



# Reflections

The Journal of the *Lake Pedder* Restoration Committee

## The world must wait

THE KEY FINDING of the Federal Inquiry, that "the proposal is technically feasible", is a milestone for our campaign, and opens the way for a go-ahead for Lake Pedder's restoration by an enlightened future government. The report also establishes the issue as being of national significance and while finding against proceeding in the "foreseeable future", points the way to "governments to undertake further research" towards a final decision.

Our fundamental aim to establish the legitimacy of Lake Pedder's restoration as a part of Australia's aspiration for the future, has been achieved by this report. We have always said this project will take years—it's not a matter of 'if' but 'when'. Lake Pedder will be restored. Since our launch just 14 months ago, our campaign has moved ahead and gained national recognition with a pace

and strength we did not anticipate.

Lake Pedder's restoration needs a resourceful, imaginative Commonwealth government. The challenge now to both the government and opposition is to embrace this idea and build it into their vision of Australia as we enter into the new millennium. For Tasmania, Lake Pedder's restoration is more than just restoring a globally unique World Heritage feature—it offers great opportunities in terms of jobs and economic flow-on through the world-wide appeal of our project.

Pedder 2000's campaign, having achieved national recognition, will now enter a second phase—one of getting the support of government at national and state levels to make the restoration of Lake Pedder a reality.

BOB BROWN  
June 26th, 1995

*I truly believe from evidence presented to the Committee that the Federal Government should begin to take the steps that are necessary to restore Lake Pedder.*

*A large part of the evidence given to the Committee was on economic costs, and this I believe is the only argument of the opponents to the proposal to restore Lake Pedder. What price is beauty? What price is a symbol that can inspire people forever? What price for the wonder of looking at a scene unspoiled by human intervention? What price to walk, and listen to the quiet? What price for restoration of the soul? What price to admire the Creator's work? These prices were not computed in our report. Surely they outweigh the other costs.*

ROBERT CHYNOWETH, MP  
from his dissent on the report of the inquiry into the proposal to drain and restore Lake Pedder

AUGUST 1995

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Pedder  
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## Inquiry Outcome

THE HOUSE of Representatives Select Committee inquiring into the restoration proposal has concluded that "Lake Pedder can be left as an option to be possibly pursued as resources and circumstances allow." The Report was released on June 26th and in summary it says:

- the proposal is technically feasible

- the most compelling reasons for restoring the lake are symbolic
- a delay would close off the possibility of initiating the process by the symbolically significant year of 2000
- it could be one of the largest rehabilitation projects ever attempted
- it is neither "necessary" nor "urgent" and is not an appropriate use of budgetary resources
- any research support from the Common-

wealth should be limited to the pursuit of academic research and the Commonwealth should encourage investigations undertaken by the Tasmanian Government.

Some select quotations from the report:

*I regret that we have had to come to the conclusion that Lake Pedder should not be drained. Chairman (p xii)*

*It would appear to the committee that there is little doubt that LP was widely regarded as a special place and that it should not have been flooded. (p 21)*

*If at any time in the future serious consideration were to be given to a proposal to drain LP, there*



# Peddertorial

BRIAN DODD, HELEN GEE, CO-EDITORS

THE RESTORATION of Lake Pedder is as inevitable as the glacial processes which formed it and we hope it begins by 2000 AD. Evidence to the House of Representatives Committee in Hobart was substantial and detailed. Challenges to it by the HEC, government and others frequently lacked the same degree of credibility. For example, the comment made by Prof Forteath about platypus numbers which was blown out of all proportion by the media.

Pedder 2000 and the Greens position has been made clear. At the Pedder Inquiry hearings in Hobart on the 6th of April, Christine Milne denounced the concept of a hierarchical list of priorities. *The Greens are constantly involved in issues where destruction is imminent... we network the circle of issues. Take one issue out and the whole loses its integrity. Pedder is the flagship, with all the connotations of rebirth, rejuvenation and redefinition. The Greens would like a decision for the restoration by the year 2000. Lake Pedder is part of the green vision.*

The furore in state Parliament and the media has focused attention on the environment, with Dr Julian Amos and the Environment Minister, John Cleary listing the urgent issues as the King and Queen River pollution, land degradation, phytophthora, carp and greenhouse emissions. Bravo! We await action on all fronts. When we all agreed these were indeed urgent issues, Michael Lester of the Mercury interpreted our response as a backdown on Pedder. The fact is, Pedder 2000 was formed solely to address a single issue, the restoration of Lake Pedder. But that does not mean that all its members see it as the single, most important issue. In Tasmania most see the destruction of our forests as far more urgent and await Federal intervention in the Tarkine and Southern Forests.

Pedder is about a profound shift in our philosophy and our attitude to the land which we inherit and pass on. A revolution. That is the real reason why it evokes such a heated response from those Tasmanians who see the land as ours to dominate and exploit. The education and public awareness activities of Pedder 2000 and various conservation groups are an important step in this revolution. Restoring Lake Pedder is not just a national issue because of Federal responsibility to restore a World Heritage area and give back a priceless natural asset to the world.

The present Premier has said (and previous Labor and Liberal Premiers would agree) that restoring Lake Pedder is "hare brained". But how "hare-brained" is it compared to each Tasmanian's debt of \$3500 for HEC to produce unsaleable and unusable excess electricity? How "hare brained" is it to try to attract industry to an economy which is narrow-based, and for a long time has had only one university to service a population of 480,000? How "hare-brained" are the poor links between education, research and development and industry on the island? How "hare-brained" is it that because of this there is minimal capacity to develop value added agricultural and green technology, so suited to Tasmania? Such products could well be the way out of the current economic malaise. How long will the Australian people have to pick up the tab for economic development based on wrong premises?

Contrast this to the restoration of Lake Pedder, which will attract visitors, scientific expertise, research and development, and create jobs—an achievement which Tasmanian governments have not been able to realise.

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would be questions that would need to be considered. The existence of all these questions raises the need for a coordinated research program. (p36–37)

Evidence from many parts of the world after various types of disasters show that nature has an amazing capacity for regeneration. It would therefore be surprising that if drained, the area now covered by the new LP did not at least gradually recover without any intervention. (p35)

The committee considers that Professor Forteath's methodology was not sufficiently rigorous to provide a reliable estimate of the platypus population, but recognises also that no scientific study has been conducted for making an accurate estimate. (p31)

It is likely that the draining of LP, if it were to proceed would create considerable international interest and additional eco-tourism to Tasmania. In the long run it would enhance Tasmania's image... (p57)

One lesson from the history of LP is that, in future, a much greater weight must be given to the preservation of biological and geological diversity when considering use of pristine areas. (p74)

## Restoration legislation

LEGAL opinion provided by Mr R Castan QC and Mr G Moor has given the green light on the Commonwealth's power to legislate to restore Lake Pedder. The opinion, by ACF and the Lake Pedder Study Group through the Environment Defenders Office of Victoria, was tabled at the House of Representatives Committee hearing in Canberra.

The source of the power to legislate for restoration lies in the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act, which provides the legislative framework for giving effect to Australia's obligation for the protection of world and natural heritage. The legal opinion indicated that the Commonwealth is empowered and indeed obligated, to take steps to enhance heritage potential of property. Justice Brennan (the Tasmanian dams case) acknowledged that the protection and conservation of some natural heritage properties may necessitate the destruction of structures on-site to allow the area to return as far as may be, to a condition of wilderness.

In Castan and Moor's view the drainage and restoration of Lake Pedder could comfortably be characterised as measures necessary for the rehabilitation of that part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, which incorporates the existing impoundment.

The opinion gives no weight whatever to the Tasmanian government's assertion that World Heritage classification actually prevents active restoration. Castan and Moor state we can see no basis in law why the Commonwealth would be inhibited in justifying the drainage and restoration of Lake Pedder as measures necessary for the conservation, presentation and rehabilitation of this greater (listed) natural heritage.

The legal opinion is very clear. The Commonwealth DOES have the power to legislate for restoration and also indeed has an OBLIGATION to do so.



Above: Rénald Navarro, Melva Truchanas and Roger Richards



Above left: Organiser extraordinaire Annabel Richards



Left: Bob Brown



Dr Dorris Graham (Chairman)



Above: Susanne Sticher, who heard our call for a helper in the Hobart office and came half way round the world to join us as office organiser. She has transformed the Pedder 2000 HQ. Thank you Susanne and Willkommen!

## Standing room only at Melbourne's MOON OVER PEDDER function

A CAPACITY crowd of over 500 crowded the Grand Buffet Hall of Melbourne University on 12 May to see "Moon Over Pedder". The event, chaired by Doris Graham, featured the original 20-minute audiovisual of the spectacular photography by Olegas Truchanas in the classic presentation by

Ralph Hope-Johnstone. This audiovisual, introduced by Melva Truchanas, was created 25 years ago for the original campaign to save Lake Pedder.

Speakers Bob Brown and Geoff Mosley outlined the significance of Pedder and the reasons for its restoration. *Our generation have an obligation to future generations to restore Lake Pedder—one of the great wonders of the natural world*, Mosley said.

Bob Brown said that the size of the turnout in Melbourne highlighted the huge support for restoration around Australia. *It is not a matter of if it will happen, but when*, he said.

Guitar musical accompaniment for the evening was provided by Simon Cruise. Playwright Fiona McVilley and Actor/ Director Rénald Navarro of the Theatre Company Tango One 60 presented Fiona's play *Solitude My Mother*—a glimpse of Olegas Truchanas, explorer, photographer, environmentalist and philosopher. The play was a wonderful prelude to the audiovisual and contributed to the audience's understanding of the beautiful and unique, the importance of restoration, and the significance of Lake Pedder to the history of the environmental movement in Australia.

The love for the wilderness of Australia that Olegas communicated to others lives on, and his commitment and tireless effort in the struggle to preserve that which is beautiful and unique in nature, remains a source of inspiration today.

An inspirational night!

## Pedder Soirée, 28 JULY

An elegant evening in an historic private home on Hobart's waterfront was the setting for our latest function. Bob Brown outlined the next phase and relayed some of the exciting happenings in the Victorian Branch. Thanks to Dick and Louise Friend.

## Scientific symposium at University of Tasmania

A SYMPOSIUM "The Natural History & Restoration of Lake Pedder" was held on the 8th of April. Attended by academics, environmentalists and researchers, papers were presented on the technical, environmental and cultural aspects of restoration. Publication of papers is under way—details will be given in the next issue. Major outcomes:

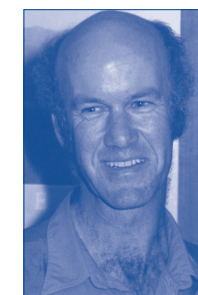
**1** The landforms are little damaged and are recoverable. The most serious landform damage has been a line of erosion around the shore of the present impoundment, which is of similar visual and landform impact to the Scotts Peak road. Some wave-erosion damage has also occurred to the Lake Pedder dune, but this will be repaired naturally since the dune is a contemporary landform subject to ongoing processes.

**2** The original biology of the lake and its environs will not be fully recoverable: some species have disappeared from the area (and some may be extinct or nearly so); other exotic species have been introduced to the new lake or have appeared (e.g. trout), and will both compete with original species and probably not be removable themselves; and initial plant colonisation if the impoundment is drained will be by species able to adapt to the bare substrate—it may take a considerable period for successional processes to return the vegetation communities to something like those which were present prior to flooding.

**3** Thus, in judging whether restoration should proceed, we need to judge whether what is recoverable is sufficient to make draining worthwhile. In this regard, it is noteworthy that to most people the landforms were what "constituted" Lake Pedder, and these are recoverable.

**4** Should draining proceed, the major problem will be ensuring that revegetation occurs rapidly enough to avoid soil breaking up and eroding (and to avoid enhancing runoff from the bare surfaces, resulting in accelerated erosion and larger flood peaks). Tim Duckett has argued that rapid revegetation is possible but will require synthetic (i.e. human assisted) methods (which will result in a financial cost). There is considerable scope for research into the most efficient methods for revegetation of such a large area.

**5** The lake and its environs were very poorly documented prior to flooding. The symposium has drawn together as much information as possible on the biophysical and cultural attributes of the original lake, including some very useful re-examination of data to provide a new synthesis of information.



Chris Sharples, symposium organiser

## Training for lobbyists

FREE TRAINING in communication, lobbying and promotion for politicians, media, industry and interest groups is available for those interested in becoming active in the campaign and who are able to come to Melbourne.

If you intend to become active in the publicity and political areas of the Pedder campaign and need some theory to back up the practice, phone Brian on 03 943 55671 to register.

## Poetry competition—Capture Pedder's Spirit in Words

AS ADVERTISED in the previous issue of 'Reflections', Harold Ogilvie of Victoria has generously offered a prize of \$1000 for a poem on the subject of Lake Pedder. The closing date has been extended, so you still have time to enter and win the Harold Ogilvie Poetry Prize. The judging panel will include eminent Australian poets as well as committee members of Pedder 2000. Hurry and send your entry to 'Poetry Competition', Pedder 2000, 130 Davey St Hobart, Tasmania 7000 Australia by August 31st, 1995.



# Politics

IT'S ELECTION TIME and we can't do it without you! With concerted effort we can build on our five Tasmanian seats. In Denison and Franklin there are real opportunities to get more Greens elected early in 1996.

Add to this the exciting prospect of Bob Brown being elected to the Senate, and you know why the

Liberal and Labor parties are getting jumpy. That's an understatement. They are paranoid about the surge in the Green's electoral performance around the country. Liberal and Labor are already generating fear campaigns and they are developing strategies to try to damage the Green's credibility in the community. (Expect worse in the next few months.)

*Bob's election to the Senate will make an immense difference. The Greens can do so much more with a direct link to the federal parliament. But it is not going to be easy. Bob's commitment deserves everyone's help, and we urge you to make a personal commitment to help the campaign.*

Christine Milne MHA (Tas.),  
Leader of Tas. Greens.

The Victorian Greens have announced their Senate team of Peter Singer, Karen Alexander and Helen Lucas. The Greens are particularly keen to promote membership in the lead up to the coming election. Membership can be arranged by phoning 03 328 4085. We urge you to support their membership drive because the Greens have been particularly strong supporters of the Lake Pedder issue.

## Letter to the Prime Minister

The letter shown opposite shows the kind of motivation we all could give our politicians for restoring Lake Pedder.

14th May, 1995.  
The Prime Minister,  
Parliament House,  
CANBERRA, ACT

Dear Prime Minister,

As a Victorian, the admittedly necessary economic reforms here have been carried out at an enormous and unwarranted, human and social cost, not to mention the damage to democratic and legal structures. My fear is that such trends will be compounded if Labour were to lose the next Federal election.

The issue that could make the difference, in my view, is seizing the initiative on restoring Lake Pedder. This initiative would recapture the green vote, re-assert the power of the Commonwealth government over a short-sighted State government and powerful corporations like Comalco and attract international attention. It has far reaching symbolic power representing generational change, a shift from exploitation to conservation, from greed and stupidity to vision and reverence for our natural heritage.

Most importantly, it would restore (and it seems there is no doubt it can be achieved) one of the most gently beautiful places on the planet.

Yours sincerely,

Ron L Muller

## "THE PEDDER ROAD SHOW"

THE LAKE Pedder Road Show will be a travelling exhibition to tour capital cities and major centres. For large audiences it may be possible to arrange the Truchanas/Hope-Johnstone audiovisual or a similar presentation. It could have a photographic display to show Pedder as it was and videos. One short video (10 minutes or so) could be on the restoration proposal and perhaps another longer production could give more detail. Both could be used in schools as an adjunct to the secondary school education units for the HSC now in preparation. Media methods such as CD ROM could have application.

We need a few people who are prepared to work on these ideas or develop better ones to bring the Pedder story to the maximum number of Australians. If you have experience in the media field and would like to be involved in the project, please phone Brian Dodd on 03 435 5671 or fax 03 432 8466.

## Bob's book reprint

BOB BROWN is going to reprint his landmark book "Lake Pedder". The estimated reprint cost is \$25000. He plans to finance the reprint and is calling for interest free loans, donations and pre-purchase copies.

If you would like to help get this book back on the shelves and are able to assist with a loan or donation, please contact Helen Gee at Pedder 2000 Hobart.

## Pedder pennies

WE ARE in the process of centralising all membership details in Hobart. Membership is \$20 per calendar year. Those on the Tasmanian register are already paid up for 1995. For everyone else membership is now due in Hobart. Funds from subscriptions and the support of members are essential to our campaign.

\$500 for membership until the lake is restored; \$60 if you are able to afford it; \$20 normal membership; \$10 student. Please send your cheque to: Pedder 2000 130 Davey St Hobart Tasmania 7000 Australia.

## HOW TO CONTACT PEDDER 2000

HOBART (002) 24 0235. Leave a message We'll get back to you.

LAUNCESTON Helen Tait (003) 31 8389

BURNIE Arnold Rowlands (004) 31 2069

MELBOURNE Brian Dodd (03) 435 5671

SYDNEY Brigid Dowsett (ACF) (02) 247 4285

Other branches are requested to formalise details.



## JOIN OUR REGULAR MEETINGS

The HOBART Branch of Pedder 2000 meets informally every first and third Monday at Zanskar Cafe 39 Barrack Street, from 7 pm. All members and friends are welcome—join us for a cuppa or a meal. For more details, call (002) 24 0235. The MELBOURNE Branch meets every first Thursday of the month at ACF 340 Gore Street, Fitzroy at 7.30 pm. Ring the bell for entry.

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PATRONS Professor David Bellamy, Claudio Alcorso, Ida West, Max Angus

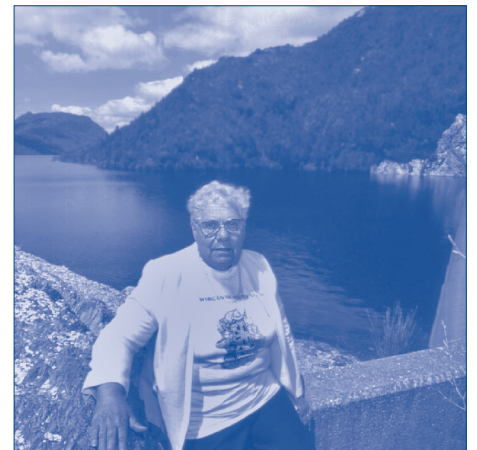
CONVENOR Bob Brown

CAMPAIGN COORDINATORS Helen Gee, Hilary Edwards

JOURNAL EDITORS Brian Dodd, Helen Gee

*Pedder will one day be reclaimed by the nation as a sacred place, a temple of the new world view. The quantum leap forward to an age of healing demands that we first revisit the early traditions that sanctified landscape and invested the land with spiritual powers. That is for us in Tasmania a full and honest appreciation of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture, a culture which preserved Lake Pedder for so long.*

HELEN GEE



Ida West, a Tasmanian patron of Pedder 2000, standing on the Serpentine Dam recently. Ida is an Aboriginal Elder, held in great esteem by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community.