notions of legitimacy and trust.

A four-step scheme suggested by Toch\(^2\) to describe the process by which individuals become involved in political action, highlights some of the points raised by Halebsky. The process is as follows:

1. The first step is the posing of a problem situation for a group of persons. Typically, this would occur when society fails to provide adequately for their needs and aspirations.

2. Such situations rise to problems if they register psychological impact - that is, they create some degree of unhappiness.

3. Although many persons who feel they have a problem will lapse into apathy, resignation and despair, others will begin to search for plausible solutions. They will view available diagnosis and prescriptions with increasing sympathy. This makes them susceptible to appeals to join collective efforts to solve their problem.

4. The final step is the intersection of beliefs and susceptibilities - when individuals become active in collective action. However, the precise nature of their affiliations varies. This is because susceptibility only increases the probability that certain beliefs will be found appealing. It does not determine the beliefs.\(^2\)
Such an analysis suggests a number of standpoints. First, it suggests that the subjective perception of the "problem" by the participants is equally, if not more, as important as the "objective" problem situation in motivating involvement in collective action. Secondly, it postulates that the ability of movements or causes to attract membership and participation depends on how well they can diagnose the problems and offer plausible solutions.

Thirdly, it makes room for the variations in the form of participation in collective action. It suggests that at several points in the four-step process, the individual actors exercise choice; that the intersection between susceptibilities of the individuals and the beliefs of the group is selective, not deterministic. Toch suggests that this allows for the possibility of a belief-based participation. "At one extreme, we observe the person who joins ... to obtain security or social support or material rewards or other fringe benefits ... He is an instrumental believer ... " On the other hand, there is the fully committed and dedicated activist. "The motives of this member are belief-centred. He belongs to the movement because he agrees with what it stands for."

Fourthly, it suggests that differing attitudes towards political objects may influence the choice of political strategies. And, finally, the approach sensitizes the analysis to the internal merits of the position of participants in political action. The question of whether collective action is rational or otherwise will be analysed
partly from the viewpoint of the participants.

The positive analysis of protest also stresses the political dimension in collective action. Jackson and Stein for example, suggest that we have to look at protest as the result partly of the specifically political conditions of society, including government, public policies and the political expectations of different groups. They argue that political protest occur partly because discontented groups feel that their political expectations are going unfulfilled or being betrayed by unscrupulous or ineffective leaders. Protest is, therefore, directed against government decision-makers with the object of transforming government policies. In other words, as Kelman points out, protest reflects partly the declining legitimacy of government.

Also emphasizing the political dimension to explain protest is Paige. He uses the concept of the "dissident political orientation" to explain support for non-conventional politics. He argues that one of the critical determinants of support for protest action is the existence of a combination of a strong sense of personal political competence, a sense of political efficacy and a deep distrust of the political system in the discontented individuals who attempt to bring about political change.

In Paige's analysis, the sense of efficacy refers to the feeling that the individuals can influence government
functioning. These individuals tend to be well informed in politics and are active politically. The other dimension is trust. By trust is meant the belief in individuals that "the government is basically acting in their interests, whether or not they participate in the political process." Using these two dimensions, Paige proposed four kinds of relationship between the political orientation of various groups and types of political action.

First, in a situation in which both efficacy and trust are high, the predominant political orientation will be allegiance. These groups will be politically active but their actions will not be directed toward change of the political system. The means they use are likely to be non-coercive and operate within the conventional and institutionalized channels of political influence. In the second situation of low efficacy and low trust, the result is an alienated political orientation. This leads to withdrawal of some groups from any political participation. The third situation of low efficacy, high trust situation suggests positive adjustment, although in this case the population believes that the government is run basically in their best interest. And fourthly, the situation of low trust in the existing government accompanied by a high sense of political efficacy. This leads to active dissatisfaction with the political system.

The fourth situation is what Paige calls the dissident political orientation situation. He argues that the "conventional view of political efficacy suggests that
alienated groups are the base of support for extremist movements and that extremist and conventional politics are opposite ends of the efficacy dimension. Such a view neglects the political components of extremism in favour of emphasizing its irrational qualities.³³ Paige suggests an alternative view which treats "political radicalism as a response to an unresponsive and untrustworthy regime by politically sophisticated activists".³⁴

The importance of the trust dimension in influencing the choice of political strategy is also stressed by Gamson.³⁵ Politically discontented groups can use a variety of means to influence decisions. It includes the use of restraints, inducements and persuasion. By constraint is meant the exercise of influence by the threat of deprivation, or the threat to do so. To induce is to influence by the promise or the addition of new advantages to the authorities or other groups. To persuade is to influence by changing the minds of the authorities without adding anything new to the situation.

It is suggested by Gamson that while discontented groups will use a combination of means in their attempts to bring about desired change, they tend to rely on one more than the others. He suggests that: (a) a group that has confidence and trust in government and the political system are more likely to rely on persuasion as a means of influence, (b) a group which is neutral towards the authorities will tend to rely on inducements. (c) The group which is alienated, that is, a group that feels that the political system will most likely produce outcomes damaging to the
group's interest, will tend to rely more on restraints as a means of influence.\textsuperscript{36}

The positive analysis suggests also that the adoption of the protest strategy instead of or in addition to a bargaining strategy by political groups or organizations may be deliberate. Wilson,\textsuperscript{37} for example, suggests that protest may be adopted for one or more of several reasons. First, it may be a strategy designed to acquire resources with which to bargain. The protest organization wants something that another organization possesses but has nothing the second organization values. Second, protest may be a strategy designed to make credible the willingness of a group to use the bargaining resources it already has. Third, a protest may be designed to activate third parties, and enlist their aid. This may occur either because they are sympathetic with the cause or because they have an interest in reducing the conflict. Finally, a protest activity may be carried on in order to enhance the protesting organization. This can be done by attracting new members, radicalizing old members, obtaining valuable publicity, or increasing the sense of solidarity and competence of existing members.

Wilson points out that the choice of political strategies can be effected by a variety of factors.\textsuperscript{38} One such factor is the nature of the issue. Wilson points out that where two opposing parties agree on the value premises that define their relationship, bargaining is facilitated. But where agreement is absent, protest is more likely.
Protest is also likely when the matter at issue is one of "all or nothing" rather than a question of "more or less". Another factor is the nature of the group. Ideological and redemptive organizations tend not to bargain because the very idea of bargaining, with its inevitable implications of compromise, will appear objectionable.

Towards a Positive Analysis of Australian Environmental Protest

The present study is an attempt to provide a positive and political interpretation for the development of protests and other forms of direct action in Australian environmental politics. It explores the possibility that the different types of political action chosen or advocated by Australian environmentalists may be logically related to their conception of the "problem" to be remedied. It is argued that problems of varying scope and complexity will require different types of solutions. It is possible then that different sets of environmentalists have advocated different sets of solutions because of the varying solutions required.

Further, the study intends to highlight the importance of relating the political strategies of actors in political bargaining to their perception of the political system. Strategies advocated or adopted by groups, it is suggested, depends partly on the level of trust and confidence they have in the Australian political system.
In the next four chapters of this study, an examination of various conceptions of the "environmental" problem, the desired solutions and perceptions of the political system of a selected group of prominent Australian environmentalists will be made. An attempt will be made to relate their views on the "problem" and the political system to their preferred modes of political action.

What is suggested in the positive analysis of protest action is that such action may be explained in the same terms as other kinds of political action. It rejects the assumption that conventional forms of political action are necessarily based on a sense of efficacy, a high level of competence and a rational evaluation of the political system while protests are based on the opposite qualities. The positive analysis of protest suggests that the source of such action may be found in the nature of the problem situation which the discontented group desires to remedy. It is possible that certain types of problem situations do not lend themselves to being remedied in the conventional or orthodox ways. It is also possible that the political system is incapable, incompetent or disinclined to remedy the problem-situation. Given these possibilities, protests need not be regarded as irrational or anti-social.

Among other things, protest may be seen as reflecting the politics of a particular type of problem-situation and a challenge to the competence and trustworthiness of political institutions. It may show that the
political system, its institutions and procedures, is not accepted by the protest group concerned. It may represent the decline in the legitimacy of political authorities in the eyes of the discontented group.
FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER IV


3 Norman Wengert, op.cit.,

4 Ibid, Wengert suggests that this seems to be the case in the development of the conservation movement in the United States of America.

5 See for example, Hans Toch, The Social Psychology of Social Movements, (Methuen and Co. Ltd.), 1971 Paperback. Toch stresses the importance of defining the 'problem-situation' by the impact a set of objective factors have on the human actor.


7 Ibid, p. 449.


9 Michael Brenner, op.cit.,

10 G.L. Kesteven, op.cit.

11 The solution of a No-Growth society was examined by Daedalus, 102, No. 4. 1974.

Negative inducements are defined as inducements which are not absolutely preferred but are preferred over alternative possibilities.

Ibid, p. 1145.

This definition relies heavily on Lipsky's concept of protest. (see footnote no. 13).


This problem is pointed out by R. Benewick "The Threshold of Violence" in R. Benewick and Trevor Smith (eds), Direct Action and Democratic Politics, (George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1972).

This lack of differentiation was pointed out by Jackson and Stein, op.cit.,


See chapter two of the present study for an example of such a tendency. See also E. Currie and J.H. Skolnick "A critical note on Conceptions of Collective Behaviour" in James F. Short Jnr. and Marvin E. Wolfgang (eds) Collective Violence, (Aldin/Atherton, 1972). Currie and Skolnick note some of the biased assumptions that exist in the literature on collective behaviour.


Ibid, p. 114

Hans Toch, op.cit.

Ibid, The scheme is represented diagramatically by Toch on p. 37.

Ibid, p. 194.
28 Ibid,
29 Jackson and Stein, op.cit.
32 Ibid, p. 810
33 Ibid, p. 813.
34 Ibid,
36 Ibid,
38 Ibid, esp. 284-289.
CHAPTER V

MANAGEMENT-ORIENTED CONSERVATIONISTS

The focus of this chapter is on a group of environmentalists more accurately described as conservationists, who advocate 'persuasion' as the means of bringing about the solution to the environmental problem. Persuasion is an influence relationship which "involves some change in the minds of authorities without adding anything new to their situation. It involves making them prefer the same outcomes that the influencer prefers." The authorities are said to have been persuaded if they take a certain course of action "based on the conviction that the influencer's argument is correct. Such a conviction may in turn be based either on the content of the argument that is made or on the belief in the expertness of the influencer without any clear understanding of the arguments given." The group of conservationists examined in this chapter believe that to solve the environmental problem they first have to persuade governments to adopt research and scientifically based principles of conservation. Secondly, the community has to be educated to change its attitudes about the utilization of natural resources. The community has to be
persuaded to accept the necessity of science and
government initiatives in determining what are 'wise'
uses of resources. Such a belief is illustrated by this
passage from Downes;

"Decisions about how land should be used are sometimes
difficult and can be best made when several persons
having different kinds of professional knowledge and
an understanding of land and what the community requires
can examine all the technical information available.
From such deliberations Governments can be advised
about how the different areas can be used to the best
advantage of the community.

Since the subsequent management of the areas is so
important, Governments need to provide services for
assisting, educating and in some circumstances
supervising and controlling people in the management
of land for particular purposes so that an individual
will not be able during his relatively short period
of occupancy, even if it is a lifetime, to destroy
the productive capacity or usefulness of land for its
chosen purposes.

For these means of examining, deciding and controlling
the use of natural resources to be accepted by Govern-
ment there must be public support and this requires that
the community should be educated to accept the need for
conservation and have a proper understanding of what it
means. Ultimately the community must be convinced that
government action on land use and management is essential
in the public interest even if this limits what at
present might be thought to be the normal rights of
private owners of land."³

Given this group's preference for persuasion as
a political strategy, this chapter will examine firstly,
how they conceptualise the 'problem' of the environment
and what they envisage to be a 'good' environment. Secondly,
it will outline what they regard as the desirable role for
scientist-conservationists. Thirdly, it will examine their
attitudes towards the political system, that is, government,
political institutions and procedures, and the political
community as a whole.

Environmental 'Problem' Conceived as Endangered Resources

The situation which poses the environmental 'problem' primarily relates, for this group of conservationists, to the physical and biological conditions of the community's resources. The problem arises because of man's ability to modify, destroy or unwisely use his natural resources. For example, Downes argues that the source of the problem is man's technology;

"Today, man has such a degree of technological skill that he can modify his environment significantly and quickly. He is now the ecologically dominant species on earth and the future biological condition and continued productivity of the planet are virtually in his hands. This means that he can threaten not only his future as a species but that of the existing flora and fauna. During his rise to this place of ecological significance, man has caused considerable destruction."^4

The following lengthy list of damage enumerated by Webb gives an indication of the kind of environmental destruction that constitutes for this group of environmentalists the problem to be solved;
"Practically all the original eucalypt woodland in New South Wales and Victoria—about 100 million acres and half the area of central Europe—has been destroyed or drastically modified by the advance of the wheat and pastoral industries. Most of the 23 million acres of brigalow country—the last area of relatively fertile and well-watered virgin land in Australia—has been cleared, at least temporarily. Of the tropical and subtropical rainforests, which originally about four million acres in the north-east, fragments survive mainly in steep slopes and infertile soils unsuitable even for forestry, the last of the peck order and generally excluded from the definition of development. Fast disappearing and sentenced to the axe and bulldozer are about five million acres of coastal wallum in Queensland and thirty million acres of heath and eucalypt vegetation in south-western Australia. And these are but few examples.

Less obvious forms of destruction of the natural environments have occurred more slowly: changes in the botanical composition of native pastures ranging from the alps to the arid zone which followed grazing; the decline and near extinction of many species of small marsupials after their habitats were modified; the concentrations of pollutants and the destruction of non-target species by pesticides; the spread of the Crown of Thorns Starfish and the threat to the whole ecosystem of the Great Barrier Reef; the deepening scars of wind and water erosion inland and along parts of the coast; the infiltration by weeds and other pests.

All these changes have meant that within a century or so we have destroyed many unique ecological systems and probably many more individual species than we dare to admit even to ourselves."\(^5\)

The other aspect which concerns this group of environmentalists is pollution of the natural surrounding. Connell defines the problem in this way:

"Pollution problems, many of great magnitude, are common throughout the industrialized Western world ... Strictly speaking, pollution occurs when substances are added to the environment causing an alteration to its physical, chemical, or biological characteristics. Pollutants are either foreign substances or natural substances discharged in excessive amounts. However, in practical
terms, pollution is generally considered to occur when the effect of any added substance is detrimental ... The waterways of Australia's cities exhibit many of the more obvious forms of pollution such as mounting foam, slicks of oil, dead fish and nauseating odours. Less obvious to the casual observer are the effects of small concentrations of pesticides and many industrial wastes."

The problem situation, therefore, is defined in terms of the deterioration of the natural environment resulting from irreversible ecological changes caused by industrial and agricultural man or from its outright destruction or its increasingly polluted state. Such a situation may be seen by non-environmentalists as indicating industrial and agricultural 'progress' and 'development'. However, to the environmentalists, it constitutes a set of 'problems' requiring urgent social action.

Various categories of problems have been identified as emerging from the deterioration of the natural environment.

One such category is the aesthetic. It is often argued that 'progress' can "destroy all the beauty, character and unknown potential of our living landscapes and replace them with uniform crops." What is threatened is the "environmental diversity afforded by these small areas and the visual appeal they lend to general landscape."\[8\]

The second problem is symbolic. The environment is regarded as contributing to the Australian sense of "her own nationhood" through its "natural monuments like termite mounds and Ayers Rock, the tracks of the overlanders, and the vivid garments of the wattles on the plains ...
kangaroos thumping over paddocks, koalas in gum trees, Aboriginal rock paintings, well preserved relics of the gold-rush, unspoiled bush and uncluttered coastlines."\(^9\)
These are threatened by destruction.

The third is scientific. Ovington regards natural landscapes as "storehouses for biological information and biological reference points."\(^10\)

But most importantly, these conservationists stress that such destruction and change in the natural environment raises the problem of maintaining the physical capacity of the environment for providing for the needs of man efficiently and at the same time sustaining that capacity to provide for future generations. Firstly, it is argued that indiscriminate development may be inefficient. Different kinds of land are often regarded as being used "for the wrong purposes ... For example, it is unwise to locate houses and factories on highly productive agricultural land if they can be located on other land which has little value for other forms of productive use."\(^11\) And secondly, at the general level, the misuse of the natural resources is seen as threatening the ability of the environment to sustain its productivity for the future. "These actions have resulted in soil erosion, water and air pollution, and many other reactions which have lowered the productive capacity of the land or made the surroundings in which we live less favourable."\(^12\)
Much of the blame for such a situation is attributed by these environmentalists to activities which are based on certain assumptions and attitudes prevalent in the community. They include, firstly, the assumption that the environment has limitless capacity to provide for all of man's needs and to absorb his wastes and that man has the right to subjugate nature to his purposes without regard to the consequences. Secondly, in the emphasis by the community on the maximum current or short-term benefit leading to 'wasteful' use and the neglect of future needs. And thirdly, in the individualistic rather than the collective orientation of the community. The diagnosis of the problem by the environmentalists stress these three themes in the community's assumptions and attitudes.

As Connell puts it;

"Impressed by the vast expanses of sea and sky man has long taken for granted his apparently limitless habitat. Only in recent years has he discovered that his environment has limitations and his activities may disrupt the basic nature of this world as he experiences it directly himself. He has been forced to realize that industrial by-products, agricultural chemicals, radioactive fallout, and the innumerable other materials may not be fed into the environment in the expectation that they will be diluted to insignificance and disappear." 13

It is argued also that development in the past has been and still is, based on a community attitude that man should exercise mastery over nature. Webb suggests that predominantly;

"Nature was seen as an enemy to be subjugated to the greater good of mankind and if a little of it was
destroyed as a result, there was plenty left. In our
time we have come to realise that, as a result of the
fantastic rise in population during the last century,
there are today, a lot of men and rather a little of
nature...

Already we have paid a heavy price for the development
of our resources, for development in the old narrow way
of the Australian 'short cut' and 'scrub bashing' in
obedience to the grand old maxim: 'If it moves, shoot
it, if it stands still, cut it down'.

The second theme in the critique of the
community's attitudes is summarized by Downes when he
contends that "man tends to think of the present rather
than the future." And Webb argues that "it is
indifference, the short-sighted greed (usually emphasized
as 'development') and; not to put too fine a point on it,
the stupidity that has characterized many aspects of
European settlement in Australia ." that has brought
about the deterioration of the environment. And according
to Barwick, the maximum profit orientation of industry
embodies a preoccupation with the present to the neglect
of the future.

"Now it, industry, is consuming incredible quantities
of the world's resources, many not of a renewable kind
... This is actually a system of production-consumption-
dump. Can it go on indefinitely? Surely it must come to
an end sometime."

And thirdly, the community is blamed for allowing
the predominence of individualism instead of a collective
orientation. Connell gives an illustration of the dissat-
sisfaction with the individualistic orientation of the
community;

"Up to the present time the production of materials for
society has usually involved three principles: economic
quality production, safe and speedy distribution and use that is profitable to producer, distributor and consumer. Decisions based on these principles are largely influenced by some personal gain to the individuals in the process. Generally, responsibility to the whole has not been considered."

However, sometimes, activity based on ignorance rather than the above attitudes, is offered as an additional reason for the deterioration of the environment. As Downes points out:

"These unthinking and rather innocent action of introducing some foreign species of plants and animals, whether for private pleasure or commercial use, has produced problems. Prickly pear was introduced into Australia but because the soil and climatic conditions were most suitable for its growth and dispersal and it was free from its natural enemies, it became widespread and ruined the usefulness of many thousands of acres of good land ... The rabbit was introduced for hunting, but it too found a most favourable environment and became one of the factors limiting agricultural production of this country and until controlled, prevented the effective introduction of conservation farming methods."18

Solution: 'Scientific-Management'

Much of the suggestions for the solution of the environmental problem is based on a sense of efficiency. An illustration of this is Day;

"In the course of a single generation, we have seen great changes in the native animals and plants of the Australian continent. Are these changes producing conditions that are the cause of concern? If so, is any remedial action desirable or possible? A ready answer to these questions is yes: but the questions are complex and we need to understand them better."19

The solution proposed have two aspects. (i)
Community attitudes should change (ii) Governments should
adopt scientifically based principles of environmental management in the determination of resource use. There is, therefore, a need for more scientific 'expertise'. The major objective of 'scientific-management' is to ensure the stability of the natural environment so that it can continue to sustain man for his material, aesthetic and scientific needs, for now and future generations.

In identifying the source of the problem in the prevailing attitudes of the community, stress is often placed in changing such attitudes toward firstly, taking into consideration the future state of the environment, secondly, an attitude which stresses the collective and community benefit in the use of resources and thirdly, an attitude of 'living in harmony with nature'.

The emphasis on the future and collective is illustrated, for example by Downes when he argues that;

"Conservation of natural resources is important to the community now, but more to the community of the future. Most of the population today are people under thirty, and relatively few representatives of the group take a direct part in government. But there are people who will suffer if conservation and rational uses of resources is not achieved."²⁰

It is also illustrated by Barwick when he defines the aims of conservation;

"Conservation, you know, is not merely concerned with the preservation of individual animal species or vegetable types. It aims ... to provide a high quality of living, a satisfying life for man for both present generations of mankind. ... This generation must have access to resources and must use the technologies which are available to improve the lot of the ordinary man, but they must also recognise that the
next generation and the next are entitled to have a tolerable environment in which to live and have continuing access to resources for their proper purposes."21

And as Day argues, what is needed is a new 'land ethic' "that will help man understand his own environment and its complex 'web of life'. From the point of the future, therefore, before decisions are taken on the most appropriate form of land use for any piece of land, all conflicting uses should be considered and a decision reached on the basis of the greatest good for the largest number as far as we can see. To arrive at such a decision requires a view of future needs and these needs will certainly change over time".22

And finally, it is stressed that the use of resources should be as far as possible, in harmony with the viability of the natural eco-system. As Downes points out;

"People, including technical people concerned with resource development must be taught that land is a complicated system in which the plants, animals, soils and the water system are in the state of 'delicate balance' ... In the natural landscapes one final objective is change and evolution toward the maximum production of biological material which can be sustained indefinitely."23

Ultimately, the aim of these suggestions is to ensure continuing use of the environment and its resources. This group of environmentalists appear, therefore, to be 'man-centred'. While insisting on the economic and frugal use of the resources, they regard nature and its resources as essentially for the use of man. For example, Barwick stresses that conservation aims at ensuring the continuity
of economic productivity;

"The original title set me for this address was 'Environment Conservation - An Essential Companion to Economic Growth.' As I pondered it, it seemed to me that the word 'companion' understated the true situation. I have dared to alter the title to 'Environmental Conservation: A prerequisite for sustained productivity'. One can do without a companion, if needs be. But conservation cannot be regarded as a de facto wife, to be shed at will. It is, as I see it, an indispensable condition for continued productivity - a paramount partner."²⁴

The importance of the natural environment as a contributor to sustained economic activity is also expressed by Downes;

"Some people look on the need to preserve plant and animal communities as an impractical emotional desire, but this is not true. Environments are being changed in many ways and so there is a basic scientific need to preserve the widest possible range of genetic material represented in the multitude of existing plant and animal species. Although economically unimportant now, some of these species could become important to man. The present pool of flora and fauna is the source from which species will be obtained to occupy the man-created conditions of the future."²⁵

More importantly, the solution of the environmental problem requires conservation, the 'wise' use of resources. For Downes, it means the "wise and rational use of resources to provide for the needs of the community".²⁶ This will require more scientific research, from which the principles of resource management can be derived, more 'planning' and positive government intervention.

The interrelated nature of these suggestions is outlined by Costin and Marples;

"... But simply believing is not enough. The issue is whether we believe it sufficiently to pay for it both by direct ameliorative measures themselves and by positive planning to create a more satisfying environment in which
to live. The responsibility remains with us, the public, to see that our elected representatives actively represent the public interest and not the interests of sectional pressure groups. The argument, 'You can't stop progress', must be challenged and evaluated in every instance.

... Ecologically, man must start preparing himself for the steady-state economy, based on the realization that he is alone and enclosed on earth as the first astronaut in his spaceship. Man must satisfy all his needs from the resources of this planet alone so that these resources or substitutes for them last indefinitely, and so that the by-products of use are upgraded to be potentially available for beneficial or at least non-harmful use again.

... it should become apparent that, although the wise use of natural resources presents many problems of research, the main problems are those of applying the knowledge and principles of conservation which are available already. The effective application of these principles will be no easy task. It will require conscious planning and effort at all levels of the community and must become an integral part of our individual, local, national and international way of life."^{27}

The stress for more scientific knowledge and research is also illustrated by Connell who contends that "the knowledge of our environment, and the care of it, has become one of the most important concerns".^{28} It is also underlined by Downes who argues that, "because conservation is fundamentally a problem of adjusting the system of land use to suit the environment, it is essential to obtain all possible data concerning the features of each environment... Each environment must be studied to determine the interaction of the critical features by which the equilibrium of the system is maintained, and what is to happen if particular changes are made".^{29}

In addition to the need for more knowledge the
conservationists advocate interdisciplinary research. It is argued that "the development of conservation knowledge is a constructive process requiring integration of scientific knowledge from many disciplines to provide suitable systems of use and management for the various kinds of environment".\textsuperscript{30} In the area of pollution, Connell argues that, "We can look to science to show a lead. But here it is clear that expanded knowledge, much of it in new areas of science and technology, will be needed to place pollution problems in their true perspective. Although man has developed considerable command of the physical sciences such as chemistry and physics, our knowledge of the biological sciences urgently needs expansion. Our capacity to predict environmental development is relatively rudimentary."\textsuperscript{31} Only when these conditions are met will there be a "more rational and scientific approach ... in determining how we shall live within our environment so that it will continue to serve the needs not only of the present but of the subsequent generations".\textsuperscript{32}

Trust in Professionals and Government.

A major objective of the group examined in this chapter is the efficient and continuing use of the environment. Such an aim is contained in the stress on 'wise', 'rational' or 'scientific' use of the resources available
in the natural environment. Consequently, this group of environmentalists see the need for more scientific researchers and scientifically trained managers. However, this has also meant that they envisage a leading role for diverse types of scientists and professionals in societal decision-making and a positive and directive role for government.

Two premises are discernible in the writings of the conservationists examined in this chapter. (i) That decision-making on the environment should be left to scientific and professional 'experts', the elite with the necessary knowledge and moral concern and (ii) that government can be trusted to ensure that the collective interest is protected by making scientific and professional advice the basis of their intervention in the question of the use of natural resources and to persuade the community of the necessity of action.

(i) Scientific and professional elitism is a belief which emphasizes the centrality of science and expertise in ensuring the 'wise' or 'rational' use of resources. The central and indispensible place for scientists and other related professionals is contended by Ovington;

"The preparation of management plans is a skilled task calling for the integration by qualified personnel of diverse facts and ideas."\(^3\)

It is also argued by Downes;

"One of the basic problems in conservation is for people to understand the capabilities of the land and to be able
to forecast what hazards might arise if certain things are done. This requires a lot of information. It can only be provided by people who have different kinds of scientific training. We need soil scientists and ecologists — men who study the relationship between plants and animals and their environment and their interrelationship and interaction with each other. We need engineers and economists, foresters, town planners and many other kinds of people. But they should not be allowed to go ahead and make decisions without consulting the others. Their knowledge must be coordinated and combined into a workable system.  

It is, therefore, to those with the necessary knowledge and expertise that Webb and others appeal for a greater sense of responsibility to the environment:

"... We owe it to our country, whether it is by birthright or adoption, to ensure that all future discussions on conservation of particular areas are argued on the nation's behalf, with all the rigour and knowledge that is available to us. And it is the duty of all of us to be forearmed with this knowledge."

And Barwick makes his appeal to the professionals whom he regards as playing a special role in protecting the environment:

"I hope the members of your profession, as planners, will widen their sense of social obligation and look all around them, obtaining the aid of the ecologists and other appropriate trained personnel before proceeding in engineering works which by disturbance of the ecosystem may end up a detriment rather than an advantage."

(ii) A related principle in the 'wise' and 'rational' management approach to the environment is the idea that positive government action is both necessary and appropriate to ensuring sound environmental practice and that given the proper scientific and professional advice, government and its institutions and procedures can be trusted to bring this about. For example, Costin
and Frith argue that;

"...it is important that a particular economic interest in an area, whether it be mining, forestry or water conservation, does not have the right to call the tune simply because it happens to make its claim before other potential resource users. The need for an overall environment and resource agencies, operating at both State and Commonwealth level again emerges. In national issues, such as whether and under what conditions, parts of the Great Barrier Reef should be developed for oil, the overall view of such an agency, with no axe to grind, should receive the most consideration."37

To Downes, the ideal system of decision-making in relation to land use questions is for the government in consultation with the scientific and professional elite. to take positive action to both advise and control the community. He outlines such a system as follows;

"From this you will see that conservation of natural resources which is really the rational and proper use of them, requires a much more co-ordinated approach than has been the custom in the past. What do we need to achieve the proper conservation of natural resources?

Governments which are concerned with the rational and proper use of natural resources will make provisions for the following things, but to do so they will need public support.

1. There will be a clearly stated attitude and policy with respect to how resources should be apportioned and used in the best long-term interest of the community.

2. Provision will be made for the necessary investigation and research to determine the nature of our resources, the characteristics of different areas of land, their potential for different kinds of uses, the problems that could arise when used for different purposes, and how these can be avoided or overcome.

3. The heads of public authorities having the responsibility for providing for the different needs of the community will be brought together to discuss their requirements with the people who know about land, its capabilities and hazards. As a group they can make recommendations about how different areas of land should be used to get the best overall result for the community.
4. Advice and assistance will be available for landholders and others who use and manage the land for different purposes, so that they will have the ability to maintain the productive capacity and usefulness of their land.

5. There will be appropriate laws to prevent the activities of anti-social or ignorant people from doing things to the land which will eventually lead to its deterioration and loss of usefulness to the community even if this restricts some of the long-established rights of private ownership."}

Some concluding comments

In common with other environmentalists, the persuasion-oriented conservationists perceive a social problem that needs urgent collective action. However, the type of action advocated is essentially one of rational argument and persuasion. The argument in this chapter is that the preference of such a mode of action is a product of a set of beliefs and assumptions which these conservationists have about the nature of the environmental problem, its solution and the political order.

First, their conception of the environmental problem is a utilitarian one. Although concern about the aesthetic, scientific and symbolic impact of the increasing destruction is sometimes expressed, the major concern of this group of environmentalists is with the continuing economic viability of the environment to provide for his agricultural and industrial needs. The major concern is with the possible depletion of vegetable and mineral resources by their deliberate or thoughtless destruction.
Secondly, they conceive the solution mainly in terms of the 'rational', 'efficient' or 'wise' use of the resources. This entails, (a) the accumulation of more knowledge and research on the question of resource use; and (b) governmental action to implement the recommendations based on such scientific knowledge by advising and providing services and by controlling those who breach the scientific-management principles. Such an orientation is based on an elitist conception of the political decision-making process. They stress the importance of the 'expert' and 'professional' role of environmentalists.

And thirdly, such a preference is based on the assumption that governmental institutions can be and are neutral arbiters of the conflicts that can arise from the existence of various interests in the utilization of natural resources. The trust of government and the existing political institutions and procedures to decide in favour of the 'public interest' is often implied in the suggestion for a greater role of government in determining natural resource use.
FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER V

1 William A. Gamson, Power and Discontent, (The Dorsey Press, Homewood, Illinois, 1968) p. 79. The point about persuasion is that it does not confer any new advantage to the authorities.

2 Idem.


5 L.J. Webb and others, "Introduction", op.cit., p. xii.


7 Webb and others, op.cit., p. xii.


9 Webb and others, op.cit., p. xv.


11 Downes in White and Elliot, op.cit., p. 97.

12 Ibid, p. 98.


14 Webb and other op.cit., p. xiv, xii.

15 Downes in Webb and others op.cit. p.17 15(a) see end of footnotes


17 Connell, op.cit., p. 3.

18 Downes in White and Elliot, op. cit., p. 99.

Downes in White and Elliot, *op.cit.*, p. 100

Barwick in Dempsey, *op.cit.*, pp. 17, 22.


Downes in White and Elliot, *op.cit.*, p. 97


Connell, *op.cit.* p. 3-4.


Webb and others, *op.cit.*, p. xvi.


Downes in White, *op.cit.*, p. 98.

CHAPTER VI

THE MORALLY-RESPONSIBLE SCIENTISTS

The focus in this chapter will be on the environmental and political views of environmentalists who believe that scientists have a special role to play in advancing the cause of environmental protection. They also believe that environmentalists should adopt, in addition to conventional political means, a strategy outside the established political institutions, possibly at the grass-roots level. Public meetings, conferences, petitions, recycling activities and rallies are regarded by this group as some of the means by which the environmental cause will be advanced.

This chapter will examine their definition of the 'problem', what they regard as the necessary steps for the improvement of the situation and their orientation towards government and the political system.

Problem: Possible Collapse of the Natural Environment

For this group of environmentalists the problem is essentially chemical, biological and physical although it can have an aesthetic dimension. Boyden's definition of the 'problem' provides one illustration.
"Apart from the chemical changes, there is the progressive mechanical destruction of vegetation and animal life and its replacement by manmade structures and areas of erosion...Besides the important ecological implications of this trend, many of us believe that by destroying the natural environment we are depriving future generations, if they are to exist, of a remarkable source of deep personal enjoyment and aesthetic satisfaction."¹

However, the 'problem' has a further dimension. It is believed that the physical, chemical, and biological deterioration adds up to the possible total collapse of the environment and civilization as currently defined. As Walker suggests, man's power is so immense he can "wreck not only individual parts of the system, but the system itself"². Such an idea is also illustrated by Boyden, who points out that,

"It begins to look as if we are victims of a series of apparently autonomous processes which are set in motion by our ancestors and which we are, with our ever-accumulating knowledge and know-how, continually improving upon and speeding up. Although these processes could not exist without living human beings to drive them, they nevertheless appear to be completely out of control in the sense that no one knows how to stop them. And clearly, if they run their course unhindered, they lead inevitably to the exhaustion or destruction of the biosphere and the collapse of civilization".³

Mason also defines the problem in a very broad way. What is threatened is the humanitarian goals of society;

"There is a danger in this essentially technocratic approach (of science) as an attempt to optimise the path to technocratic goals may, and probably will, conflict with the wider goals of humanity".⁴

If the signs of potential environmental collapse are physical and biological, the root of the problem lies
in the cultural and institutional fabric of industrial society. As expressed by the Society for Social Responsibility of Science, environmental deterioration is the result of a situation in which the "world continues to live by the philosophy of multiply, exploit, consume and dump". Man has failed in his "respect for life in all its forms and awareness of the interaction of humanity with all other species".

To Kesteven, environmental deterioration represents man's failure to live up to his moral responsibility;

"...For man as organism, this planet is a heritage, and all of which it is composed of is his for whatever use he cares to make of it; but to man as rational being this planet not only offers scope for the realization of his own potential but also a responsibility...I believe of [man's] failure to appreciate certain of the dynamic characteristics of the systems about which they are concerned, and especially man's role as one of these systems".

For Crook, the problem with the environment lies also with scientific institutions like the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization not discharging adequately their social responsibility. Crook argues that;

"The CSIRO [and the scientists who comprise it] has, I believe failed to discharge adequately its responsibility to society in two particular areas. First, it has failed to promote full freedom of scientific discussion. Second, it has done little to ensure that discoveries made, are applied to practical problems".

Crook identifies a number of sources for the failure of scientific institutions;
"The origin of the unwillingness is difficult to determine. Certainly the individual scientists feels that outspokenness will earn him the disapproval of his superiors, and may adversely affect his career."^9

"The source may be Section 31 of the Science and Industry Research Act which relates to official secrecy...There may be fear that outspokenness by individuals my rebound upon CSIRO, leading to financial restrictions and political controls... Its unwillingness to become involved appears also, but in a different way, in the upper levels of CSIRO. There, the tradition of public service quietism seems to be dominant...There is, then, rather too much of the 'Herr Gott Professor' attitude in Australian science..."^10

Mason on the other hand, identifies secrecy in public institutions as an integral part of the problem of the environment. He argues, for example, that;

"By the time the first man stepped triumphantly onto the lunar surface an increasing number of people were starting to look at the other side of the technical revolutionary medal: the diseases of the environment, smog, pollution, and noise: CBW: the rapid proliferation of nuclear ballistic missiles, anti-missile-missiles, anti-anti-missile-missiles and so on, all misbegotten children of the scientific revolution... And with all this came a feeling of helplessness and alienation. The big decisions were increasingly being made behind closed doors, frequently on grounds of 'security': by the time the general public became aware of them it seemed too late even to raise a voice in protest".^^11

And, finally, there is a belief that the problem is a very urgent one. It is often suggested by this group that action to protect the environment and avoid disaster needs to be taken immediately. As an illustration of this sense of urgency is Boyden's warning.

"I would suggest that, in the light of the straight facts that we have before us concerning the magnitude of the changes taking place, the rate at which the processes responsible for them are accelerating and the nature of the warnings coming from learned men,
our society would be guilty of the greatest possible folly and negligence if it did not take action immediately, with a sense of real urgency and on a scale proportionate to the immensity of the problem".12

Solution: Socially and Morally Responsible Scientists

As a necessary step for the solution of the problem, this group stresses the importance of the development of a greater social and moral responsibility by scientists who are in a position to appreciate the complexity and urgency of the threat to human civilization. For example, Walker suggests to the other scientists that;

"...it is imperative that those who have the information, the foresight and the concern should unite to persuade governments to act in their role of leadership of the public...There is also a need for many of us whose work and delight is to collect ecological information, to come down from our ivory towers and admit that, uncertain though we may be of many details and bereft as we are of any clearly defined general theories, there is still much of which we are certain and about which we can obtain general agreement that is potentially very valuable to the cause of conservation".13

Crook also urges scientists to be more socially responsible. In particular he is anxious that scientists should communicate more effectively.

"This problem is particularly acute in Australia. We need to question the social implications of scientific activity; to promote discussion among those whose interests are affected; and to ensure that facts and opinions are freely available. Only so can society chart its path forward with some degree of optimism and assurance about the effects of science".14

What is needed, according to Mason, is that "The politicians and scientists must indeed become conversant with the 'axiology' of science - the difficult
art of ordering of worthwhileness, but the worthwhileness must be evaluated in the most general social terms, not primarily in regard to the criteria of efficiency of the scientist or even the economists. An agreement must be obtained openly from the people before large and scarce resources are put into such things as supersonic airlines, heart transplants, or CBW. Consequently, there is a need for the following:

(1) Education of the politicians to understand the scientists.

(2) Education of the public to understand the scientists (therefore no secrecy).

(3) Education of the scientists to interpret and communicate (mass-media involved).

(4) Education of the country to recognise the fallacy of taking an infinite production of consumer goods as the (unspoken) goal of society.

Social responsibility for scientists means also that scientists have to change their concept of 'science'. The kind of change needed is illustrated by Crook's argument that science should be,

"...the whole of learning from law, economics and political science, through other social and natural science, to include technology. For science to be socially responsible there must be interaction between these previously somewhat separated disciplines. Indeed I regard such interaction, coupled with widespread participation by scientists so as to ensure a free flow of information and opinion as the essence of responsibility in science."
In addition to the moral and social responsibility of individual scientists it is also argued by this group of scientists that scientific and political institutions should be less secretive in their decision-making process. As Mason points out, "the big decisions are increasingly made behind closed doors". Consequently, there is a need to "debureaucratize" scientific and political institutions. But as Crook maintains, debureaucratization can only be achieved if there is drastic change in attitude into what he calls a 'contemporary' attitude.

"The contemporary attitude is different, as is strikingly shown in matters of pollution and conservation. This attitude can be summarized as follows: we can have confidence in specialised public instrumentalities only in so far as they are prepared to discuss, and if necessary justify, their policies and recommendations in public. Willingness to discuss and justify policy is essential because such instrumentalities have a monopoly of neither competence nor concern in their field of specialism. Furthermore their policies and recommendations should be examined against the broader background to determine what effects they may have in other spheres. Specialised instruments are apt to take a narrow view of their responsibilities".

And apart from external checks on what specialised institutions do, Crook also advocates a less hierarchical mode of operation within them. As he argues;

"There is, then, rather too much of the 'Herr Gott Professor' attitude in Australian science. This may have originated in the rather aristocratic and deferential traditions of Australian science in its infancy. The small Australian scientific community of last centuries had its giants, and they were given the respect in the manner of the times. Scientists in Australia are now too numerous, and the effects of science on society are too great, for such attitudes to continue to be acceptable. Widespread and easy participation of scientists in scientific decision-making is an essential part of the responsibility of science and scientists to society".
Lack of Confidence in Governments and Key Institutions

The group on the whole has little confidence in governments and established institutions to be appreciative of the urgency of the problem and take the necessary action. There is even a feeling that governments represent interests and opinions that are inimical to environmental protection and improvement. A number of reasons are advanced for having little faith in governments. Boyden's arguments summarizes two of these.

"It is certainly my impression that government in this country, reflecting, perhaps quite properly, the attitudes of the majority of the people it represents, has little inkling of the seriousness of the environmental situation and little, if any, sense of its national and international responsibility in this connection".  

"Australia at present shows few signs of leadership or initiative in this area. I am thinking not only of federal and state governments, but also of other key institutions in Australian society, such as universities... [We] have seen some legislation introduced by some state governments aimed at mitigating some of the local pollution problems; and many organizations have chosen aspects of environmental quality as themes for their annual conferences. Moreover, we learn that interdepartmental meetings have been held in Canberra recently to discuss the Federal Government's responsibilities with respect to the Australian environment. However, all this merely reflects earlier developments of a similar nature overseas, and can hardly be taken as evidence of a particularly imaginative approach to the fundamental problem on the part of the Australian community".

A second theme is the view that government authorities which have the power to make decisions affecting the environment cannot be trusted because they often confer in secret and politicians have been known to make decisions which have harmful effects on
the environment in spite of public opposition. For example, Crook doubts the willingness of governments to take much notice of environmentalists in such a situation;

"Let me quote an example - the $130 million proposal to establish a nuclear power station at Jervis Bay. In February last year the Federal Government announced that the time had arrived when Australia should take substantive action to establish a nuclear power station. This was welcomed by many people who felt that Australia had been lagging behind other countries in nuclear technology. The then Minister for National Development, Mr Fairbairn, toured the States to ascertain their attitudes towards incorporating such a station in their power generation programs. Apparently he met a unanimous refusal to participate. This was based on the economics of power production, electricity from fossil fuels being cheaper.

Despite this, the Federal Government announced in June that it proposed to establish a nuclear power station in the A.C.T. No justification was given for the Commonwealth's proceeding, or for locating the station in the A.C.T. Later in the year, the Prime Minister announced that a site near Jervis Bay had been selected. There has been widespread speculation about the motives behind these decisions, speculations that ministerial explanations have so far failed to still. At no time has there been a public inquiry into the proposal, nor has it been debated in Parliament, although questions have been asked."^{23}

Mason, also, suggests that governments, because they increasingly make decisions behind closed doors, cannot be trusted to be environmentally responsible. They are in such a situation more likely to be influenced by military and prestige considerations. Consequently, according to Mason;

"Experience and controversial exercises like the Blue Streak, Concorde, the large telescopes or atom smashers are announced after they have attained such momentum that to call a halt would be to write off an enormous outlay".^{24}
And finally, there is the view that the political party system in Australia, as currently organized, is not likely to produce a genuine and effective commitment to the cause of the environment because of its complexity and long term implications. As Walker argues,

"A simple problem to which there is a simple answer, validated morally or economically or by expediency alone, need not present insuperable difficulty of political solution. Particularly if its public impact is likely to be short lived, a simple issue may even be espoused by an existing political party and effectively resolved by normal governmental procedures. But a complex issue has far too many facets to appeal to any political party except at the level at which it appeals equally to them all and this, of course, ensures inactivity".  

Non-institutionalized political strategy

A feature of this group of environmentalists is their advocacy of a political strategy that goes beyond the conventionally institutionalized channels of political influence.

The view that the environmental cause requires action which goes beyond the conventional politics and authoritative government action, is illustrated by Boyden. He suggests that in addition to the establishment of a permanent and authoritative federal body to examine in a comprehensive way the total environmental situation in Australia, in the form of a national environmental commission, there should be established a 'national environmental information centre'. "This new institution
should definitely not be a pressure group nor should it be under the influence of any pressure group, political or otherwise". The functions of the centre should be (a) to gather and collate information which will be freely available to educators, journalists, government departments, industry and members of the public and (b) to promote discussion between different groups in society such as ecologists, economists and industrialists and provide a forum for the exchange of views. The emphasis is placed on public education and participation.

For this group an important political question is one posed by Walker. "Who is to warn, protect, harry, educate, research and prophesy?" In this role of agitation, it is believed that scientists have a special part to play. As Walker suggests "those who have the information, the foresight and the concern" would have a special leadership role. However, such action must involve not only the scientifically and professionally trained but all concerned individuals. The importance of mass action is also underlined by the others in this group of environmentalists. For example, Crook appeals to all concerned scientists to join and participate in the activities of the Society for the Social Responsibility for Science. The Society has the following aims;
(a) to draw attention of natural and social scientists to the social consequences and implications of scientific development and to stimulate in scientists a sense of social responsibilities, both as individuals and members of groups;

(b) to draw attention to the public to the social consequences and implications of scientific developments;

(c) to draw the attention of decision-makers to the consequences and implications of scientific developments.

It seeks to achieve these aims by:

(i) conducting public meetings;
(ii) establishing study groups to investigate crucial issues and prepare reports;
(iii) disseminating the findings of study and other relevant information;
(iv) arranging discussions between scientific experts and decision-makers;
(v) co-operating with other Societies for Social Responsibility in Science and other organizations and individuals having similar aims.

Independent action is another method, particularly for individuals having special expertise relevant to some rather pressing public issue, or to an issue on which few voices are heard.30

A range of reasons are advanced by this group to justify the adoption of non-conventional political means in order to promote the environmental cause.

It is believed that such action is needed because the problem is a very urgent one and conventional modes of political action are tardy in bringing about change. Mass action is one way of ensuring vigilance and swift action. As Walker argues;
"(Environmental action)... must also be vigilant and justifiably aggressive. By the time the sewage has filled the bay it is already too late. By the time a minister has made a decision it is already too late. By the time the shares are on the market it is already too late".31

Mason also emphasizes the need for quick action on the ground that, "by the time the general public become aware of them it seems too late even to raise a voice in protest".32 For this reason there is need for unconventional action to fulfill the "pressing need for watchdog activities".33

Further, given the complexity and urgency of the matter, mass action is seen as one of the ways in which environmental groups can ensure that they do not become pawns in political party politics while working for environmental reforms. As Walker insists;

"...it is vitally important to a matter of such broad and long term importance as conservation that it not become a pawn of party politics for though nothing is so ephemeral as party policy, little has such a potential for creating lasting and deep bitterness as inter-party strife; the issue is too important to put at hazard in this way".34

And as Walker suggests, mass action, allows for new ways of using "the existing parliamentary institutions ... from the outside".35

There is also the belief that governments will act more responsibly when there is some kind of public consensus. This is expressed by Mason who argues that;

"You may say that it is all very well for scientists to come together and to reach a common mind...but that Governments will pay no attention to them. I shall reply that, when men of science speak publicly about findings as they have done within the Pugwash Movement, Governments will no longer so easily continue conflicts for which there is no basis".36
And finally, mass action is seen as performing important functions for the solidarity of the movement itself. It strengthens the group's morale and promotes its solidarity due to the greater participation of individuals in political action. It also has the added virtue of being consistent with the 'democratic' ideal of the movement. As Mason claims, mass action serves the "very necessary function, that of keeping up morale. The current tendency to feelings of helplessness of the individual in the Too Great Society should be opposed". At the same time it is also realizing a democratic ideal;

"Political influence can only be obtained through 'normal channels', 'normal' being a function of the particular society in which you live. In a self-styled democracy the normal channels are supposed to operate through the pressure of informed public opinion. If this system is to be more than a caricature, the major decisions must be opened to widespread public debate before they are settled".

Socially Responsible Scientists and Mass Action

This chapter has examined the way in which a group of environmentally concerned scientists perceive the 'problem' of the environment, how they propose to remedy the situation and what their orientations are towards the political system. The aim of the examination is to establish the relationship between these and their preferred political strategy. From the above examination, it seems possible to argue the following.
The advocacy of direct action by this group becomes meaningful when their conception of the 'problem' is taken into account. For this group, the problem is the possibility of the breakdown of the entire natural ecosystem. Such a catastrophe will occur unless urgent social action is taken. But as the problem has its roots in the institutional and political framework, major social and political reforms are necessary if such a catastrophe is to be avoided. Consequently, it is necessary that the public and the knowledgeable but socially responsible scientists should concern themselves with governmental decisions that have an impact on the environment.

The desire to evolve novel ways of influencing government and the public is related to the feeling that the existing political institutions have so far failed to provide the necessary leadership and farsightedness to deal with the problem. In addition, there is an element of distrust of the existing politicians and officials. It is felt that they are much more likely to be persuaded by groups whose interests are inimical to the environment than by the environmentalists. There is also little confidence in the political party system. It is felt that if environmentalists limit their political activity to that system as it currently operates, the issue of the environment will be diffused and allowed to become inactive.

It can be argued therefore, that the mass political strategy of this group of environmentalists is
related partly to their goals and objectives which are formulated on the basis of a particular assessment of the environmental problem and the solutions necessary to remedy it. It is also related to their assessment of the most appropriate means of promoting these goals. Their advocacy of mass action is a function of their distrust of the political system and the feeling that conventional institutions and procedures are unreliable. Mass action is seen as the only alternative which can ensure a swift, effective and democratic means of protecting the environment.
FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER VI


2 Donald Walker "Conservation: A Need for New Strategies" Search, Vol. 1, No. 3, September 1970, p. 96. Donald Walker in 1970 was Professor of Biogeography, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, Canberra.

3 Stephen Boyden, op.cit., p. 6.


6 Ibid, p.2.


9 Ibid, p. 121.

10 Idem,

11 Mason, op.cit. p.141.

12 Boyden, op.cit. p. 7.

13 Walker, op.cit. p. 97

14 Crook, op.cit. p. 120

15 Mason, op.cit., p. 141.

16 Idem,

17 Crook, op.cit. p. 124.
18 Mason, op. cit., p. 141.
19 Crook, op. cit., p. 123.
20 Idem,
21 Boyden, op. cit. p. 9.
23 Crook, op. cit. p. 123.
24 Mason, op. cit. p. 141.
25 Walker, op. cit. p. 76.
26 Boyden, op. cit.
27 Ibid, pp. 9-10.
28 Ibid, p. 10.
29 Walker, op. cit., p. 97.
30 Crook, op. cit. pp. 122-123.
31 Walker, op. cit. p. 97.
32 Mason, op. cit. p. 141.
33 Idem,
34 Walker, op. cit. p. 96.
35 Idem,
36 Mason, op. cit. p. 141.
37 Idem,
38 Ibid, p. 140.
CHAPTER VII

THE RADICAL ENVIRONMENTALISTS

The focus of this chapter is on a group of activists in the Australian environmental movement who advocate protest and mass action as the main political strategy in the fight for environmental protection and improvement. Examples of such action include strikes, 'green bans', sit-ins, picketing, marches and protest meetings. The type of influence that is advocated may be described as the use of "constraints"; this may be defined as the 'addition of new disadvantages to the situation or the threat to do so". It involves an element of confrontation between the parties. In this case, it is the confrontation between environmentalists and government authorities or industrial and pastoral interests.

This chapter will examine their shared attitudes towards the environment and society and their political orientations.

The Problem Seen as a 'Crisis' of Civilization

One feature of the protest-oriented environmentalists is that they define the deterior-
ation of the environment primarily in terms of the moral values and institutional norms and ideals that underlie the physical and biological damage. Their critique of the environment highlights what the environmental damage stands for as well as the biological and physical deterioration. Another feature is that they regard the problem as constituting a 'crisis' or as an impending 'disaster'.

The 'crisis' has a biological and physical dimension. As an illustration of this is McMichael's definition of the 'problem'.

"What is ultimately at stake in the ecological crisis is the very capacity of the earth to sustain advanced forms of life... The complexity and diversity of life which marked biological evolution over millions of years is being replaced by a simpler, more synthetic, increasingly homogenised and much less stable environment".

However, this group emphasizes the importance of the moral, political and institutional aspects of the problem.

First, there is the moral dimension. For example, Wright in dealing with the problem of conservation argues that "...we cannot afford to neglect the very real moral and emotional aspects". For Wright, the physical and biological deterioration represents;

"... a certain rootlessness and ugliness in our own attitudes. We do not yet see what to do about it, but we are becoming uneasy about ourselves. Waste, pollution, exploitation, greed, we begin to understand, are having their effect on human nature as
on nature itself. We know however vaguely, that we need a new kind of attitude towards the world, both the natural and the social world".5

McMichael raises the moral question by suggesting that;

"Modern man has become an ecological vandal. Buoyed up by a presumptuous culture, which ordains the conquest of nature, Western man has lost sight of his biological origins; he has forgotten that homo sapiens is, to date, a short lived evolutionary experiment, obliged - if he is to survive - to co-exist within the ecosystem that has shaped his biology through the processes of adaptation and natural selection".6

Secondly, there is the institutional and political aspect of the environmental problem. As May points out,7 the environmental 'crisis' represents primarily the failure of our individual values and/or social organization. He argues that such a 'crisis' has arisen mainly due to the failure of the market system and the existing form of representative government in determining social choice. And others have added to these two aspects, the failure of scientific and administrative institutions to live up to their responsibility as contributing to the problem of the environment.

As May points out, the market fails in the following way;

"...the market disposes resources between alternative avenues of production and allocates final products between consumers. In relation to the environmental crisis, however, the market has three serious shortcomings. First, in the interplay of private buyers and sellers no systematic account is taken of present
social costs and benefits; each buyer and seller acts to maximize his individual welfare (to do otherwise would place the individual at a competitive disadvantage). Secondly, although the market takes some account (through interest rates) of rates of transformation between present and future satisfactions, preferences are heavily weighed to the present, because sellers are not interested in sales beyond their lifetime and buyers are normally interested in fairly immediate satisfaction. Thirdly, in the market situations, producers are generally better organized than consumers and thus are in a good position to influence consumption patterns, particularly with respect to 'creating' new demands to ensure expanding markets.  

More importantly, protest-oriented environmentalists feel very strongly the failure of public institutions to live up to their environmental responsibility, particularly those institutions that are bureaucratically organised.

Hancock, for example, points to the bureaucratic aloofness, paternalism and insensitivity, as a basic source of the threat to the ecology of Black Mountain (in the Australian Capital Territory) by the construction of a concrete tower on it;

"During the easy-going years of the 1950s and 1960s departmental planners had grown increasingly aloof, not only from the people for whom they were planning but even from their opposite numbers in other departments. Planners in the Australian Post Office and Works, as we have seen, stood together like a band of brothers; but they did not sufficiently consult either governmental colleagues who might have sharpened their thinking.

Fruitful consultation is a two-way exchange of information and ideas; but the A.P.O. and Works has what may be fairly called the salesman concept of the consultative process — they tell people what they want. They were salesmen for the Black Mountain Tower."
The National Capital Development Commission must share with the A.P.O. responsibility for the secrecy which shrouded the developing project... Up to date, repeated request for information addressed by responsible organizations and individuals to ministers and officials had been invariably fobbed off.9

To Hancock, the decision to build Black Mountain Tower, which threatens not only the natural plants and animals in the area but also the aesthetic quality of the mountain and the 'character' and 'integrity' of Canberra, represents an attempt by Australian engineers to compete with overseas technological achievements without regard to the environmental costs. He describes this as a 'colonial cringe'.

"Living up to the Joneses expresses an attitude of mind reminiscent of the cultural cringe - of the colonial cringe. We Australians are a nation. We need to maintain a vigorous two-way traffic of ideas between our nation and nations overseas; but we do not need to follow every foreign fashion. In Black Mountain we already possess within our own national capital something beautiful, unique, and all our own".10

And for McMichael the problem of the environment lies in the whole of society's social, economic and cultural organization. He argues that;

"Too often, ecology reformers see the eco-crisis as deriving merely from our flourishing technology and population growth. This limited view divests the issue of its explosive social content; it ignores the fact that a society's "technology" comprises, not only machines, but the social attitudes that mobilize the machines. It forgets that a society whose prevailing values are domination and exploitation will inevitably develop a technology exploitative and destructive in nature."
...Our ecological crisis is the product of an emerging and new democratic culture, in which Western science and technology, both moulded within a Christian context, were fused together in the Industrial Revolution. The seeds of the pollution crisis were sewn. The growth of Capitalism has reinforced this exploitative attitude towards Nature; the attitude that talks of "the conquest of Nature" and "the conquest of Space". The breakdown of closely-knit communities of medieval feudalism, and the emergence of "open market" laissez-faire economics, promoted the impersonal exploitation of man by man, Nature by man; all in the cause of profit and power. 11

Another important theme in this group's view of the problem is that it constitutes a 'crisis' which requires urgent action. As an illustration is May's definition of it:

"(a) That we are facing a global environmental "crisis", probably within the next 100 years and possibly sooner; (b) That such a crisis is almost certainly inevitable, although we can influence the shape it takes and the process of social adjustment to it;" 12

Its urgency is also stressed for example by McMichael;

"Today, the situation is changing drastically, and the continued life of the biosphere is threatened. If this catastrophe is to be averted then the ecological crisis must be seen in its full perspective..." 13

The quest for moral and institutional reform

Not surprisingly, the definition of the environmental problem in terms of moral deterioration and bureaucratic secrecy, arrogance and aloofness leads to moral and bureaucratic reforms becoming major objectives of
this group of environmental activists.

As Wright puts it, "we are beginning to realise the truth...that 'conservation' is even more a human and sociological problem than a technological one".\textsuperscript{14} This has led them to advocate the debureaucratization of the relevant institutions from the outside. For example, Mundey suggests that, "The imposition of 'green bans' (ecology bans) on proposed buildings, and the prevention of the desecration of gardens and parkland, and the demolition of houses and flats to make way for freeways for the 'good' car...(can)...become a powerful countervailing force against institutionalized bureaucracy and the power of the developer's dollar."\textsuperscript{15} And for McMichael, the solution of the problem requires that "Society must adopt a new set of values, must re-think its social aspirations."\textsuperscript{16}

As a consequence of the perceived need for moral and institutional reforms, this group of activists has given a greater emphasis on the agitation and emotional role for the environmentalist rather than his scientific role. As Wright puts it, "Scientific arguments and presentation of the case are important, but they alone will not get the message to governments - and governments need very strong messages."\textsuperscript{17} Hence she suggests that,
"When we are sure we have an important issue on our hands, conservationists must do the best they can to present the case as strongly as possible, and not avoid appeals to public feelings."\textsuperscript{18}

McMichael also stresses the importance of the role of moral reappraisal. He suggests that "If man is to survive the impending crisis, this backlash of ignorance, reaction, and false-consciousness must be outflanked. The revolution in social values necessary for our ultimate survival presents homo sapiens with his greatest challenge yet."\textsuperscript{19}

Distrust of political authorities, institutions and procedures.

One feature of this group of activists is a large element of distrust of the political system as well as the incumbent political authorities. Politicians, representative institutions and the existing established procedures are often seen to be either incapable, or too corrupt or biased to be in the position to bring about the desired change in order to create a better environment. A number of themes underlie this distrust.

There is a general view that governments are on the whole always resistant to any drastic change. As Wright contends;
"...it is a sad fact that considerable resistances to change are embedded in governments and in legislative procedures, which proceed, as any lawyer will tell you, according to precedent. Where wholly new situations arise, as they are now doing, precedent is not enough." 

But apart from being precedent-bound, Wright further argues, governments are also unlikely to take any kind of radical action for fear of losing their popularity. The tendency is, in matters of the environment, for governments to postpone doing anything. As she points out;

"Successive governments have therefore shelved the whole thing; and no doubt, in spite of the gravity of the problem, will go on doing so. Any government brave enough to take the kind of radical action that is now needed to stop the degeneration of these lands will be unpopular; no government can afford to be unpopular." 

And for Wright "it certainly proves that we can't leave action in such matters to governments alone." And Mundey would agree on grounds that councils and governments are too short-sighted. For example, he argues;

"Myopic councils and governments have often allowed developers (in Sydney) excessive latitude in approving their plans. These plans often have little or no consideration for people or for the environment or for the future generation." 

Another example of the doubts and distrust in the minds of environmentalists about governments is illustrated by Timlin in relation to the Western Port Regional Planning Authority. This Authority shares with the Shire of Hastings the responsibility
for developing the Westernport Bay area in Victoria.

Timlin suggests that there is a conflict of interests in the role of some of the councillors.

"But how able is the Authority? On what basis does it resolve the conflicting interests of the developers and conservationists? This crucial question largely remains unanswered, since the Authority meets in camera and refuses public access to the minutes of its meetings. Members are not disqualified by the normal pecuniary interest provisions attaching to local government councillors. Thus, Cr. Leake can deliberate on matters which may effect the value of the Colourtome Holdings land interests in the area. His chairmanship of the Mornington Sewerage Authority could also lead to a conflict of interest which may be seen from his clash with conservationists over the proposal for establishing a sewerage treatment plant on the historic property "The Briars". Another member of the authority, Mornington estate agent, Mr. Tom Hast, has a family company with the unlikely name of Merriwendiwokewoke Pty Ltd. This company also has land interests in the area."²

Timlin also gives another reason why the government cannot be trusted to make decisions favourable to enhancing and protecting the environment; that of a general bias of politicians and those who have influence over them. He believes that;

"... what has happened at Westernport cannot just be put down to government ignorance, although that commodity in Victoria is not in short supply. It is more the case that the government has no understanding of growth except in terms of money. The value of Westernport as Melbourne's recreational hinterland cannot be totalled up on a cash register; steel production can. Migratory birds do not have the same property rights as speculators.

What's good for Milo Minderbinder is good for the world and, in the view of the Victorian Government what's good for Megacorp is good for the people.
Government is big business but there used to be a difference. Ours now adopts the same procedures; it is informed by desires for growth and expansion, it is paternalistic. Easily dismissing its shareholders, it is ruthless in the face of opposition, and it will not suffer inquiry into its own rationale.\textsuperscript{25}

An experience of government decision-making which leads to environmentalists having no confidence in them is given by Hancock.\textsuperscript{26} It related to the joint meeting of the caucus committees of Urban Affairs and Works of the Federal Parliament, which had to consider whether or not the work on the Black Mountain Tower should proceed. Hancock relates that;

"It was approximately 9.30 when Professor Kaneff was invited to address the meeting. On the ground that he was not a public servant, a point of order was moved that he be not heard. The motion was not put to the meeting but Professor Kaneff had to speak amidst reiterated interruptions from the floor on the point of order. The meeting did however listen quietly for about 5 minutes to Professor Harry Johnson of Duntroon. When he sat down the invited guests withdrew. There-upon the meeting decided not to raise in full caucus the question of the Black Mountain Tower.

When I was told the story of the proceedings I felt no doubt that the tower project would soon be railroaded through the cabinet. Two days later, in the evening of Thursday, 6 December, work started again on Black Mountain."\textsuperscript{27}

The two views above illustrate the theme in the general distrust of governments of various levels: the feeling that the operative ideals and procedures of governments are biased in favour of big business and technological advances regardless of the costs to the environment and that inspite of some show of concern
by governments for the environment, they are basically indifferent to its fate.

There is also a widely-shared view that positive government action on the environment is very unlikely given the institutional biases and governments' own lack of interest in the matter. Such a view is illustrated by May when he suggests that;

"In short, government is only likely to act where (a) social costs are clearly perceived by the electorate and are regarded as more burdensome than measures to eliminate or offset them; (b) those whose private gain outweigh their private costs are not more politically powerful than those whose costs outweigh their gain. For the same reasons, governments are unlikely to initiate substantive shifts in public opinion (consider, for example, stances on birth control and abortion...) and even more unlikely to take account of the interests of future generations - unless, of course, perceived immediate costs do not appreciably exceed perceived immediate gains (for example, protection of kangaroos is likely to be a more viable policy than restrictions on private motor vehicles.)"28

**Ideological and Tactical Justifications for Mass Direct Action.**

For this group of environmentalists protest and direct action is justifiable on both ideological and tactical grounds.

Wright for example insists that mass action and the engaging of public opinion in favour of the environment is the only effective way to achieve environmental goals in spite of the fact that sometimes public opinion works against the cause. Thus she argues;
"To the scientific conservationist, who has had experience in dealing with public attitudes to his programmes it may easily seem that public opinion is one of the chief blocks on the way to proper planning of resource use and sensible attitudes to carrying out those plans... Yet only public opinion - educated public opinion - will be the decisive factor in the fight. The struggle to reverse the trends of waste and exploitation of resources is a human battle."

Underlying such argument is a faith in the common man and the possibility of the meeting of the 'two cultures', one scientific and the other humanistic. As Wright puts her case for mass action:

"...here scientists and workers ought not to scorn the work of the lay enthusiast and his viewpoint, however non-technical and even misguided they may seem. Most lay conservationists are intelligent enough to be able to modify views they have not clearly thought out, and many are only too anxious for guidance in principle and action...

This is a movement which ought to transcend jealousies and bridge the gap between the 'two cultures', between science and the humanities. It is just as important to the writer and the painter, the social worker, the philosopher, even to the factory worker and the clerk, that the human race should learn again to live in responsible harmony with its surroundings, as it can possibly be to the scientist, engineer, or farmer."

Mass action and public opinion is also deemed important because it is felt that alternatives to conventional political means have to be found. Alternatives have to be found, to counteract what Mason calls the 'technocratic' approach to decision-making. And, as illustrated by Mundey, it is often felt that basic and fundamental reforms are unlikely to emerge from institutionalized activity but are likely from extra-Parliamentary action:
"Throughout history progressive legislation and its introduction has not been the prerogative of legislators but the result of Extra-Parliamentary activity of the common people insisting on change".\(^3\)

However, distrust of conventional channels of government influence is only one basis for the choice of unconventional and uninstitutionalized means of exerting power. For these activists the choice of mass action, mass meetings, and 'green bans' serve some positive functions.

Mundey for example, interprets the increase in direct action by individuals as a sign of increasing 'democratization'.

"Community values are changing, and the new healthy development of ordinary citizens becoming involved in community affairs is an expression of direct participatory democracy, as against the outmoded concept of casting a vote in elections once every few years and "leave all matters of decision-making to the elected representatives".\(^3\)

There is also the belief that mass action is the only effective way of preventing the continuing abuse of the environment by powerful interests in the community given that these interests are rarely moved by moral, scientific or aesthetic arguments. Such a belief is expressed by Wright who claims that;

"It seems most unlikely that those people who stand to gain a short-term profit...have either been converted or persuaded to stay their hands, the moral or scientific or aesthetic issues at stake, or that what action there has been at the government level has been taken because of these issues. It has been taken because public feeling has been roused; and if public feelings dies away, or is allowed to lapse, the forces in favour of mining exploitation will
ensure that these temporary measures are reversed. Make no mistake about it, only the force of public opinion holds them for the moment at bay".  

And also, mass action is necessary as the forces against which it is pitted are powerful vested interests. And it is believed that these "powerful vested interests do not want to relinquish their rights to extract and process natural resources and market them for profit".  

It is also believed that governments will in fact take notice of groups that succeed in engaging public attention on issues and having taken notice will behave accordingly. It is believed that this is how governments operate in an imperfectly rational society. As Wright puts it;

"Under a really wise and well-informed government, and in a perfectly rational society, it would no doubt be enough to simply present a well-thought-out case and leave it at that... Some scientists appear to consider that it is enough. They forget that governments are as much swayed by public opinion as by rational argument - in fact, in many cases far more so... Scientific arguments and presentation of the case are important, but they alone will not get the message across to governments - and governments need very strong messages".  

Some concluding remarks

It is shown in this chapter that the protest orientation of some environmentalists is the function partly of their particular conception of the environmental problem which goes beyond the physical and material aspect to include the moral, administrative and political dimension. The deterioration of the environment
in its biological, physical and economic forms is felt to be representing a deterioration in the moral, organizational and political system of Australian society. Consequently, moral reform and debureaucratization constitute major objectives of their political action. Protest is also partly a function of this group's distrust of many aspects of the existing political institutions and procedures. In their evaluations, these institutions and procedures are biased in favour of the interests and values detrimental to environmental quality. Protest is seen as the logical alternative to conventional political activity.

Protest can therefore be interpreted as a logical and rational mode of political action for environmental reform. It is rational given that this group of environmentalists have moral and anti-bureaucratic objectives and believe that the existing political institutions and procedures are untrustworthy. The advocacy of protest and mass action by moral-political environmentalists is based partly on a set of interrelated convictions.

(a) It is believed that scientific, moral and scientific arguments are insufficient to overcome vested interests in the community and government inertia. It is believed that to succeed in solving the environmental problem, such arguments have to be accompanied by a show of wide social consensus or a symbolic show
of strength or force. In other words, to succeed, environmentalists have to agitate.

(b) It is also believed that if they work through the existing system of political parties the result will be government inactivity and neglect of the environmental problem. The group seeks therefore to avoid co-option in the existing political party system.

(c) Mass action and participation in protest political activity, it is believed, will raise the awareness in individuals of their responsibility to the environment and society.

(d) It is expected that mass action and protest will perform the function of strengthening the movement by enabling the individuals in it to become politically active.

It is argued, therefore, that protest orientation in some environmentalists is not the direct function of their psychological or sociological characteristics. Rather, it is the result partly of their goals and objectives which are derived from their assessment of the environmental problem and the solutions needed to remedy it. It is also partly the result of their assessment of the most appropriate means of achieving their goals and objectives. They believe that the existing political system is untrustworthy and conventional institutions and procedures are unreliable. As a consequence, mass and protest activities is seen by this group of environmentalists as the only alternative which may ensure an effective and democratic remedy. This requires agitation and participation in protest and other forms of mass action.
FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER VII


5. Idem.


8. *Ibid*, p. 5. The failure of the market as a cause of environmental deterioration has been pointed out by many commentators. One such commentator is Neutze who argues that;

   "...much of our thinking about environmental problems can be cast in terms of market failure. But unless an economist can see that the warnings of the conservationists are about a kind of market failure, and one that is not met by appropriate action, he tends to be sceptical about predictions of a 'crisis'. He tends to think that the market system, adapted in fairly well established ways is 'innocent until proven guilty'...the market is indeed 'guilty'.


13 McMichael, *op.cit.*, p. 3.


18 Idem.


20 Wright, *Conservation as an Emerging Concept*, p. 3.


23 Mundey *op.cit.*, p. 27.


26 Hancock, *op.cit.*


29 Wright in Webb, et.al., *op.cit.*, p. 43.

30 Idem

31 Mason, *op.cit.*

32 Mundey,*op.cit.*, p. 28.

33 *Ibid*, p. 28.

34 Wright, *Conservation as an Emerging Concept*, p. 6.


36 Wright, *Conservation*, pp. 6, 8.
CHAPTER VIII

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PRAGMATISTS

This chapter focuses on a group of environmentalists who advocate a mixed strategy of public education and political compromises and inducements. Pragmatists are defined as those who, while they see the need for public and mass education, stress that politics is a game of compromise and bargain. They see the need to provide inducements to opposing groups and governments if they are to achieve some of their goals. They do not regard the conflict of principles between themselves and their opposing groups as absolutely irreconcilable.

This chapter will examine their (a) conception of the environmental problem and its solution, (b) attitude towards the political system, and (c) their conception of the role that environmentalists should play in relation to the environmental problem. An attempt will be made to relate these to their stand on the political strategy to be adopted by the environmental movement.

It will be argued that there is a logical relationship between their political strategy and their conception of the problem, their feeling about the political system and the kind of leadership needed for the
solution of the environmental problem.

The 'problem' conceived as threats to aesthetic and recreational amenities.

The 'problem' of the environment is conceived by this group of environmentalists as existing on two levels. At the first level is the phenomenon of pollution. At the second level are the social and recreational amenities that are threatened by such pollution.

Pollution is defined, for example, by Martin as;
"... a deterioration of part of the environment, due to the occurrence of substances or processes in such quantities that the environment cannot handle these before they cause damage ...

It involves earth, air, ocean, lake and river..."²

The problem of pollution can be conceived essentially in physical, biological and health terms. For example, Whittington defined water pollution as "any action rendering water less suitable for any use than it was in the original condition".³ He is concerned with both water and air pollution, at one level, because of the effect such pollution can have on human health.⁴

The group, however, stresses the problem at the second level. It is concerned with the implications that such pollution has on the aesthetic, scientific, recreational and resource uses of the environment. Martin, for example,
expresses concern not only for the fire, the noise and rubbish but also for what he regarded as 'visual' and 'aesthetic' pollution. He notes, "I would include here any unnecessary activity or process which reduces the recreational value of the area." Similarly, Whitington regrets the polluting of Australia's 'unspoilt' beauty which consists of having "the finest and healthiest climate in the world, whose hard clear light has been the fascination and despair of painters, whose harbours and rivers worked rhapsodies from early navigators and cartographers, whose beaches are famed around the world..." The importance of the environment for recreation is emphasized by this group. As Mosley points out;

"The city dwellers of Australia are remarkably fortunate in that the remaining large areas of roadless bush still present them with opportunities for the enjoyment of the physical challenges, the solitude, and the beauty of wilderness... but if the wilderness continues to shrink at the present rapid rate his days are clearly numbered.

Wilderness has a great deal to offer this generation and no doubt other generations. It is something which provides a contrast with the city, where man can exercise all his senses to the full, and gain a better understanding of nature and his place in it..."

A further value of the environment, particularly in its natural state, is 'scientific'. As Mosley also points out;

"The loss of the wilderness would considerably narrow the range of experience available to man, but there are other important values. Large primitive areas provide the best conditions in..."
which plants and animals can evolve naturally. The people of hundreds of years hence, possibly thousands, may well value such areas more for the information they have to give than for their inspiration and enjoyment. Already such areas are of infinite scientific importance."

Finally, there is a concern for the fragility of the natural ecosystem and the long-term implications of current practice and future proposals for its use. For example, Seddon points out;

"We know only in a general way how our natural ecosystems function, and we have as yet little data on their adaptability or response to human interference. What we know leads us to caution - in general we have learnt that the Australian environment is a good deal more fragile than that of the temperate lands of Western Europe and east-central North America from which the indusstechnology, and its attendant psychology, has spread."

For this group, 'conservation' is regarded as the necessary solution to environmental deterioration. Such a solution is differentiated from the idea of preservation. Martin, for example, defines conservation as the "wise use of resources";

"Wise use of resources means in general, that a resource should be exploited in the manner which does the least amount of damage to the long term survival and renewal of the resource and its surroundings... The ideal form of land exploitation wherever it is possible, is multiple use."

Martin, in addition rejects the idea of preservation;

"Preservation might be defined as an attempt to preserve the status quo for all time ... Preservation is a totally indefensible line of argument."
The preservationist, in effect says "We have done too much harm already. We must call a halt now to all further progress and development. We must totally protest all native fauna, ban all pesticides, discourage all further mining, stop driving cars, stop drilling oil wells.

What we are trying to preserve is not some mythical stable 'natural state'; but an array of dynamic ecological processes; simply putting them behind bars and saying "Dont touch" will never achieve this aim. Conservation is an active process, not a negative and passive one."

Mosley also distinguishes the non-use of the wilderness with conservation. He regards the establishment of national parks as part of the conservation strategy. However, this is for the purposes of public recreation and scientific research. In other words, what is emphasized here is the uses to which the environment may be put rather than its preservation for its own sake.

Conservation as requiring scientific knowledge and moral and social leadership.

One theme that underlies the conservation proposals of this group of environmentalists is the need for both scientific research, knowledge and expertise as well as moral and social leadership. Part of the explanation for this view lies in their analysis of the source of pollution. For them, the general 'way of life' in Australia is regarded as the main cause of the environmental problem.

The perpetrators of pollution includes, for Whitington;
"The industrialist who permits unnecessary emission of fumes from his chimney stacks, or allows industrial wastes to flow into a creek or river; the householder who burns rubbish in a backyard incinerator; the politician who opposes legislative action, or having taken it fails to enforce it, the boat owner or ship's master who empties refuse into a harbour; the car owner who fails to control exhaust fumes for his motor - all are contributing to the destruction of the environment."\textsuperscript{14}

For Mosley, the source of the problem is man as the restless consumer and improver;

"Wherever he goes man is the restless consumer and improver. Even when he decides to conserve an area he finds it very difficult to restrain his natural instincts to civilize and improve.

The highly commercial and materialistic philosophy which guides most of our contemporary land-use policies makes the prospect for the conservation of an adequate system of wilderness areas in Australia very poor."\textsuperscript{15}

For the above reason, Mosley suggests that part of the role of the conservationist is a social one rather than scientific. "The conservationist has a leading role to play in gaining acceptance of wilderness as a public utility and his words of persuasion must be aimed at all parts of society".\textsuperscript{16}

Whitington also argues that the solution to the problem requires both scientific expertise and public consciousness. The role of the conservationists is to raise the consciousness of the public to the problems that can be defined and identified scientifically. He suggests that if what he writes is alarmist or alarming, "it is because it is based on the evidence available from experts who know more about the problems of pollution than anyone else in
Australia, but who confess they know comparatively little about how to combat it".\textsuperscript{17} His role is one of attempting to "make the public accept the views and opinions of experts even though these are not certain".\textsuperscript{18} 

The idea that the problem of pollution needs the involvement of the whole community rather than the attention of the scientists alone is also expressed by Martin. He sees the problem of pollution as "not a problem of the future... not something we can ignore and leave to the politicians and the scientists to worry about. It is a problem here and now, and of Australia and New Guinea, of you and me".\textsuperscript{19} He suggests that the major task is raising the consciousness of the public, not a scientific one. He argues that "The fundamental facts of pollution are well known to biologists and, indeed, to anyone else who has studied the problem. But somehow they have not been clearly outlined to the layman and the student, who have been caught up with the emotional middleground of pollution consciousness without understanding its reality".\textsuperscript{20} 

In short, as Seddon suggests, it is believed that "most environmental matters have only a small scientific component, and a very large social one".\textsuperscript{21} 

\textbf{Government may and ultimately needs to be trusted} 

One feature of this group's feeling about government and the political system is its mixed character. On one hand, they blame government's neglect of the issue.
They sometimes go so far as to suggest that governments themselves are pollutors of the environment. But, on the other hand, they stress the need for well informed governmental action to prevent further environmental deterioration. On balance, they seem to believe that governments and officialdom will act favourably towards the environmental cause if sufficient public pressure is directed in that direction.

The negative view of the government's role is illustrated by Whitington; He suggests, for example, that governments are not blameless for the continuing deterioration of the environment;

"In fact, government apathy is just as culpable for the pollution problem as is private enterprise, and probably more so. Had governments been firm and positive the present hopeless contradiction could have been avoided."22

As for official attitude, he suggests that;

"Inertia and stupidity are apparent in every aspect of the official attitude to pollution."23

Added to these, is the inadequacy of the Australian constitutional arrangement for government action in the area of pollution control. He argues that;

"Constitutionally, Australia is creaking along in a nineteenth century horse and buggy, with stones in the horses hooves, a greaseless axle and felloes with dry rot. The Commonwealth's powers are limited and the States pursue their strongly individualistic and often headstrong courses... often they obstruct, delay and defy, insisting on state rights before national welfare".24

Mosley also cites examples of government and official lack of sympathy for the environmental cause.
As an illustration he points to the Lake Pedder controversy in South-West Tasmania:

"The government gave the public little or no information about the power scheme it was investigating and about alternative sources of power. Official comments were either evasive, as when in 1961 the Chief Commissioner said, 'the possibility of power development in this area in the foreseeable future is remote or vague, as when in 1965 the Premier said, 'there would be some modification of the Lake Pedder National Park'."^{25}

He even goes on to suggest that the Tasmanian government is actively committed to industrial development at expense of the conservation cause. As he suggests;

"The governments of Tasmania have for many years been deeply committed to a policy of industrial development based on the exploitation of water power resources and there was little official sympathy for those who suggested that the area should be preserved."^{26}

However, if they lay part of the blame for environmental deterioration on government and officialdom, they seem to be of the view that governments and officials may yet be pressurized into taking the necessary steps toward environmental protection. They believe that what is needed is the development of public opinion in favour of environmental protection. If this is achieved, governments will follow the lead. Ultimately, environmental protection will require the co-operation of existing governments.

As an illustration of this view is Whittington;

"Governments will do nothing until or unless they are spurred into action."
Pollution can be combated. The means to do so are at hand. All that is needed is the will.

The most important step to be taken is a campaign to arouse public awareness of the potential dangers. If the public is alerted to the danger it could well demand more positive action from its politicians who have never led, but usually are prepared to follow, public opinion.

An aroused public by its very interest and vigilance, would cause greater government spending on matters like research.

There is urgent need for an overall planning authority for closer examination of factors contributing to air pollution."

Mosley, also points to instances where in the clash between important economic interests and wilderness preservation the State Government has allied itself with the former. But he suggests that after strong pressure was applied the State Government has reluctantly agreed to investigate the demands of environmental groups and examine alternative areas of development. He concludes that public opinion can and has had a considerable, although not critical, influence on the outlook of governments.

Mosley, on the whole, believes that governments in Australia are responding to the demand for environmental protection. He suggests that their record bears this out;

"Several recent land-use conflicts in Australia involving natural area conservation have strengthened the policy and administration affecting nature conservation and the evaluation of Crown land. In Tasmania the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act is a product of the Lake Pedder issue. The Victorian Little Desert controversy led to a strengthening of the Land Utilization Advisory Council (now the Land Conservation Council) which advises on the best
use of public land, and to the decision to set aside at least five percent of the State in national parks, wildlife reserves, and forest parks. Recently, a Minister of Environmental Protection was appointed in Western Australia, and a Ministry of Conservation has been established in South Australia. Other bodies are being set up by the remaining States and the Commonwealth to handle problems of environmental pollution. These promise to improve the means of gathering information prior to decision-making, and also to seek balanced judgements through the involvement of representatives of various interest groups; whether they succeed or not will probably depend to some extent on when and if they can introduce national and regional conservation criteria into their judgements on specific areas."

Ultimately, they feel that the existing governmental arrangement can be reformed adequately to ensure pollution abatement and environmental protection. An illustration of this theme is Whittington's view of the way in which pollution can be abated:

"The Commonwealth has not the constitutional power for this at present, but it has never sought it. If it seeks and fails to obtain it from the electorate then the Australian people will be able to blame only themselves. But there is a very good reason to believe that, with a proper propaganda campaign, the Australian people could be educated to a point where they would depart from precedent to vote additional powers to the Commonwealth to control a menace which could be defeated now but which could destroy them within a few years.""

An even more positive view of government and governmental action is expressed by Martin;

"Governments are elected as the servants of the people; and in principle, therefore, we can tell them what we want (whether we get it is quite another matter). But all we can do is try
...[H]olding sensible views and expressing them to people in general and people in power in particular - is probably the most effective kind you can possibly take. It is only legislation that is going to curtail the most serious of the environmental problems today."31

Political Compromise and Bargaining as a Strategy.

One feature of the political view of this group of environmentalists is their rejection of direct action as a mode of political influence. Instead they have to work indirectly. It is believed that inspite of the conflicting nature of the positions of governments, industry and environmental groups there is still room for compromise and bargain. It is argued by this group that environmentalists have to trade-off some of their demands for what may be regarded as quite legitimate demands of industry and governments. This group believes that environmentalists have to be realistic and accept that their demands may be more readily met only if they can demonstrate to the other groups in the community that they too will benefit from the action desired by the environmentalists.

The rejection of direct forms of action is illustrated by Martin when he addresses himself to the question of "What can the individuals do?"

"The answer, I am afraid is, not very much; or rather not very much in a direct way. Our survey will have shown that most of the problems require action at the council, shire, state, federal and world levels. You can of course achieve a lot indirectly, by demanding action in the right quarters, as the Little Desert case in Victoria showed."32
Seddon also counsels against working outside the 'establishment'. This is particularly so for scientists. He argues that;

"In England the well-known science-writer Bronowski urged what he called the 'disestablishment' of science.

Many scientists share his views, but the problems are not simple. By rejecting all the unconditional university research-grant money, the scientists regains his freedom to work on the problems of his choice - but only if they don't cost too much money, and this rules out most of modern-day science, in effect. Moreover, he still has no control over how his results will be applied, and by cutting off from industry he loses both a stimulus and a chance to be useful at a time when environmental problems require a new level of co-operation between science and industry."

Seddon goes on to suggest that there are very basic differences between the way in which scientists and governments operate. The first is the time-scale on which the respective groups base their action. For example, on the question of an ecological impact statement, the scientists will need several years to do research, while for the politician six months is a long time-period to have nothing concrete happen. There is also the difference in loyalties. For the scientist, he owes a loyalty to an international community and to the truth and often he sees that the interests of a particular state do not coincide with those of the biosphere. On the other hand, the politician's first loyalties are to his party and his constituents. However, inspite of this, he rejects the view that scientists should couch their demands for environmental protection in an extreme way.
He states his position in the following way:

"I found myself under very strong pressure to make more extreme claims, on the grounds that to others, all my ifs and buts made my support lukewarm (which it is not), and also that the opposing faction would show no such scruple, and that it was necessary to overstate to balance the opposing overstatement.

I reject this view, as I believe most scientists would, on the grounds that it is the responsibility of scientists...to uphold the rationality of debate."35

Seddon suggests that it is possible for environmentalists to compromise both with industrial and mining interests, often regarded as the opponents of the environmental cause, and governments. According to his experience, he found that "the mining companies had made fair efforts at the restoration in its nearby leases", in order to meet some of the demands of environmentalists in, for example, the Myall Lakes controversy in New South Wales.36 As regards the difference between scientists and governments, it is possible to have that reduced by expanding 'the scale of politics'. He argues that "National environmental protection bodies have better prospects than state bodies (provided they have the power and local knowledge), and international bodies like the World Health Organization and the various UNESCO bodies have still wider loyalties, and scientists find it relatively easy to work for such bodies".37

Seddon, therefore, advocates that environmental scientists should work within the framework of existing governmental system. Liberal use of government funding
should be made by scientists. This will not be inimical to the environmental cause as long as scientists make explicit their value judgements involved in such work and that they communicate effectively and clearly with non-scientists without resorting to propaganda.

The need for compromise is stressed by this group of environmentalists. This arises partly because they believe that consensus is difficult to achieve without compromise. It is also because they believe that for environmental protection to be accepted it must be demonstrated to the opponents of such action, that they too will benefit.

As an illustration of the former, Whittington points out, for example, to the difficulty of achieving any consensus on matters relating to the environment;

"It is almost as difficult to induce people to agree about the causes of air pollution as to obtain agreement about the fact that it exists, that it is at all serious and that it is a menace to health."³⁹

It is argued, therefore, that environmentalists should attempt to persuade others to their point of view by positive inducements. As an illustration is Martin's suggestion;

"...the surest way to conserve species and habitats is to make them earn money. One has only to think of South Africa, whose wildlife is one of the mainstays of the tourist trade, and which has one of the best systems of national parks in the world... One has to be a realist: it may be hard to convince a government authority to preserve a tract of forest because a pretty little possum lives
there; it will be much easier if they can be told that it will bring thousands of dollars to the area each year."40

Mosley too argues that for an Australia-wide programme of wilderness to succeed, environmentalists have to demonstrate the concrete benefit that will accrue to man. As he suggests:

"The key points requiring explanation seem to be that wilderness is for the benefit of man, not plants and animals, that it is an important part of an attempt to provide the maximum range of recreational choice, which is undertaken for the benefit of the community as a whole and not just for the minority who happens to use it at any one point in time. Much public misunderstanding of the aims of wilderness conservation could be avoided if the term could be restricted in its application to very large areas managed primarily for the conservation of land in a primitive condition but made available for compatible scientific and recreational uses."41

Some observable relationships

It would appear that the pragmatic strategy of this group of environmentalists is an integral part of their conception of the environmental problem, their beliefs about the political system and their conception of the role of environmentalists.

This group seems to be concerned primarily with the social, aesthetic, recreational aspects of environmental pollution. Given that level of concern and (a) their belief that their opponents and governments are open to compromise if they can perceive any benefit for themselves
and (b) their belief that what is needed in environmental reform is the development of a responsible consciousness of the collective problem, it seems logical that they should advocate a pragmatic, compromising and gradualist strategy.

Their rejection of direct action or working outside the established channels of influence seems also consistent with their beliefs about the trustworthiness of their opponents and the authorities.
FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER VIII

1 "Inducements are the addition of new advantages to the situation or the promise to do so, regardless of the particular resources used. The authority acts as the partisan group desires in exchange for some resource which they have received or will receive. There is a specific good or service involved as a quid pro quo in such an exchange." William Gamson, Power and Discontent (Dorsey Press, 1968) p. 77. The relationship between the tendency by a discontented group to rely on inducements and a neutral attitude to political authorities is postulated by Gamson. This view has been outlined in Chapter Four of the present study.

The political strategy described here is basically that of conventional pressure group activity. It has as a basic feature, the adherence to the accepted 'rules of the game' of the political system.

2 Angus Martin, Pollution and Conservation in Australia: A Layman's Guide to the Causes, Effects and Controls of Pollution (Lansdowne, 1971) p. 82, 6.


4 Ibid.

5 Martin, op. cit.

6 Whittington, op. cit.


8 Ibid p. 568


10 This term has been defined in the Introductory Chapter of the present study. The distinction between conservation and preservation has also been outlined in Chapter Five.

11 Martin, op. cit. p. 92.

12 Ibid. p. 84.

13 Mosley, op. cit. p. 576.
38 Ibid. p.22-23.
39 Whitington, op. cit. p. 37.
40 Martin, op. cit. p. 89.
41 Mosley, J.G., "South-West Tasmania...", op.cit., p. 578.
CONCLUSION
CONCLUSION

SOME CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The study has shown that environmental political action in the late 1960's and early 1970's has been interpreted in a variety of ways by quite a wide range of studies. Such differences, it would seem, reflect not only the multifaceted nature of the problem, but also the variety of ways in which it can be looked at. The following viewpoints on environmental politics can be discerned.¹

First, there is the view that environmental action has arisen out of the psychological pathologies of a group of people. These individuals suffer from a range of psychological anxieties and other personal imbalances. Consequently, wide-ranging changes in the environment are perceived as a 'threat' or a 'crisis'. The environmental concern is regarded by this theory as a symbolic outlet for the fears and anxieties of these individuals. The occurrence of protest and other forms of direct action is interpreted as reflecting pathological tendencies and irrationalities. Environmental protest action is regarded therefore as constituting a 'medical' problem.²

A second set of studies has tended to 'moralize' on environmental action in that they disapprove of such action. According to these studies environmental political
action may be seen as the weapon with which the economically secure middle-class individuals attempt to preserve their lifestyle in the face of mass consumption patterns of the poorer class. It is in the defence of a middle-class lifestyle combined with feelings of guilt that some middle-class individuals have concerned themselves with defending the natural environment and its aesthetic and recreational amenities. Such a basis explains why environmental politics has sometimes taken the form of moral crusades, expressive politics and the politics of localism. Such politics are seen as hypocritical, impotent and potentially disruptive.3

A third set of studies has tended to idealize environmentalists and their protest politics. These studies have looked upon environmental action as embodying a 'humane' and 'democratic' ideology. The setting for such action is the transformation of industrial society into a 'post-industrial' one. In this period of profound social change, individuals and groups attempt to humanize, democratize, and make more socially and morally responsible the emerging 'technocracy'. Protest politics of the 'grass-roots' and 'direct action' are seen as the embodiment of this vision of society and politics.4

It has been argued by this thesis that while the above viewpoints have highlighted significant aspects of environmental politics and protest, they nevertheless are partial explanations. The aim of the study is, to use a convenient label, to 'normalize' the phenomenon of environmental protest and politics. It is to suggest that the politics of the environment should be seen in the same terms as one
would view the political activities of any discontented group.

A basic argument of this approach is that the types of political action advocated or adopted by a politically discontented group are partly related to their conceptions and beliefs about the 'problem' and the political system. It is suggested the different political strategies may be purposive and rational depending upon the configuration of conceptions, beliefs and aims of the political group.

The importance of relating types of commitment and political action to the way in which the 'problem-situation' is conceived by the political actors is articulated by Toch. This has led the present study to examine discernible relationships between the conception of some environmentalists of the 'problem' and its solutions and their proposed action to achieve it. Toch also suggests that commitment to all types of collective action can be belief-based rather than irrationally based. Such a suggestion has led the present study to examine the beliefs of environmentalists on such things as the appropriate solution the trustworthiness of the political system and the scope and character of the 'problem' to be solved.

The argument that has guided the study is the one suggested by Gamson, that one of the critical elements in determining the type of political action advocated or adopted by a discontented group is the level of trust this group has for the political system, that is, its incumbent authorities, its institutions and its procedures. His argument
can be restated in the following propositions;

i) A group that has confidence and trust in government and the political system is more likely to rely on persuasion as a means of influence.

ii) A group, which is neutral towards the authorities will tend towards relying on inducements.

iii) The alienated group, that is, a group that feels that the political system has a tendency to produce outcomes damaging to the group's interests will tend to rely on constraints as a means of influence.

A similar argument is also advanced by Paige, particularly in relation to mass and direct action. He argues that this type of political action is typically the product of a 'dissident orientation' in the discontented group. Also emphasising the rationality of protest under specific circumstances is Wilson who suggests that protest may be rationally preferred by some groups, depending upon the nature of the issue, their aims and the nature of the political resources they have.

The variables suggested by Toch, Gamson and Wilson as significant in determining the type of political strategy preferred point towards explaining the alternative political strategies advocated by environmentalists by the different configurations of their conceptions and beliefs on the following matters;
(a) The way in which the problem of the environment is perceived and what they regard as essential to remedy such a situation. There are two extreme conceptions. At one end, the 'problem' is seen in terms of the economic utility and productivity of the environment. At the other end, the problem is seen in much wider terms, namely in terms of the aesthetic, moral, institutional and cultural deterioration of the environment.

(b) What they regard as the appropriate and necessary role for environmentalists in the solution of the problem. There are two extremes. At one end is the view that what is needed is more scientific and technical knowledge about managing the environment and that the environmentalist's role is to provide such knowledge. On the other extreme is the view that there is a greater need for moral and political leadership and that environmentalists should provide for this leadership.

(c) Their attitudes towards the political system. At one extreme are those who trust the political system, its institutions and procedures. At the other extreme are those who believe that the whole system is biased against their interests and values.

The examination of the public writings of some of Australia's well known environmentalists has shown that their conceptions and beliefs on these matters are related to their preferred political strategies. There are four sets of relationships and can be diagramatically represented as follows:
The 'Problem' of the Environment

The above typology suggests four general profiles of environmentalists.

The first profile is that of the 'management-oriented conservationist'. Such an environmentalist expresses concern about the environment but such a concern is basically about its physical and economic viability. He is concerned about pollution, overpopulation and the possibility of resource depletion. He regards conservation, the scientific management of resources and more economic use of the environment as the necessary remedial action to ensure its continuing use and productivity. Consequently, he sees an increasing need for scientific knowledge and research and professionally
trained managers in order to conserve the environment. He is also trustful of governmental authorities and the political system. He believes that if the scientific basis of conservation principles can be demonstrated, the authorities will adopt the required action to maintain and protect the environment. He believes that the best chance of succeeding politically is to try to persuade politicians, the authorities and the community to accept the scientific validity of their arguments.

Most of the environmentalists examined in Chapter V of this study, seem to fit into this profile. Environmentalists like Downes, Webb, Connell, Barwick, Ovington, Day, Costin and Frith. They are essentially conservationists who see the problem primarily in terms of continuing economic productivity of the environment. They regard scientific and professional 'expertise' as the basic ingredient to the solution of the problem. They expect they will be able to persuade governments and the community to accept such expertise as they are essentially rational, fair and open to persuasion. They accept the political system as it is and expect that they can successfully operate within the conventional channels of political influence.

The second profile is that the 'morally responsible scientific environmentalist'. Such an environmentalist is concerned about the way in which scientific research and knowledge has been utilised by governments, industry and the community as a whole. He feels that scientists have not
always been morally and socially responsible. Consequently, the biological and physical deterioration of the environment can be attributed partly to the scientist's neglect of his moral and social responsibility. What is needed to improve the environment is not more research, but a more responsible scientist. This requires the involvement of the scientist in the moral, social and political issues of the community. For this the scientist has to go outside his laboratory.

He is slightly distrustful of authority both in scientific as well as in the political institutions. Therefore, to develop a sense of responsibility, he believes the scientist must work outside the established institutions, possibly at the grass-roots level. Mass meetings, conferences, petitions, recycling activities and rallies are the stuff of the alternative politics.

Some of the environmentalists examined in Chapter VI of this study seem to fit in this category of environmentalists. Boyden, Crook, Kesteven, Mason and Walker seem to express most of the above views about the environment, the role of scientists and the need to partake in mass action.

A third profile is the 'radical environmentalist'. He sees the problem of the environment primarily in terms of the deterioration of the values, institutions, beliefs and standards of the community. The physical and biological pollution and the deterioration of the social and aesthetic amenities of the environment have their origins in the existing cultural, social, economic, scientific and political
organization of technologically advanced countries. As a consequence, the problem of the environment cannot be alleviated through the established channels of political influence because the system and its rules is biased in favour of the perpetrators of pollution and environmental degradation.

Politics then has to be redefined and broadened. This seems necessary according to this category of environmentalists because the goal is the radical transformation of the society. Given such a goal, the environmentalist must oppose, agitate, demonstrate, protest and sit-in. Such activities may dramatise the problem and ultimately change the consciousness of society.

Some of the environmentalists examined also in Chapter VII can be categorized as radical environmentalists. Activists like Judith Wright, McMichael, Hancock, May, Timlin and Mundey seem to epitomise the characteristics of the profile. Consequently, they believe that environmentalists should not compromise their principles. In their view mass action, demonstration, protest and black bans are justifiable given that the task of environmental protection and preservation is something the existing political arrangements cannot cope with.

The fourth profile is the 'environmental pragmatist'. The 'problem' of the environment is conceptualized in terms of not only the physical and biological pollution and deterioration, but also in terms of aesthetic and recreational aspects of such deterioration. The origins
of environmental deterioration lie in the short-term orientation of industry, government and the community as a whole. The normal consumption patterns of the community also contribute to the neglect of the environment. As a consequence, what is needed is moral and social leadership.

It is believed, however, that there is room for compromise and bargain. Governments can be induced into protecting the environment if it can be demonstrated that there are tangible advantages in doing so. This also applies to industry. On the whole, governments and industry can be trusted. It is felt that rational argument and positive inducements have succeeded in the past in gaining for some conservationists concrete benefits such as the creation of wildlife and forest reserves.

The environmentalists examined in Chapter VIII of this study including Martin, Whittington, Mosley and Seddon, fit into the 'environmental pragmatist' profile. They define the problem of the environment quite broadly. The also see the importance of moral and political leadership in the struggle to maintain the beauty, scientific and recreational utility of the environment. However, they maintain that compromise, bargaining and inducements within the accepted rules of the game is the way in which environmentalists can make substantial gains.

The point to be made about the above profiles and their concrete examples amongst Australian environmentalists is that political strategies expressly preferred by them are an integral part of their conception of the problem, the necessary action needed to alleviate such a problem and
what kind of political activity they regard as most likely to succeed. The conception of the problem, their own role and their politics seem to be logically connected to each other. Such logical connections seem to exist in the four environmentalist profiles outlined.

It is argued, therefore, that mass action and protest need not be explained in terms apart from the explanations for conventional and allegiant politics. Just as conventional forms of politics on the environmental issue can be explained as being rational in the sense that such action are logically related to the aims and goals of the sectors, mass and direct politics can also be similarly explained. It can be shown that mass action and protest is advocated, at least partially, on the basis of the beliefs, aims, goals and evaluation of the environmentalists advocating them.

It can be argued also that mass action and protest can be a normal part of the variety of political strategies advocated and adopted by a discontented group depending on the nature of the problem and the response of the authorities. The study seems to show that while many environmentalists are content to work within the established political system, many others felt compelled to work outside the conventionally accepted means because it is the way in which they feel they have a possibility of getting some response from the authorities and their opponents. It is also felt that the 'problem' of the environment is too urgent and important to leave to the ordinary channels of political influence. For them the issue of the 'environment'
does not lend itself to compromises.

The above conclusions seem to be consistent with the body of research which, according to Halebsky, suggests that dissidence is a product of "a broader condition of group and class conflict, struggles over power and differences over societal policy, among other considerations".\textsuperscript{10} It suggests also the 'ordinariness' of the support for political dissidence, rather than its being 'deviant' or 'abnormal'.

It maintains that political dissidence is not necessarily a reflection of the purposelessness and alienation of the individuals who support it. It is possible for dissidence, in fact, to reflect the actors' purposive negotiation of their political and social environment.

Those conclusions can be argued for the advocates of mass action on the Australian political issue of 'the environment'. The 'radical environmentalists' and the 'morally responsible scientific environmentalists' among Australian activists are those who disagree with the other environmental groups about the nature of the problem and the public policy that is required to solve it. They also disagree with governmental authorities and industrial interests about social and economic priorities. Their advocacy of mass action is based on these beliefs.

The dissident environmentalists also believe that mass action and protest is the better alternative to working through the established political parties,
institutionalized pressure groups and government institutions. Protest and mass action is regarded as more democratic and that such involvement is consistent with the idea of the active citizen. Also it is believed that if they work through these channels the result will be the defeat of the environmental cause. Protest and mass action gives them a better chance of achieving some political advantage and influence.

The present study seems to suggest that we may have to revise the 'conventional' view of protest and dissident action generally and in Australia. It may be that its occurrence represents wider changes in the political culture of Australia.

It could mean that there is a process that Little calls 'feminization' in the Australian culture. Little suggests that the embryo of these changes can be detected on Australian campuses and is probably working outwards through the professional and administrative systems. The roots can be seen in the rise of "sensitivity groups, the theatre of experience and politics; naturalism - bare feet in the streets, furniture of stripped and oiled wood, light shades of coloured papers, and organic food; ecology - pro trees, parks, bicycling and recycling, anti-high rise flats, freeways, cars and plastic containers." For the new culture the 'masculine' style of politics of hierarchy and discipline is rejected in favour of the 'feminine' style of politics which is spontaneous, intimate and non-hierarchical.
Protest and mass action may also indicate an increasing disenchantment with the Australian political system, particularly its political parties. As Jakubowicz suggested environmentalists are in their political behaviour breaking out of the traditional political party attachments. If that is the case it will have important implications for the future conduct of political affairs in Australia.
FOOTNOTES: CONCLUSION

1. The variety of ways of regarding a social phenomenon is adapted from a typology used by L. Rainwater "Neutralising the Disinherited" in V.L. Allen, Psychological Factors in Poverty, (Markham, 1970), pp. 14-24.

2. This view is examined in Chapter One of the present study.

3. This view is also examined in Chapter One.

4. Look at Chapter Two for a detailed examination.


BIBLIOGRAPHY


Hancock, W.K., The Battle of Black Mountain, Canberra, Australian National University, 1974.


Rubenstein, Colin L. "Science Affairs and Australian Politics" (Paper presented at the Australasian Political Studies Association Conference at Monash University, Melbourne, August 1971).


Senate Committee on Water Pollution, Water Pollution in Australia: Report from Senate Committee, Government Printer, 1970.


