

Submission To The Garnaut Climate Change Review

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This submission is concerned to place weapons and war, as major climate changing pollutants in the economy, on the agenda of the Climate Change Review. And, to suggest that the Kyoto Treaty needs strong references to Disarmament Treaties, especially the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

I welcome the interim findings of the review:

That climate change is a threat to the Australian economy and the environment on which it depends.

That climate change is a threat which needs a swifter and more optimum response than has been currently considered by Australian governments so as to establish and develop newly appropriate production and economic human activities and behaviour whilst acting to ameliorate climate change itself.

This climate change threat, is not a threat removable by war which has in previous times gained maximum shifts in priorities to defend the nation: enemies were defined, sacrifices of comfort and expectations achieved and a major demand made on human resources to change habit and behaviour.

Climate change threat does not present us with an enemy except for ourselves as a too prolific and profligate species. And, defining any part of humankind as an enemy would be self defeating in addressing the climate change threat, as violence, force and war increase all the pollutions that give rise to the threat and increase the rate and scale of climate change.

Climate change threat demands extensive changes in human behaviour and expectations. And, demands that as a species we make effective changes *cooperatively, carefully and quickly*.

Hugh Saddler, Richard Denniss and Mark Diesendorf [1], Australian researchers, have described feasible, rapid and extensive transference to an energy conserving and renewable energy-using-Australia with, arguably, an improvement in enjoyment of Australian life. It is claimed that Australia can expeditiously exceed Kyoto goals, present a renewable and conserving example, and export to other nations the knowledge and technology to achieve the major components of the Kyoto Treaty.

However, focus on the human habits of violence, force and war is also needed in the alleviation and amelioration of climate change as the following quotes state:

"The greatest contributors to the destruction of the environment are the 169 military establishments that train, feed and finance more than 20 million people under arms.

Physicians for Global Survival in a research report entitled *The impact of Militarism on the Environment*, concluded that military activities, during both war and peace, have extensive adverse impact on the environment. To-day the world's militaries consume approximately 25% of all global jet fuel. The Pentagon is considered the single largest US consumer of oil. An F16 jet on a training mission lasting less than an hour uses twice as much fuel as the average motorist uses in a year." [2]

"In debates over causes of Climate Change, the media too rarely highlight the major role of mining and metal production as well as arms manufacture and the polluting effects of using these arms in the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and many other regions." [3]

Australia purchases its costly arsenal and equipment for a Defence Policy which prioritises "armed force". Foregoing the major pollution of weapons and other offensive equipment will focus development on the many other techniques and technologies for defence which we already use to better effect than armed force.

"Understanding the extent of damage to the environment caused by the manufacture of weapons and war, and acknowledging that war inflicts great suffering, logic inevitably leads to a realization that this is a non-essential human activity that we should discontinue. To this end, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty provides a sound legal basis to argue for the inclusion of disarmament as a component of environment protection measures.

Article VI of the NPT requires all parties to the Treaty to negotiate in good faith for general disarmament. On 1 January, 2008 Ted Crail sent out an email calling for the adoption of Kyoto style legally binding goals for staged disarmament and the cessation of armaments manufacture." [4]

I urge you to consider in the Review, the relevance and synergy of linking the Kyoto and Non-Proliferation Treaties for the alleviation of Climate Change; to prioritise environmentally appropriate production and economy, and to highlight disarmament and the cessation of armaments manufacture in that priority.

Hellen Cooke. 24 February, 2008.

[1] 'A Clean Energy Future for Australia' 2004, by Hugh Saddler, Richard Denniss and Mark Diesendorf.

[2] 'Toward a Culture of Peace: Can We Afford to Pay the Price?,' 2007, by Murray Thomson. Page 10. *Canadian Quaker Pamphlet No 64*. Argenta Friends Press.

[3] 'Mining as a fuel for war'. <<http://www.wri-irg.org/pubs/br77-en.htm>> No 77, Feb 2008, Newsletter of War Resisters International. This article is included below.

[4] 'Include Disarmament in Climate Change Action': Page 15, Peace & Freedom, Dec. 2007. Women's International League for peace and Freedom. <www.peacewomen.org>

Mining as a fuel for war

<<http://www.wri-irg.org/pubs/br77-en.htm>>

No 77, Feb 2008, Newsletter of War Resisters International.

Aluminium's countless applications in modern civilian life tend to mask its numerous uses in weapons technology, which make it one of a handful of metals classed as "strategic" by the Pentagon, meaning that a top priority of the world's most powerful Governments is to ensure its constant supply at lowest possible cost.

To this end, new bauxite mines, alumina refineries and aluminium smelters are being promoted with enormous hidden pressure in many countries, including Iceland. In India, this entails particularly dire repression of indigenous people as well as huge threats to the environment, especially in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, where some of the biggest mountains are capped with a layer of high quality bauxite. This layer conserves the monsoon rain and releases it in hundreds of perennial streams. Mining the summits of these mountains impairs their water-retaining capacity. Producing one ton of aluminium also consumes over 1,000 tons of water. Toxic red mud waste at Vedanta's new refinery at Lanjigarh has already polluted the Bansadhara river, within a month of starting up.

Discoveries of thermite and duralumin in 1901 and 1908 led swiftly to commercialising aluminium's potential for bombs and aircraft. The 1st and 2nd world wars boosted aluminium sales hugely, as has every war since. Aluminium is at the heart of the military-industrial complex, and defines the scale of modern warfare in a way few people realize.

Thermite bombs exploit the latent explosive power in aluminium, using its high heat of formation (the temperature at which it is separated from oxygen), to increase the size of explosions. It formed the basis of 70,000 handgranades used in the 1st world war. Later uses involve the incendiary bombs dropped on German & Japanese cities in the 2nd world war, napalm, daisycutters and nuclear missile warheads.

In the 1920s aluminium alloys took humans to the skies, starting with duralumin (used in 1st world war aircraft). After Hitler ordered construction of a massive fleet of aluminium-based warplanes, Britain and America started a programme of rearmament in 1934, aided by a huge dam-construction programme begun in the 1920s–30s. An unfurnished jumbo jet or military aircraft still consists of about 80% aluminium, though the alloys used in aerospace have become far more sophisticated, especially the lithium range and metals matrix composites (mixtures with oil/plastic derivatives).

Dams and aluminium are closely intertwined. From then till now (NB Iceland's new dams), the real purpose of many of the world's biggest dams is to supply cheap hydro-power for aluminium. "Electricity from the big Western dams helped to win the Second World War," by producing aluminium for arms and aircraft, and later plutonium for the atom bomb [1]. In 1940, President Roosevelt called for 50,000 warplanes to be built.

Henry Kaiser responded to this with his own plea for more aluminium production, and by making incendiary bombs. The 2nd World War initiated a new level of man's inhumanity to man in the way that civilians became prime targets. From early in the war, a key strategy of both sides was bombing cities. Incendiary bombs and napalm were mostly aluminium-based: 4–8% in napalm, 3–13% in Kaiser's incendiary or "goop" bombs. 41,000

tons of goop bombs were dropped on Japan and Germany by 1944. The Chemical Warfare Service used them “to burn out the heart of Japan”, & “save thousands of American lives.” [2]

Before the atom bombs were dropped, these chemical bombs had already created carnage beyond calculation among civilians. Half the British bombs dropped on Dresden in 1945 were napalm, authorized by Churchill, and killing about 25,000 civilians. Both bombs became standard in Korea and Vietnam. The latter introduced a fearsome new weapon: the 15,000 lb. BLU-2 or daisy-cutter, whose aluminium-slurry explosive power was invented by a “creationist” (i.e. Christian fundamentalist) named Melville Cook in 1956. This is the weapon used for carpet-bombing vast areas from Korea to Afghanistan.

After 1945, aluminium demand suddenly dropped. Henry Kaiser's brilliance was to gamble on a war in Korea, and his first customer was Boeing. His factories were soon making the B-36 bombers used there. His “bet” on this war paid off, and it marked the start of Eisenhower's “permanent war industry”, that has never looked back. US aluminium production more than tripled between 1948 and 1958, ushering in a “golden new age” for aluminium companies [3].

A little-known text that encapsulates this policy is *Aluminum for Defence and Prosperity* (Dewey Anderson's 1951), which reveals much about the industry that has never been openly admitted since:

“Aluminum has become the most important single bulk material of modern warfare. No fighting is possible, and no war can be carried to a successful conclusion today, without using and destroying vast quantities of aluminum ... “Aluminum is needed in atomic weapons, both in their manufacture and in their delivery.” [4]

Aluminium forms part of a nuclear missile's explosion technology and casing, as well as its fuel. “Propellants” fuelling missiles have been based on aluminium powder since the 1950s. From the 1990s, use of exceedingly fine aluminium powder in rocket fuel extended this through nanotechnology, and nano-particles of aluminium from spent rocket fuel have already introduced serious pollution to outer space, involving the satellite industry.

Aluminium is subsidized in many ways, on account of its importance for “defence”. It is anything but a “green metal.” And priced far too cheaply. The real cost of its electricity, water, transport systems and pollutants are all “externalised” onto manufacturing regions such as India, even as aluminium plants are closing down fast in Europe. Even the standard Kalashnikov assault rifle has had an aluminium frame since 1961.

Among the costliest items of military hardware are the aluminium-rich aircraft, which feature so prominently in a stream of major corruption scandals, involving massive bribes or “commissions” paid by the main manufacturing companies and arms dealers [5].

In debates over causes of Climate Change, the media too rarely highlight the major role of mining and metal production as well as arms manufacture and the polluting effects of using these arms in the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and many other regions.

The media is also all but silent about the situation of many indigenous people in India, whose lives are being devastated by the aluminium and steel industries. These people's movements to maintain their sustainable lifestyle deserve to be known and supported internationally. Tribal and non-tribal villagers protesting against aluminium, steel and chemical factories have been killed in police firings at Maikanch (2000) and Kalinganagar (2006) in Orissa, and Nandigram (2007) in West Bengal. These events are only the extreme manifestation of a continuous harassment against these communities' attempt to defend their property.

This rapid forced industrialisation is claimed as “sustainable development” and “poverty reduction” when it is actually the opposite. Village people's standard of living is collapsing all over India as their lands are taken over for big industry

The Lanjigarh refinery is built by a London-based company called Sterlite or Vedanta. Tribal communities nearby have been split apart and their water, land, air seriously polluted. It is built next to one of Orissa's best-forested mountains, in a range called Niyamgiri, which has its own special tribal people, classed as a “primitive tribe”, the Dongria Konds, who are preparing to resist any assault on their sacred mountain. This case has been over 3 years at India's Supreme Court, with huge pressures for and against, and vast sums spent by Vedanta. This is highly symbolic, for the Dongrias' supreme deity is Niyam Raja, the Lord of the Law – the main deity associated with the

4,000 foot mountain summit, in whose name the Dongria have maintained a taboo on cutting trees up there, thus preserving an extensive area of primary forest with many unique species – which Vedanta wants to strip-mine! Vedanta's subsidiary Balco is a principal supplier to India's arms industry, including its missiles.

The industries being promoted in Orissa and neighbouring states of eastern India are providing fuel for the world's wars, as well as feeding a lifestyle of cars, packaging and mega-scale construction that is increasingly recognised as completely unsustainable in the long-term. As Bhagavan Majhi says – one of the tribal leaders of the Kashipur movement against the Utkal project – “I put a question to the SP [Superintendent of Police]. I asked him, Sir, what do you mean by development? Is it development to displace people? The people, for whom development is meant, should reap benefits. After them, the succeeding generations should reap benefits. That is development. It should not be merely to cater to the greed of a few officials. To destroy the millions of year old mountains is not development. If the government has decided that we need alumina, and we need to mine bauxite, they should oblige us with replacement land. As Adivasis, we are cultivators. We cannot live without land.....If they need it so badly they need to tell us why they need it. How many missiles will our bauxite be used for? What bombs will you make? How many military aero-planes? You must give us a complete account.” [6]

Mining companies, arms companies, and the world's financial institutions that support them are linked extremely closely, and make large profits out of war. There will not be peace in this world until the arms race stops, and the arms race ceases to be fuelled by mining and the metals industry.

Felix Padel

Based on a chapter from a forthcoming book by Felix Padel & Samarendra Das on the political economy of the aluminium industry and its impact in Orissa.

Notes

[1] P.McCully Silenced Rivers: The ecology and politics of large dams, 1996.

[2] Albert Heiner Henry J.Kaiser: Western Colossus 1998 p.112.

[3] G.D.Smith p.150.

[4] Dewey Anderson Aluminum for Defence and Prosperity. Washington, US Public Affairs Institute 1951 p.3-5.

[5] Sampson 1977 gives numerous examples up to the '70s. Since then, the world's media has exposed a constant stream of these scandals. The Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) is a London-based NGO virtually devoted to exposing these, frequently focusing on involvements by UK government departments and institutions.

[6] This interview is in the film Matiro Poko, Company Loko (Earth worm company man) by Amarendra & Samarendra Das.