

SAVE COLONG

THE COLONG COMMITTEE

Correspondence to Secretary, Third Floor, 18 Argyle St., Sydney, N.S.W. 2000

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Secretary: Milo Dunphy, 67 Waratah St., Oatley, 2223. Phone 57-2153.

Liaison Secretary: Mark Weatherley, 18 Begonia Rd., Normanhurst, 2076. Phone 84-0285.

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MARCH 13, 1971

THE FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING OF SUPPORTING SOCIETIES Held on 17th February 1971

In his opening address, Professor Johnson, who chaired the meeting, said that conservation was one of the major issues of our times, and enthusiasm for Colong, far from dying down, had been extended and enlarged.

Professor Johnson extended a welcome to our two patrons, Mr. Guy Moore, who had done great work for the National Trust, and Mr. John Holt, whose generosity had enabled the insertion of the full page advertisement appearing in the Sydney Morning Herald of 12th February. Mr. Moore, responding on behalf of Mr. Holt and himself, traced the origin of many of today's conservation bodies back to the former Forestry Advisory Council founded before the last war.

THE TEST CASE FOR CONSERVATION IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Father Tierney, Chairman of The Colong Committee, presented the annual report of the Committee. "We are not only fighting to save Colong and the Boyd", he said. "We are fighting THE TEST CASE for conservation in New South Wales...and victory is now in sight. Despite the powerful vested interests and Government support allied against us, Colong has not yet been mined, nor the Boyd bulldozed."

The Committee, which was representative of very diverse elements had been augmented by the co-option of Mr. Charles Culberg, Mrs. Mary Mills, Mr. Len Willan, Mr. Philip Kidner, Dr. Phil. Millard and Mr. Ian Campbell (who later resigned due to an injury). It had been depleted by the death of Mr. Fred Keene, O.B.E., to whom the highest tribute was due. Father Tierney also paid special tribute to the Secretary Milo Dunphy, for his untiring efforts, and to Mark Weatherley, Liaison Secretary.

The number of supporting societies, upon which the strength of the campaign depended, had grown to 150 and he thanked them for their strong support.

Eight issues of the Save Colong Bulletin had been published in the year. Writing, typing, duplicating, collating, stapling, addressing, stamping, posting etc.

represented a tremendous labour (falling mainly on Father Tierney himself and his helpers at Holy Cross College-Ed.) He therefore appealed for close study of its contents.

A large number of pamphlets had been issued, including some for general use, 10,000 for the Georges River by-election, and 50,000 for the State election.

Evidence had been submitted before the House of Representatives Select Committee on Wildlife, but Federal intervention, for which we had hoped, had not yet ensued.

Thanks to David and Malle Eden there had been considerable escalation in the number of 1 share shareholders attending the annual meeting of A.P.C.M. (Aust.). Continued pressure on the company, together with hidden intervention by the Duke of Edinburgh, and Peter Scott, Chairman of the World Wild Life Fund, and release of Mr. Fife's Murruin Creek Report, led to a meeting with Sir John Reiss (Chairman of the Blue Circle Cement Company), Sir Grant Ferrier, Chairman of the Australian subsidiary (A.P.C.M.A.) and Mr. F.E. Taylor, (Managing Director). At the meeting Sir John admitted that the company would forsake Mount Armour if Marulan proved "viable." This however leads to other problems, such as tonnage available, re-distribution of leases, shared pipe lines, and further damage to another valuable environment. A field inspection of Marulan was made on the 13th December 1970, and an application lodged for an objection in the Mining Warden's Court to Southern Portland Cement's application for a 400 acre Mining purposes lease on Barber's Creek. This is believed to be the first time an objection has been entertained to such a lease in the public interest.

Pressure on the Government was maintained by means of letters, rallies and meetings with Ministers.

The Liberal Party State Council, as a result of the efforts of Colong supporters, appointed a special Committee which paid a two day visit to Colong and Boyd Plateau with Messrs. Fife, Beale and Lewis. The Committee's report, though a compromise, was against the mining of Colong and pine plantations on the Boyd.

The Committee attempted to make Colong a non-party issue at the elections, but to publicise candidates views on the question. The non-party principle came under strain. When the Liberal Party committee was investigating The Colong Committee went to great pains to supply them with accurate information and during the months that followed refrained from presenting the Liberal Committee's report as a criticism of the Government's policies. When no Government action was forthcoming and the elections approached, The Colong Committee attacked the Liberal Party's record in conservation.

In conclusion Father Tierney summarised progress as a continual, if slow gaining of ground, for the final assault in the near future.

The Committee's Financial Report was presented by the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Charles Culberg. Total receipts from the inception of the Committee to June 30th last year were \$4,844 and payments \$4,413. Since then

receipts were \$3,226 and expenditure \$2,644, leaving a balance of \$581.

ACTION IN 1971

Presenting a programme of action for 1971, Milo Dunphy said: "In this age of social helplessness, of "anomie,"we have shown that a small group of determined people with a just cause can achieve a veto power over a harmful project, no matter how powerful a combination of politicians and private interests support that project." Major tasks projected included an ecological survey of the Boyd Plateau, proposals for extension of the Kanangra Boyd Park, prevention of destructive land development on the Hollander's River, a challenge to the State's pine planting programme, submission of a master plan and management plan for Kanangra-Boyd, court cases on a further three Marulan lease applications, further meetings with Ministers, publication of a book, new editions of pamphlets on Colong and the Boyd, a pamphlet on Marulan, nomination of a Director of A.P.C.M., preparation of a Private Member's Bill, further efforts in presenting a big petition, also telegrams, letters, phone calls etc. to Parliamentarians and the activating of a campaign against A.P.C.M. in the British press. Turning to the question of what the Committee, which represented "as competent a group of environmental activists as you will find anywhere," should do when the Colong and Boyd struggles were won, Milo Dunphy expressed the hope that it would seek a mandate to achieve legislation setting aside permanently the remaining half dozen wilderness areas in the State. The so-called "Minister for Conservation", Mr. Beale had already decided to eliminate three of these areas - the Boyd Plateau, Brogo and the area west of Nadgee on the Victorian border.

In conclusion he said: "In a world which has surrendered to technology, there can be few more important tasks than to establish our last few wilderness areas intact. Such a task involves upsetting the essential concepts of half our Government departments and many of our biggest businesses. There isn't a single group which is better equipped or more experienced in such work than The Colong Committee. The urgency and importance of this task demands that we win Colong and the Boyd at the earliest possible moment."

The meeting agreed to re-appoint the present members of The Colong Committee including co-opted members (see above) and to add several supporters nominated by the meeting. These were Messrs. Bruce Vote, Henry Gold, Daryl Taylor, Mick Dark, Neil Mackerras, Patrick Thompson and Mr. and Mrs. Kaub.

The action of the Committee on the Marulan leases, and the litigation undertaken on its behalf by Milo Dunphy, was unanimously approved by the meeting.

It was decided that the Committee should prepare bills incorporating its objectives for presentation to Parliament at the earliest opportunity.

Following supper, Philip Kidner showed a series of coloured slides illustrating the beauty of the Kanangra-

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Boyd area, the effects of clearing for pine plantation, and damage inflicted by mining at Marulan.

The meeting concluded with a motion urging the Premier to take a fresh look at the Colong and Boyd issues, to receive a delegation from the Colong Committee, to revoke lease 444 at Mount Armour, and to adopt a plan for Marulan which would rationalise mining activity and preserve conservation principles.

MARULAN OBJECTIONS

The Mining Warden's Court hearing of objections lodged by Milo Dunphy (Colong Committee) and Warwick Counsell (University of N.S.W. Speleological Society) against the granting of a lease on Barber's Creek, for the purpose of dumping some 40 to 100 million tons of spoil, has concluded in Goulburn. It re-opened briefly in Sydney on March 5th and will resume again on 18th, 19th and 30th May. Although the outcome is unpredictable, the case has aroused considerable interest and elicited much evidence in our favour. The Assistant Director of the Australian Conservation Foundation, Dr. J.G. Mosley, who described Bungonia as "Australia's Grand Canyon," said that the scenery around Barber's Creek and the Shoalhaven River, into which the Creek runs, was outstanding. Machinery, old tyres and mullock from the Company's existing lease had been dumped into the Creek and mullock had washed down into Shoalhaven River. Formation of a mullock dam, with sudden release causing a lethal boulder rush, could be foreseen. Professor Munrow, an expert in water resources, said that mullock dumping would pollute Barber's Creek with clay and limestone in such a way as to muddy the clear waters of the Creek, destroy the creek bed ecology and possibly pollute the River. It would cause instability in the proposed water storage on the Shoalhaven. Mr. D.K.B. Thistlewayte, research consultant in public health engineering at the University of New South Wales, estimated that 30,000 parts per million would be suspended in the waters of Barber's Creek and the amount suspended in the Shoalhaven would be between 500 and 1000 parts per million. Mr. Douglas McEwan, senior supervising surveyor for B.H.P. at Port Kembla, called as a witness by Mr. A. M. Gleeson (appearing for the applicant, Southern Portland Cement, a B.H.P. subsidiary) was cross examined by our Council, Mr. Meagher. He admitted that S.P.C. had been dumping mullock from the quarry down towards the creek for six years. He said that S.P.C. did not have permission from the Minister for Mines to dump mullock outside its lease area, and that he knew this was an offence under the Mines Act. He agreed with Mr. Meagher that the natural scenery of the area had been very seriously interfered with by the dumping. The case received good press coverage in "The Australian", "The Financial Review", "The Sydney Morning Herald", "The Goulburn Evening Post" and "The Canberra Times."

SAVE COLONG PETITIONS

Mrs. B. Goldstein of Oatley, writing to the Sydney Morning Herald on the 22nd February, states that she met with 100% success in a door to door appeal on our petition. In her opinion "had conservation been the sole issue at the recent elections the swing away from the Liberal Government would have been much greater than it is."

Save Colong Supporters are urged to continue to collect signatures on petitions and to forward these to the Committee. The response has been excellent but the more the better. Deadline for receipt of petitions is 15th April.

THE SAVE COLONG ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Although all final election figures will not be available for some time, an assessment of the effect of the Save Colong Campaign on the elections is possible. Three members of the Colong Committee stood as individuals (not Colong Committee representatives) for the Australia Party. It is possible that the seats they contested would not have had an Australia Party Candidate if they had not been available. Since the Australia Party was formed to contest the foreign and economic policies of the Federal Government, its goals in State politics are to some extent still in the formative stage. Since the Colong Committee candidates put conservation and the Colong and Boyd issues at the forefront of their campaign, distributed large numbers of Colong election pamphlets, and enlisted the aid of local conservationists, it is fairly certain that a proportion of the support they attracted was a Save Colong protest vote.

In Collaroy Brian Walker, who resigned as President of a Liberal Party Branch to contest the Premier's electorate, received over 4,000 votes, the highest vote received by any A.P. candidate. There was no A.L.P. candidate in this electorate, and no doubt Brian collected some of the A.L.P. vote; but he did not seek the A.L.P. vote, his second preference going to an Independent. Labour voters could equally well have voted for Mr. Adcock, Independent, Mr. Ward, Independent, or Mr. Antliff, D.L.P. The total vote for these three candidates was less than that received by Brian Walker, and the vote for Mr. Askin well below the vote he received in 1968.

In Miranda, Milo Dumphy received 2135 votes. This represented 7.5% of total votes cast as against the 5.9% average received by Australia Party candidates in other seats contested. This is another indication of the appeal of the Colong cause by both major parties. Had the Labor party candidate, Robb, pushed the Liberal, Walker, harder, the 65% of Australia Party preferences which favoured Labor could have been decisive in changing the sitting Member. The D.L.P. obtained only 4.5% of the total vote.

David Eden's campaign in Ashfield was very effective. In 1968 Mr. Hunter, the Liberal member, won by 3357 votes. In this election the primary vote for Hunter was about the same as that for the A.L.P. candidate while David Eden (A.P.) and Conroy (D.L.P.) each received some 1,100 votes. Although David Hunter is highly respected, and has been in Parliament continuously for a very long time, he was returned on the narrowest of margins by preferences.

The results were also highly significant in three other electorates where active Save Colong sympathisers were candidates. In Fuller Mr. Coleman, who won by only 600 votes in 1968, and would have been defeated by the State wide swing against the Government, increased his majority. In South Coast Mr. Beale, Minister for Conservation, who

won by over 3,000 votes in 1968 nearly suffered the fate of the Victorian Minister for Lands, who was defeated on the Little Desert issue. He defeated Mr. Hatton, (Independent) an active Colong campaigner, by only 312 votes. In Blue Mountains Mr. Harold Coates (Independent) maintained his majority although his electorate had been unfavourably affected by re-distribution. Mr. Coates normally votes with the Government but is opposed to its plans for Colong and the Boyd. Electorates where Colong political committees were active told the same story.

In Bathurst where there was a strong Colong supporters committee the majority of Mr. Osborne (C.P.), who evaded a reply to the Colong questionnaire, was reduced from 2431 to 237. His opponents supported our objectives. In Nepean, another electorate with an active Colong political group, the Liberal Member was defeated.

(Although Colong was not involved it is interesting to note that the Liberal Member was defeated by a big margin in Gosford, where the Government's proposed sewerage plant on Pelican Island was a hot election issue).

Such were the results achieved in a campaign hastily organised by political amateurs. But the Colong Committee never lacks professional advisers. What sort of result could be achieved by "Save Australia" Party candidates, professionally organised and campaigning on conservation issues generally? If the major parties want to lay this gruesome spectre they have only to add the conservationists' projects to their party platforms.

COMPARISON WITH MANAPOURI

"The Save Manapouri Campaign", as it has become known, has wide and deep support. Doctors' organisations, sports clubs, churches, academics, politicians, housewives and schoolchildren have voiced their views. A methodist Church publication recently said that Manapouri could be used to show that New Zealand has not yet sold its soul to company profits.

Financial support has flowed in for the campaign. Wellington business men gave \$10,000. A "share issue" of 30,000 50c. shares was quickly filled.

A public opinion survey taken last year showed 70% in favour of the lake level remaining untouched. A massive petition calling for salvation was received by Parliament. More than 260,000 of the country's less than three-million population signed the petition." S.M.H. 27.2.71.

WANTED : A QUARTERMASTER

The Colong Committee needs someone to take charge of its stocks, stationery, pamphlets etc. and to order new printing - in short a quartermaster. If you have a little experience in dealing with printers and want to help conservation in New South Wales phone the Secretary, Milo Dunphy (274714).

VISIT TO MT. COLONG AND MT. ARMOUR ON 3RD AND 4TH APRIL

The Geehi Club of Cooma will visit the Colong area on the above dates, with guides supplied by The Colong Committee. Would any other individuals or groups who wish to join this or another inspection party please advise. Several weekends ago Mr. Len Willan of the Committee led a party of 60 from the Society for Growing Australian Plants on a tour of Boyd plateau and Kanagra Walls.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF A.P.C.M. (A) LTD.

DATE, TIME AND PLACE : To be announced to shareholders in the Company's Annual Report.

Meet the cement men. What have they set their minds on? Come and see for yourself the men who have the future of our finest wilderness area in their hands. This meeting provides the challenge of extracting factual information from the Board of Directors. It provides unique entertainment - for example this debate from a tape recording of last year's discussion on the dividend:

Chairman : "The motion is now open for discussion".
- four second pause -

Chairman : "Now I'll put the motion..."

A shareholder moved an amendment.

Chairman : "I declare that motion out of order".

1st shareholder : "How can I re-word it so that it will be in order?"
- silence -

1st shareholder : "In what way is it out of order?"
- silence -

1st shareholder : "How can I re-word it so that it will be in order?"

Chairman : "No you can't do that".

1st shareholder : "Could you tell me how it is out of order?"

Chairman : "I now put the motion".

2nd shareholder : "...you cannot sit up there and say that amendments cannot be made to motions. That is what motions are for. That is why meetings are held. This is a meeting of shareholders, whether or not you hold eighteen million votes in your hand. This meeting is entitled to discuss that motion".

Chairman : "I again put the motion."
- uproar -

A third shareholder asked a question which the Chairman would not consider.

3rd shareholder : "When do you suggest I bring the question up?"

Chairman : "Ladies and gentlemen I put the motion..."

3rd shareholder : "At what stage should I bring it up?"

Chairman : "It's not on the agenda".

3rd shareholder : "Of course it's not on the agenda".
- laughter -

2nd shareholder : "I'd like to move a motion of censure against the Board through you for suppressing the discussion on the question of that dividend".

Chairman : "The motion is out of order".
2nd shareholder : "On what grounds?"
Chairman : "No previous notice".
- uproar
2nd shareholder : "I've never been to a shareholder's meeting like this before".
Chairman : "Neither have I".
The Chairman moved to the next item on the agenda.
4th shareholder: "Mr. Chairman, point of order".
"How can you give previous notice of motion of censure when you don't know that the Chairman is going to suppress discussion?"
Chairman : "I did not suppress discussion".
- uproar -

STEAMING-UP SESSION AND REHEARSAL

Call at 22 Fairmount Street, Dulwich Hill at 7.30 p.m. Monday 26th April or 8.00 p.m. Tuesday 27th April. Supper will be provided while discussing meeting procedure and strategy. Meanwhile, shareholders should direct enquiries about the Company's affairs to the Managing Director. His answers can be used during discussion at the meeting.

BE THERE!

If you can't, find someone who definitely can and give them your proxy; OR send us your signed proxy form so that we can find a suitable proxy for you.

SUPPORTING SOCIETIES

Could office-bearers of societies please advise their members of the shareholder's meeting. Any person who wishes to attend should ring Mrs. M. Eden at 5607714 (evenings) or write to The Colong Committee.

SHAREHOLDERS

Any enquiries about the registration of your share can be made to Messrs. Wilson, Bishop, Bowes and Craig of 1 McLaren Street, North Sydney who keep the register of A.P.C.M.(A)'s shareholders.

STOP PRESS - BEALE HAS CRACKED AT LAST!

Two years ago all the experts said no-one could hope to save Colong. Today the Premier, Minister for Mines, numerous Liberal backbenchers and A.P.C.M. (A) all hope to be able to save Colong.

Six months ago the experts said it was hopeless to oppose Forestry plans to bulldoze the Boyd plateau. No one was more blandly confident of the Forestry programme than the so-called Minister for Conservation, Mr. Beale. As a result perhaps of the report of the Liberal Party Special Committee on Kanangra-Boyd or of his close electoral contest with Colong, supporter, Hatton, Mr. Beale is changing his attitude to preservation of Boyd plateau.

Mr. Glen Hunt, postgraduate student in zoology at the University of New South Wales recently advised Mr. Beale of new species located on the plateau. In his reply of

3rd March Mr. Beale stated :

"No definite timetable for the planting of the northern section of the Boyd plateau has yet been prepared, but the Forestry Commission plans to retain belts of native forest on either side of the Kanangra Walls Tourist Road in a number of localities as it traverses Konangaroo State Forest. It also proposes to maintain the previous Camping Reserves, now included within Konangaroo State Forest, under natural forest with some development for recreational and tourist use. This will be undertaken in conjunction with the National Parks and Wildlife Service with which it has consulted on the development of the plateau".

"In addition the Commission has also intimated that it would willingly consider the creation of a Flora Reserve of native forest, particularly in the region where Peripatus has been collected. Such a Flora Reserve, which would essentially be available only for scientific use, would presumably also harbour some of the other arthropod groups in which you are apparently interested."

"Whilst the Government does not believe that the retention of the whole of the Boyd plateau under native forest is practicable, it will ensure that a sampling of the northern plateau environment is preserved".

The Liberal Party Special Committee considered retention of the whole of the Boyd under native forest to be practicable - why doesn't Mr. Beale? If the Government will ensure a sampling of the environment is preserved then it must first list what is there - does it therefore agree with us that a full scale ecological study should be carried out before any Forestry operation is started?

The idea that Flora Reserves are essentially available only for scientific use is nonsense. They are commonly logged. The new Bundageri Flora Reserve near Coffs Harbour exists to preserve the recreation environment of a Forestry V.I.P. lodge. The proper way to protect scientifically valuable environments is as a Nature Reserve under the National Parks & Wildlife Service. And Mr. Beale may speak of Public Reserves which his Department has usurped as "the previous Camping Reserves" but they have never been revoked and according to another Department, still exist.

Nevertheless Mr. Beale has taken the first step along a line of thought which can only logically lead to the conclusion that the Boyd plateau is an integral part of the Kanangra-Boyd National Park. He has admitted at last that there may have been a purpose for Reserve No. 67062 for Preservation of Native Fauna and Flora on the Boyd plateau.

We recommend that each of our supporting societies explore this matter with Mr. Beale by deputation and letter in the next couple of months. Who will help him take the next step?

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