

GREEN

MAGAZINE OF THE AUSTRALIAN GREENS

New Frontiers



Hope & change:
on the
campaign
trail with
Barack Obama

Can the Green
New Deal
really save
us and the
planet?



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crisis - the
real story of
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contents

- 2** editorial
- 3** letters to the editor
- 5** campaign updates
- 6** financial crisis
the current financial crisis is more 'crisis' for some than others. while some worry about their share portfolio, what happens to those who are already in poverty?
- 8** the green new deal
what is it, what does it mean and why is it so important?
- 11** investment in a green future
changing the world seems like a huge task. how can you start small and achieve big in the fight against climate change?
- 12** federal frontiers
what has party status meant thus far? what opportunities and challenges lie ahead for the party and how is balance of power really working?
- 16** the great american hope
ebony bennett takes to the united states to watch the presidential election campaign firsthand.
- 20** emissions targets
the government shocked everyone with a 5% emission target to tackle climate change. senator christine milne explains what it means for australia's climate future.
- 23** guest green
green mayor of leichhardt council, jamie parker, is this edition's guest green.
- 24** reviews/bits & pieces

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the australian greens wish to acknowledge that we are on indigenous ground – this land is the spiritual and sacred place of the traditional owners and their ancestors and continues to be a place of significance. further, we thank them for sharing this land with us and agree to respect their laws and lores.

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welcome to the new frontier

Welcome to our first edition of 2009, 'New Frontiers'. The Australian Greens are facing new frontiers everywhere we look, including this magazine, where there is a new editor and a new editorial board. On behalf of our members, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing editors Drew Hutton and Brian Hoeppe for the many fantastic issues they have provided us with, along with their contributors and team members. As we move forward with *Green magazine*, I hope we can continue their tradition of encouraging debate and participation within our community.

As 2008 drew to a close it saw the Australian Greens in a dramatically different position to where we were twelve months earlier. With over one million people voting Green in the Federal election, we increased our representation in the federal senate and formed part of the balance of power. As the year progressed, new challenges were met with new victories. We showed strong results in both state and local council elections. The year also saw the 2nd Global Greens Conference in Brazil, where we took the exciting step of agreeing to the formation of a Global Greens Secretariat to be based in Canberra.

For us as a party, and for all those involved in the green movement, these achievements are vital. They allow our carefully crafted policy platforms to be applied to legislation on all levels of government. Our representatives are gaining ground in instituting better practices, buoyed by numbers other political parties cannot ignore. Our increased vote, the greater

mobilisation of people to become involved in green issues, and more members in Parliament all add support to what we already knew: Australians care about our environment and social justice. The green movement is not a fad, it's a groundswell of change, emanating from all sections of our community. It cannot be ignored that all over the country, people have shown they trust the Australian Greens to represent their interests.

We face many new frontiers, especially in Government. This edition aims to inform, spark debate and encourage thought on how we will face them. From the Green New Deal to our role in seeing social justice is not forgotten in the economic crisis, these pages are dedicated to seeing that we face these frontiers with awareness and forward motion.

I hope you enjoy the edition, and encourage you to help us with the magazine's own new frontiers. On page four you will find details of our reader's survey, which we hope you will find the time to complete. It seems like a perfect time to take stock and find out how you feel about this resource. With those opinions in mind, we hope to build upon this fantastic base and create a magazine which further serves to meet the needs of our community. I'd also like to remind you that submissions for our next edition (or any edition for that matter) are always happily received. This is a space for diverse opinion and issues, so please get involved.

Happy reading

Lefa Singleton Norton - Editor

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I feel the article in *Green magazine*, Spring 2008, entitled "Dietary choices - global impacts" requires response. I do not disagree with the quantitative analysis presented. I agree that the numbers are concerning.

However, the article's concluding argument is spurious. It states, "If everyone were to [reduce their consumption of animal products], the worst impacts would be avoided and we could be well on the way to sustainability and an equitable use of the world's resources". This comment ignores evidence by social scientists and economists in order to provoke an emotional response.

The vast majority of people are dependent on markets for the consumption of goods which have high resource usage. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the behaviour of people within our markets to understand the population's consumption of these goods. Prices (in Australia) are not fixed and move according to volumes of goods and services which are supplied and the volumes demanded. This system works in a way which means maximum volumes are matched and there is little wasted. This is an efficient market.

Got something to say? Drop us a line at greenmag@greens.org.au



For example, if there was a reduction in the demand for beef (as advocated by the article), yet the ability of the market to continue supply remained the same, the price would fall in order to encourage people to buy the product. Those who previously could not afford this product now have access to purchase it at the reduced rate. The market has corrected to stabilise volumes traded, with lower prices altering the consumer habits of others, who expect to continue this consumption. More people now have access to consume higher resource intensive goods. Is this really an "equitable use of the world's resources"? Do we really want an increase in people exposed to these high resource usage goods, as opposed to the alternatives they were prepared to use previously?

In this scenario, the volume consumed remains constant over this initial change. This leads us to ask, is it the choices of individuals that will turn this problem around? Or is it a systemic change that will? I believe that broad systemic changes to our economy are required to deal with the problems we face.

Changing behaviour without changing the system will not have

the desired effect. This seems to be understood by many in the areas of stationary energy industry or transport, but the same arguments are not used for agriculture. We must pay attention to this inconsistency in economic policy.

AUSTIN LUND
via email



Robin Arnold is right to argue for the need to reduce world population growth. Such growth, particularly in developing nations, is a major cause of poverty.

It is relatively cheap and easy to reduce birth rates by providing family planning aid. Hundreds of millions of people may consider the use of birth control but lack access to it. Unfortunately, most foreign aid agencies largely ignore family planning.

The consequence of such neglect is exemplified by Ethiopia, whom, since a severe famine in the mid-1980s, have received large and ongoing amounts of international aid. However, almost no funding has gone into family planning, and over the last two decades Ethiopia's population has doubled. As a result, the country remains on the brink of famine, despite continued aid.

The Australian Greens policy sensibly advocates increased funding for family planning. The Rudd Government should be encouraged to lift family planning aid above its existing miniscule level.

Marie Stopes International Australia is one of the few aid organisations that concentrates on providing sexual and reproductive healthcare, and I urge people to support it.

TOM NILSSON
TAS spokesperson
SUSTAINABLE
POPULATION
AUSTRALIA
Sandy Bay TAS



I read with interest Rob Speirs' criticism of Green and the editor's response (*Green magazine*, Issue 26). Whilst I don't agree with the points Rob made, I do find the magazine a bit folksy or lacking in stimulating, thought provoking, well researched, less polemical or rhetorical articles. The Greens now garner perhaps 10% of the vote nationally, give or take a bit. I once wrote to Dr Clive Hamilton, executive director, The Australia Institute, in response to an article he wrote for Melbourne newspaper *The Age* suggesting he might like to join the Greens.



He responded with a lack of enthusiasm, saying that he did not believe that they could ever get much beyond 10% of the vote, and whilst they would perform a useful function with that level of support, would probably never make much additional headway.

For reasons of my own, I'm inclined to agree with him. I feel a key issue is the lack of broad based discussion on what it means to be green, including some of the fundamental philosophical issues, issues of principle, and discussions related to the limits to growth. There are four key principles that are integral to what it means to be green. Two of them, social justice and

ecological sustainability, can collide. From a social justice perspective, we might want to dramatically increase our refugee intake. From an ecological perspective, we might already be beyond our long term carrying capacity. Where is the sophisticated debate about how we can reconcile these types of difficulties?

For example, whatever happened to the limits to growth debate? Global economic growth for the last half century has averaged around 3%. This is a doubling of the global economy every 25 years, meaning, if it continues, that the global economy would be 256 times its current size in about 200 years. That's a lot

more stuff dug out of the ground, a lot more energy to turn it into stuff that we use, and a lot more waste and pressure on the environment. Global warming, something we're all talking about, is merely a symptom, the cause being consumption. But consumption is barely part of the debate within the Greens movement, (except to illustrate other points, or as an implied subtext) let alone the mainstream. In fact, whilst I find it difficult to understand why limits to growth is not part of mainstream debate, I am totally bemused that something about it isn't in every issue of Green. Whether or not my lack of economic credentials means that I am missing some point is not the issue. The point is we lack vibrant discussion and analysis.

Such discussions, I believe, enliven and enrich the Greens movement. What is the Greens long term vision for Australia and the world, and how do we get there? What would a "Green" world look like? I have read every issue of Green since issue one and apart from my state newsletter, it is the only hardcopy written material my membership buys me.

Whilst some of the issues I've raised are implicit, or talked about peripherally, I consider that there is insufficient 'meat'.

Now, this may not be the role of Green, but if not, where do we get it? It should be within the Greens movement, not in elite journal articles in academic libraries.

Yours truly,
LAWRIE HALL
Australia Greens Victoria -
Macedon Ranges

ED: Thank you, Lawrie, for continuing the debate on the role of *Green magazine*. We're interested to hear what all members think about this resource, and we encourage you to write a letter to the editor on any issue regarding *Green magazine* and its content. Letters are requested to be no longer than 400 words and will be edited for length. Please email them to greenmag@greens.org.au

Please also take the time to let us know what you think of the magazine by taking part in our 2009 readership survey. It's your opportunity to let us know what you feel we can change, improve or keep producing for you. ▲

Tell us what you think and win

We want to know what you think of *Green magazine*.

Visit www.greens.org.au/greenmagsurvey to enter, or call the national office on 1800 017 011 to have a copy of the survey sent to you.

Don't miss out on your chance to win vouchers to online stores such as Global Giving, Vitale Natural Skin Care and Ink & Spindle fabric and homewares. Also up for grabs are shopping bags from EnviroTrend, an assessment from Green Home Makeovers, gardening systems from Plant-A-Genda, treats from Desert Pea Skincare, gorgeous environmentally-friendly jewellery from Utopian Creations, various books on sustainability and politics and environmentally friendly cards from Earth Greetings and many more. There are goods totalling over \$1,000 for you to take home, and all you need to do is tell us your opinion of the magazine!

Got the urge to get involved in a few campaigns? Not sure what's going on around the country? Here are just a few suggestions to whet your activist appetites. For more information about other campaigns, visit www.greens.org.au

HAVE YOUR SAY ON AUSTRALIA'S PUBLIC TRANSPORT
Australia's first Senate Inquiry into Public Transport (started by the Greens) is seeking submissions from organisations and individuals until 27 February 2009.
For information visit
www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/rrat_ctte/public_transport/tor.htm

WELFARE QUARANTINING TRIALS
Income management trials for child protection and truancy are currently underway in parts of WA and the NT.

You can help get word out about these punitive, unfair methods.
For more information see
greensmps.org.au/content/stop-welfare-trials

SAVING THE MURRAY DARLING
Australia is experiencing a water emergency, especially in the Murray Darling Basin.
The Greens' Senate Inquiry into water management in the Coorong and Lower Lakes has revealed that the iconic wetlands and lakes can be saved from collapse.
For more information see
greensmps.org.au/content/saving-coorong-lower-lakes

THE PEOPLE PLAN FOR MELBOURNE
The Victorian Greens have a complete plan for Melbourne's ailing public transport network, which would see a rejuvenated, green city. With recent heatwaves crashing the existing system, this alternative plan is a bright way forward.
For more information see
www.thepeopleplan.org.au

GREEN COLLAR JOBS FOR QLD
The Queensland Greens have launched an ambitious campaign to green up the Sunshine State, creating thousands of green-collar jobs in Queensland by retrofitting homes for energy efficiency and investing in clean energy infrastructure.
The EASI-Q project will retrofit homes for better efficiency and build two new solar thermal plants to provide renewable energy.
For more information see
www.qld.greens.org.au

AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE TAX SYSTEM
There is a review underway now, and all Australians are welcome to have their say.
For more information see
www.taxreview.treasury.gov.au

FLORENTINE VALLEY WILDERNESS
Full of birds, marsupials and rare species, this ancient eucalypt forest is of World Heritage significance.
Environmental activists have been camped in the Florentine, attempting to stop the woodchipping. A large convoy of police raided the Florentine blockade to coincide with the beginning of logging season. The imminent logging operation there is a national disgrace.
For more information see
www.stillwildstillthreatened.org

social welfare in crisis

This is an edited version of the paper

'The impact of the global financial crisis on social services'.

A full version can be found at www.unitingcare.org.au

The current global financial crisis and its likely impact on the Australian economy will have an acute impact on the most disadvantaged members of society, as well as pushing increased numbers of low and middle income earners to seek the services of welfare agencies. Among the contributing factors are high rent or mortgage increases; fuel and food costs; utilities bills; medical fees; and childcare costs. Even during the recent period of buoyant economic conditions, agencies were reporting growing demand, and the emergence of a new clientele of 'mid-stream' wage earners facing severe financial stress.

The demand for social services is already rising and will rise substantially in the short-term. In many areas — examples include residential aged care, housing, homelessness and family relationship services — demand already outstrips the capacity of agencies to offer assistance. The services most immediately affected by deteriorating economic conditions are in employment, housing, financial and general counselling and emergency relief.

Low income households, especially in the bottom income quintile, generally have very low levels of household wealth holding, relying heavily on wage income. If these households do have an asset it is often their family home. Increasing job losses will severely impact on income streams and spending power including the capacity of low-income households to service mortgages. The potential result could be the loss of even the modest non-income economic assets held by low-income households.

A decade and a half of sustained economic growth has seen labour force participation reach historic highs and unemployment historic lows. Unemployment reached its lowest level in more than 30 years — just 4.1%. While such measures are instructive, suggesting strong prospects for jobseekers over recent years, they can mask underlying factors such as workforce withdrawal and underemployment — individuals who are working, but would prefer to be working more. In

these cases, financial stress may be experienced, despite the individual being classified as employed.

The strong overall picture of employment participation is not evident in communities living with multiple and concentrated disadvantages. Unemployment levels are significantly higher in these communities and existing employment support programs have not addressed the significant barriers people face when trying to get and keep a job — including accessing skills development, childcare, transport and support following placement in a job.

As economic growth falls, so too will demand for labour; consumer spending will slow and businesses defer investment plans. Compared with the quarter of a million jobs created in the year to June 2008, the Treasury forecasts just 80,000 new jobs in the year to June 2009. Reflecting this, it forecasts unemployment rising to 5% by the June quarter 2009 and 5.75% by the June quarter 2010.

As well as rising unemployment, there is likely to be a shift toward part-time and casual employment and away from full-time positions. As the economic outlook becomes increasingly uncertain, and with demand and output slowing, employers will look to the flexibility of casual and part-time workers to manage risk. While a part-time job is far preferable to no job at all, the pressure on certain households will be compounded by the fact that many of those who remain employed will be working fewer hours over the short term.

Less skilled workers are at higher risk of involuntary casual and part-time employment. These people will be disproportionately affected by increasing levels of casual and part-time work. Competition for jobs may also be greater as many older workers who had been planning to retire may defer retirement and those who are currently unemployed will face greater competition from recently redundant workers.

The forecast for Australia's economy paints a picture of slowing economic growth and rising unemployment coupled with falling inflation and declining interest rates. Invariably, however, different segments of the

The current financial crisis is more 'crisis' for some than others. With increased pressure on those already most in need, Australia's social services sector will inevitably see a rise in demand for support systems.

PIC CREDIT: FLICKR USER JEREMY HIGGS



economy and society will be affected in different ways. Some will be hit disproportionately hard.

Over the short-term, the greatest source of financial stress on mortgagors is likely to be the risk of unemployment. For renters, the pressures are likely to remain more acute. The benefits from falling interest rates will be markedly less. Inflating rents will have flow-on impacts on low income households who drop out of the private rental market and begin seeking access to already stretched emergency and public housing.

With key drivers of the recent acceleration in inflation including essential items such as education, health services, food and housing, it is evident that cost-of-living pressures on families have been mounting. This is a trend of particular significance to low-income households who spend a considerable proportion of their household budget (in some instances all) on essential items, leaving minimal scope to reduce expenditure in discretionary areas as conditions tighten.

The nature of the demands on social services is likely to change. With a slowing economy come new challenges for service providers and policymakers alike, as measures employed effectively during a time of economic expansion become increasingly inappropriate.

A number of agencies have noted that while they are operating over capacity, they necessarily focus on providing the essential services required to those with the currently most pressing needs. This means many clients with less urgent requirements cannot be served as effectively and that many preventative activities cannot be undertaken.

Incidence of severe financial stress can leave households vulnerable in several ways, forcing people to seek assistance in a number of forms. This adds considerably to the complexity of the pertinent issues.

For many of the 35% of households who are repaying mortgages, rising interest rates have presented a major financial challenge over recent years. Similarly, for the 27% of households who rent, rising rents (relative to income) have added to the increased incidence of 'housing stress'. In 2005-06, around 23% of households were

spending over 30% of their income on housing. For those who most recently bought houses, the risk of housing-related financial stress is particularly acute, with 62% of households who bought their first home in the past three years spending over 30% of their income on housing.

While the need for emergency relief is often driven by exogenous events, a major factor determining emergency relief requirements is the ability to access immediate funds. ABS data from 2006 indicate many individuals of all family structures would be unable to raise \$2000 within a week for something important. Having sufficient financial resources on hand to deal with unforeseen events can be challenging for households with a reliable income stream, let alone the unemployed or underemployed.

The capacity of the not-for-profit sector to provide those services which it directly finances has also been impacted by the financial crisis. While there is considerable diversity in the financial structure of different service providers, many have been heavily exposed to losses on financial markets. Providers who rely on investment earnings for operating revenue have been significantly affected, with their ability to deliver self-funded services considerably impeded.

The outlook for the Australian economy suggests at best a moderate slowdown and at worst, a more severe, drawn-out economic downturn. Regardless of which scenario eventuates, active policy responses will be needed by governments — at all levels, but particularly the federal — as part of a rational, counter-cyclical fiscal policy response. In addition, greater coordination will be needed among different levels of government, and between government and service providers, to ensure that the policy initiatives introduced are facilitated in the most optimal and effective way.

In addition to being the response of a genuinely civil society, high quality social services are an integral part of a productive economy. Investment in such services is a benefit not just to those in such desperate need of services, but also reduces long term social costs and enhances the overall productivity of the economy. ▲

the green plan that will save our skins



75 years since President Roosevelt launched a New Deal to rescue the US from financial crisis, a new group of experts in finance, energy and the environment have come together to propose a 'Green New Deal' to save the economy, the planet and life as we know it. But will it work? Chloe Harvey investigates.

With the developed world facing the very real threat of full-blown recession, a new movement could be rising from the ashes – one that involves massive public investment in clean, green energy to revive economic growth whilst also fighting climate change.

The 'Green New Deal' has leaders from U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to former U.S. Vice-President Al Gore arguing that industrialised countries can kill two birds with one stone – saving their crippled economies whilst also creating millions of “green collar” jobs, and investing in renewable, non-polluting industries.

Echoing U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's 'New Deal' to lift the USA out of the 1930s Great Depression, a Green New Deal seeks to rebuild the global economy based on the very Green four pillars of renewable energy, energy efficiency, clean alternative transport and protection of ecosystems. When you take a look at the state of the world after decades of industrialisation, it couldn't come at a better time.

Three distinct elements make up the Green New Deal: **Stabilisation of the financial system.**

The failure of the American Dream was made only too real to millions of middle-class Americans in the Wall Street crash and bailout of 2008. It was the failure of a financial system built on impossible accumulation of debt, a system built on the promise of speculation and multi-million dollar deals created out of thin air. Rather than the massive institutions existing behind the illusion of being too solid, too strong to fail, there must be a radical restructuring to the small scale economy.

To put it in an Australian perspective: if the investment bankers at NAB decide to flout restrictions (or very well operate within loose, inadequate regulations), and gamble a few billion dollars away on a lost venture, the impact is widespread and catastrophic. However, if a small, local business whose business loan comes from the community owned Bendigo Bank folds, the repercussions are relatively small, and absorbed by a community who are emotionally invested in their local town. The community owned bank may be an extreme example, but it has already proved to work effectively in the face of the big banks.

Adequate investment.

Roosevelt's New Deal involved huge sums of Government cash, designed to pump back into the economy and stimulate a new movement. We've already seen the Australian Government's huge stimulus package, doling out wads of cash to those most in need. These payments were designed to stimulate the buyer economy, with encouragement for recipients to go forth and spend their new cash. The high streets of Australia were to be directly cash-injected, increasing sales, driving up consumer confidence and balancing the slide. A similar investment in a new wave of environmental transformation of our energy, transport and building infrastructure would also have that effect, with the added bonus of being a long term, positive investment in the future economy.

In the UK, there are calls for the establishment of an oil legacy fund, similar to a highly successful Norwegian government initiative, paid for by a windfall tax on the profits of oil and gas companies. A dramatic increase in the costs of fossil fuels, raised to reflect their incredible cost

“Renewable energy technologies will enable us to continue to exist on this planet”

to the environment, would also generate revenue for the Deal, and create economic incentives that drive efficiency and bring alternative fuels to market. At the same time, care has to be taken to put in place safety nets to protect those most vulnerable to increased cost in food, fuel and goods. The very real problem of peak oil needs to be addressed, and should not be discounted. **Complete environmental transformation.**

The end goal of any plan is to produce a low-to-zero carbon economy. Significant investment would push us as a species away from a mindset of environmental destruction and shift us towards the more efficient, decentralised energy dependency that we must achieve to survive. A variety of renewable energy technologies will enable us to continue to exist on this planet, let alone allowing the planet to exist alongside us. The current mind block on most people's minds exists in the immediate requirements needed to effect massive change. The small steps mentality is laudable, sure, and every little bit DOES make a difference, but to increase that level of impact to a national, or international scale, would change the very way we live for the better.

Increasing our energy security through renewable means, investment in home power systems, increased efficiency and individual independence by making every building its own power station will require a huge workforce. A shift towards training and development, research and development in new, green technologies will create sustainable industries that are dependent only on production and upkeep of those systems.

Sadly, however, we are already seeing the signs of our political systems worldwide putting the stops on a grand overhaul. President Obama said in a campaign debate that the credit crunch could slow his plans for a \$150 billion clean energy program, designed to reduce dependence on foreign oil and create up to five million green collar jobs. Research shows that new investments in renewable energy will decline by 4 percent this year compared with 2007 due to the crisis. Germany, Europe's biggest economy (and one country that appeared very passionate about the Deal), has allocated just a fraction of its own €50 billion stimulus package for measures to renovate buildings and reduce emissions.

Our own Greens policies of *Re Energising Australia*, alongside *Energy Efficiency Access and Savings Initiative (EASI)*, supported by a range of new financial mechanisms and ecological tax incentives, aim to not only accelerate Australia's climate change response but to stimulate economic growth through local employment and training, new domestic industries, and an expansion of the manufacturing sector.

The ultimate vision is of a nation where all homes are retrofitted with government-supported solar panels which are easily paid back by the consumer thanks to a future of heavily reduced electricity bills, where drought-stricken farmers are transformed into large-scale energy producers, and where major infrastructure decisions are driven by suitability and need, rather than wheeling, dealing and dodgy decisions.

As our own Greens Senator Christine Milne has said: *"In the coming decades, either we will have successfully reshaped our political and economic structures and be heading towards a new healthy, happy, prosperous and safe future with an environment under repair and a strengthened civil society, or we will have chosen to stick with the current model which is reshaping our environment and climate in ways that will lead to system collapse, huge population movements and widespread conflict. The choice is ours - we can make a change for the better, but we have to make it now."* ▲



PIC CREDIT: FLICKR USER DAVID NIKON/SCANON

Take the first step in greening up your own office or business

A basic energy saving checklist for businesses both large and small:

1. Install sensor lighting and turn off all lights and appliances at night, on weekends and over holiday periods;
2. Reduce heating or cooling by two degrees at the thermostat;
3. Install shades and blinds on windows to cut cooling costs;
4. Only purchase minimum five-star energy rated appliances;
5. Turn off all non-essential electronic equipment at the power point when not in use. Stand-by mode can use just as much energy as when in use;
6. Stop photocopying and faxing — scan and email instead;
7. Upgrade desktops to laptops (they use half the energy) and dispose of old PCs responsibly;
8. Use low energy flat panel monitors and carefully dispose of old CRTs;
9. Check all appliances with a simple meter to identify power-hogging devices;
10. Switch to green power to support the alternative energy sector.

Switching to greenpower is an excellent way to send a message to our big energy providers that they must reduce their dependency on coal.

investment in a greener future

Drastic changes to our environment have altered the way we think about the world in which we live. Nicholas Bernhardt looks at some of the ways we can easily make a difference.

Global warming, extreme weather, pollution, toxic waste, deforestation, species extinction and water shortages are now mainstream issues — most of which are widely accepted to have been caused by human activity.

Some sobering Australian facts: Over the past 13 years in Australia, 12 have been the hottest years on record; Australia is the highest per capita CO2 emitter in the world; note: some publications claim that the US holds this unenviable record — whichever way you look at it we are one of the worst if not the worst emitters in the world.

A recent survey by the Australian Industry Group (2007) found that only ten percent of companies reported they have the know-how to deal with climate change, yet 80 percent want to do something about it.

Taking action

Using our resources more efficiently and taking action to alleviate global warming does not imply a threat to our economy. The only industries threatened by the green movement are the big polluters — big oil and mining companies and other corporations with fossil fuel vested interests.

There is no economic and social risk from action.

In fact, a study by the University of Massachusetts-Amherst found that a \$US100 billion green investment package would create two million jobs — nearly four times more jobs than spending the same amount of money within the oil industry, and would reduce the unemployment rate to 4.4 percent over two years.

The solution

The solution lies in increased energy efficiency and increased investment in renewable energy sources. This will create jobs and actually boost our economy.

Major risks of inaction on climate change include:

1. Regulatory risk: governments have or will impose regulations, taxes and charges for all forms of pollution;

2. Physical risk: damage from bad weather and rising sea levels;
3. Competitive risk: losing customers to more eco-savvy competitors;
4. Litigation risk: potential law suits from investors unaware of their exposure to companies at risk from climate change or law suits against large polluters;
5. Reputation risk: loss of customers and market respect towards companies taking no action.

We cannot leave action on climate change to government regulators. The Government Green Paper is a step in the right direction, however we must take it upon ourselves to do more.

Now that most of us agree we must take action, what can businesses actually do? Office-based businesses don't produce much CO2 right? Wrong.

The University Of Melbourne recently published a study that stated office buildings produce more CO2 than cars. This is because of the high electricity consumption required to power buildings and the appliances contained within.

A stroll through any of our major CBDs at 11pm on a Saturday night confirms that most companies are still wasting money hand over fist. Most buildings are lit up like a Christmas tree — wasting electricity and generating heat with a very high likelihood of most computers also having been left on — generating even more heat and waste. As if this were not bad enough, the air conditioners (also on for no apparent reason) have to work overtime to compensate for this unnecessary heat. A company can easily shave at least one third of its energy bill by switching off overnight, at weekends and over the holiday period.

Switch off

The message is clear: The single most effective change for businesses to take action is to switch off. Energy use from lighting and appliances within buildings accounts for the major proportion of greenhouse gas emissions. ▲

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green action in the senate

With the new makeup in the Senate, the Greens now share balance of power alongside two independents. Bradley Fry analyses what 2009 could hold for our federal representatives.

The Australian Greens have entered a new era in politics. We have emerged as Australia's third political force. The Greens have more than 100 local government representatives, 26 state parliamentarians and now, with five Senators, we qualify as an official party in the national parliament. Our party is growing and this year will exceed 10,000 members. As Bob Brown outlined at his recent Press Club Address, now is the time for Labor to truly recognise the will of the 1.17 million people who voted Green at the last election, and support key Greens priorities.

On a federal level, there is much to be achieved. There are 76 seats in the Senate. Half plus one – 39 – is required for legislation to pass. The Coalition, with 37 seats, will need two extra votes to pass its own measures or just one extra vote to have 38 and block government bills. Labor, which has 32 Senate seats, will need an extra seven votes to get its way. There are five Greens and two independents. This means that the Greens have a shared balance of power – requiring lots of debate, discussion and negotiation if Green ideas are to flourish. Our representatives are dedicated to having the greatest impact possible with this opportunity.

These are the priorities of the Australian Greens in parliament;



Renewable energy feed-in laws

Senator Christine Milne's Bill to create renewable energy feed-in tariffs, such as those already proving viable in Germany, will enable people who generate renewable power for their own use to offset initial infrastructure costs. In some cases, this has the potential to generate an independent revenue stream. For example, with solar panels on their shearing shed or home, users could be paid four times the rate paid to coal generators, when selling this planet-saving power back into the grid.



Saving our native forests

An end to the wood-chipping of native forests and the clearance of Australia's wildlife-filled woodlands. This measure alone could cut our nation's greenhouse gas emissions by more than ten per cent, according to Australian Greenhouse Office data. As Sir Nicholas Stern pointed out at the National Press Club last year, ending deforestation is the most immediate and effective way to help save the Earth from catastrophic warming. Allowing our natural forests to grow to full maturity may soon be more profitable than logging.



Ending the Northern Territory Intervention

Senator Rachel Siewert's amendment to restore the Racial Discrimination Act and remove the exemption the Howard Government gave itself when it intervened in the Northern Territory Aboriginal communities. Those communities deserve enormous assistance, but not with racist policies.



Same-sex equality

Senator Sarah Hanson-Young has been working hard to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sexuality from all statutes, including the Australian Marriage Act. Whilst we have seen significant changes in this area, with the passing of the *Same Sex Omnibus Bill* by the Senate late last year, the rights of same-sex couples to marry are a glaring omission, and one that must be rectified.



Fair maternity and paternity leave

After 11 years under the Howard Government, Australia is one of the rich world's worst performers in ensuring parents have good amounts of time with their babies. It is time no one can ever recover. Countries such as Sweden ensure that parents get 16 months leave. So should Australia.



Our new Senators

In the 2007 election, we gained two new Senators to our Federal team; Sarah Hanson-Young from South Australia, and Scott Ludlam from Western Australia.

A peace and environmental activist with a background in sustainability policy and graphic design, Scott's work has spanned issues as diverse as climate change, globalisation, energy market reform, Aboriginal land rights, preventing uranium mining and creating a nuclear-free Australia.

Sarah is the youngest person ever elected to the Senate, and the youngest woman elected in the Federal Parliament's history. Sarah has worked in the fields of human rights and community activism for many years, including a four-year stint as SA/NT Campaign Manager for Amnesty International.



No nuclear dumps

Senator Scott Ludlam is calling on Labor to uphold its election promise to not dump radioactive waste on Aboriginal communities and the people of the Northern Territory, by repealing the *Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Act 2005*. Labor voted against this legislation saying, quite rightly, that it was "extreme, arrogant, heavy-handed, draconian, sorry, sordid, extraordinary and profoundly shameful". The Greens will assist and support Labor in repealing it.



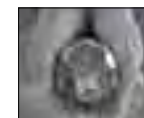
Abolishing the ABCC

The last election became a referendum over *Work Choices*, the failed industrial relations overhaul of the Howard Government. But while Australia voted to have fairer workplaces and equitable working conditions, Labor has still refused to budge on abolishing the unfair Australian Building & Construction Commission. Last year, Senator Rachel Siewert's Bill to abolish the ABCC was referred to committee for review, but even with a damning report outlining the coercive powers of the commission, the ALP have ruled out any closure. The Greens will continue to push for its immediate disbandment.

"The Greens are working for an environmentally sound and just economy"

The view from Mount Ainslie, Canberra.

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Extend foreign aid

Holland puts 0.8% of its GDP into overseas aid, which is a potent way of countering terrorism. Why has Australia, under Labor, dropped its sights to just 0.5% of GDP, and that not until 2015 – at least three terms of government away? The world needs more aid to alleviate poverty and gross injustice. In this age where \$1 trillion is spent on armaments each year, the Rudd government's aid projections require a substantial lift.



Right to dignified life and death

Dying with dignity can only be ensured by allowing the individual to be in control – not by that troubled, obsessive minority which advocates leaving people to suffer. Senator Bob Brown's Bill, now before the Senate, will return the right of the elected territorial assemblies in Darwin and Canberra to legislate for death with dignity.



Sustainable communities

Senator Scott Ludlam has been pursuing a shift in focus to deliver a portion of infrastructure funding to support sustainable communities, including fast, efficient mass transit and affordable housing. His plan to implement a light rail network for his home town of Perth is receiving wide support.



Fighting climate change

Australia and the globe is in the midst of a financial and environmental crisis – and make no mistake, the two are linked. Like the majority of Australians horrified at the Federal Government's measly 5% target for reducing carbon pollution, the Greens will be doing everything possible to make sure Australia's response leads the world in combating climate change.



Social Justice in a time of financial crisis

As the global financial crisis bites and tens of thousands of people are thrown onto the dole queues, the Greens will honour our social justice aims and be a voice for the poorest and most needy. We will be there to highlight the needs of low-income Australians hit hard by the global crisis such as pensioners, the homeless, self-funded retirees, the disabled, students and carers.

The Greens' movement also extends far beyond the walls of Canberra. The Australian Greens are part of the Global Greens movement, and our role in the Senate is supported by a powerful base of Greens members and voters. Together we are working for an environmentally sound and sustainable economy based on four key principles: renewable energy, energy efficiency, clean transport and ecosystem protection. ▲



The Australian Senate Chamber

PIC CREDIT: FLOKOR USER ASCHAF

the obama revolution

The American people have voted for change, but it was the campaign that really captured the hearts and minds of the nation. Ebony Bennett was there when Obama claimed victory.

I was one of the millions of people who huddled in front of a TV instead of on the steps of Congress in Washington D.C. to witness the inauguration of Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States of America on January 20th 2009.

But just a few months ago, on November 4th 2008, I was one of thousands of people who poured onto the streets of DC celebrating Obama's election as America's first black President, following Obama's electrifying acceptance speech in Chicago.

In this article I hope to give you a sense of the campaign and to outline some of the things I learned that could be useful to the Australian Greens.

The scenes of jubilation on election night were no different to those on Inauguration Day. Many people, myself included, shed tears of joy during Obama's acceptance speech on election night, embracing total strangers in bear hugs and cheering raucously at its conclusion.

I was in Washington D.C. on the last leg of a State Department sponsored tour, on which I was fortunate enough to be the Australian Greens representative.

Over two weeks our unlikely group (consisting of four Labor staffers, four Liberals, a National and myself) met with lobby groups, campaign volunteers, polling companies, political staffers and attended press conferences and rallies.

The tour began in the liberal haven of San Francisco, which I was delighted to find looked exactly as it does in the movies (in fact, a vague sense of familiarity accompanied me around most American cities I visited). But the campaign stop was the headquarters of extreme Republican conservative Dean Andal's congressional campaign.

Andal holds the distinguished honour of being the only State Assembly member to vote against expanding

the legal definition of rape to include situations in which women are unable to resist because they are intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.

I introduced myself to two phone-banking volunteers, who turned out to be religious conservatives.

'You're from Australia?' asked the woman on my left, 'I heard they took your guns away. Is that right? Who did that?' she demanded. I explained to the women that the conservative government had overwhelming public support to reform our gun laws in the wake of a tragic massacre. Dismayed they couldn't persuade me that more guns make society safer, the conversation quickly turned to whether I had Jesus in my life, Obama's terrorist links, gay marriage and abortion (or 'genocide' as the kindly-looking older woman on the right described it).

Both women spoke fervently about why Obama would make a terrible president and were effusive in their praise of Sarah Palin, but neither even mentioned McCain until I specifically asked them. This was the case with most Republicans with whom I spoke. To me, this was the Republicans' biggest problem. Republican voters were motivated by fear of Obama, Republican volunteers were energised by Palin — but to both groups McCain was just an afterthought.

Unsurprisingly, the 'Sacramento for Obama' grassroots campaign office was a hive of activity when we visited. Obama posters adorned the walls. T-shirts, bumper stickers and buttons were for sale at the front desk. They were even selling 'Teacakes for Obama'.

Long-time volunteer Mark Billingsley told us that more than 1.2 million calls had been made from California to battleground states in the days preceding our visit. At least 25 people were crowded into the small office; each was armed with a call sheet sent direct from the Chicago head office and was talking to a voter on a phone.



PIC CREDIT: FLOKX USER STEVE RHODES

Supporters line the streets in Lincoln, Nebraska



PIC CREDIT: FLICKR USER ALEXANDRA MATZKE

The whole thing operated like clockwork. Chicago head office identified and provided contact details for the voters who needed to be targeted and the grassroots offices provided the volunteers to call them or visit them.

Resources were also accumulated and used strategically. Mark told us how more than 10,000 calls were made in two hours — at no cost to the Obama campaign — when 500 rally attendees were asked to use their own mobiles to phone bank. Ten thousand calls for free!

He said that the volunteers in the Sacramento and Los Angeles grassroots offices had campaigned almost exclusively in battleground states from the moment Obama won the California primary, phoning and door-knocking in states like Nevada, Colorado and Ohio.

It also became apparent that non-compulsory voting is the reason for the most dramatic difference between American and Australian campaigns. In the United States, Parties must initially register people to vote, but then they also have to Get Out The Vote (GOTV), i.e. make sure all the registered voters actually turn up at the ballot box on election day.

The motto of the campus Democrats GOTV campaign in Orlando, Florida wasn't 'Yes, we can' but 'Yes, we can' as students were shepherded to the ballot box by minivan for early voting.

And of course, the most obvious and talked about success of the Obama campaign was raising tens of millions of dollars through lots of small donations from ordinary

Americans. This is clearly a technique that a grassroots party like the Australian Greens could benefit from.

The Obama campaign also recruited, utilised and managed its volunteers extremely effectively. For example, volunteers were encouraged to speak to voters about what had personally drawn them to Obama's campaign, rather than try to answer policy questions in detail. With hundreds of thousands of volunteers, this simple strategy avoided mixed or incorrect policy messages and allowed volunteers to connect on a personal level with voters.

From California we travelled to the battleground state of Florida for the final days of the campaign, where we were lucky enough to see Palin, Biden and Obama at rallies over three consecutive days.

The Palin rally was quite an experience.

I saw a total of two African-Americans in the crowd, one of whom was our tour guide. Country music played for hours while waiting for Palin to arrive. 'Jay the Contractor' held up a sign which read "They can't take my gun, my religion or my bulldozer", while security removed another sign which read "Obama bin Lyin".

Despite disagreeing with everything she said Sarah Palin was amazing to watch. Her assured delivery could not have been further from her cringe-worthy interview with Katie Couric, but when she shook hands with the crowd to the tune of 'Redneck Woman' it was pretty clear her only role was to fire up the Republican base, not to attract independent voters or Hillary supporters, as some commentators had asserted.

The mood of the Obama rally in Jacksonville — where the crowd danced to Kanye West, Aretha Franklin and Stevie Wonder — was far more upbeat.

A young Iraq veteran beside us in the crowd was optimistic, despite telling us how more than 27,000 votes from Jacksonville were 'lost' in 2000. 'Get over it, they told us,' he said. He, along with about 80% of the crowd, had voted early. But the Democrats were not taking any chances this time around. Early voters were asked to make sure all their friends and neighbours had voted and the crowd was told they could NOT text in their vote, as some people had been informed. They were also reminded that if they were standing in line at 7pm they could legally cast their vote. 'Don't let anyone tell you otherwise' said the speaker.

When Obama came to the stage the crowd went nuts. It was like being at a rock concert. He gave his standard stump speech, but standing in the crowd of tens of thousands, it was easy to get swept up in the moment.

In his tone, rhythm and intonation, Obama's delivery is almost that of a gospel preacher and seeing him speak is an experience I'll be re-telling to people until I'm old and grey.

On reflection, the more I learned about the American electoral system, the more I was amazed any Americans vote at all.

Ballot papers include not just the Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates, but nominees for the Senate, Congress, the Judiciary (!) and county

supervisors as well as for things like the School Board or the Soil and Water Conservation Board. Almost every position you can think of is elected, including dog catchers and electoral officials. Despite this, distrust of elected officials was virulent. The notion of 'independent' also seemed to mean 'equal numbers of Republicans and Democrats'.

On top of that, ballot papers could also contain anywhere from two to a dozen amendments to the state constitution, such as the gay marriage bans approved in California and Florida. Both parties use these amendments to raise issues which inspire their supporters to vote, force their opponent to spend money and time campaigning, but don't encourage supporters of their opposition to vote. Republicans have traditionally been more effective at this but the Democrats seem to be learning.

The global financial crisis and health care dominated the campaign issues discussed. However, President Obama has clearly made tackling climate change and greening the American economy a priority for his administration. His commitment to creating 5 million green-collar jobs sets a clear challenge for Kevin Rudd.

I've already found the tour useful professionally, but personally it was one of the most memorable and rewarding experiences I am ever likely to have and I'd like to conclude by thanking the Australian Greens for selecting me for the honour and privilege of representing the Party. ▲



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white paper is a white flag on climate change

With climate change as one of the greatest challenges we face, the Government stunned many with their low emissions reduction target. Senator Christine Milne offers a brief overview of the current issue, and the repercussions of the Government's betrayal of our climate future.

“The 5% target emissions reduction target Prime Minister Rudd announced is completely globally irresponsible”

The release in December 2008 of the Rudd Government's climate change white paper is a clear demonstration that this Government is intent on playing politics with climate change without actually doing anything about it. This puts the Greens in a vital political position as the debate develops both inside and outside Parliament.

The useless emissions reduction target and self-defeating design of Labor's scheme tells only half the story. The Government pre-empted the announcement by throwing half a billion dollars at expanding coal infrastructure in the Hunter Valley, and followed it up with a badly-designed incentive scheme for renewable energy that will ensure it does not grow beyond a marginal player to challenge the dominance of the coal sector.

The Age newspaper's editorial put it clearly:

“Each time the Government announces a major policy initiative on energy and climate policy, it has managed to convey the impression that a politically convenient compromise has been preferred to policy that might actually encourage fundamental changes in energy use.” (18 December, 2008)

What we need now is transformative policy to turn Australia from a highly polluting resource-based economy into a carbon neutral society based around our natural assets of sun, wind, wave and clever, innovative, forward-thinking people. Instead, the white paper delivered a policy structure that pretends to encourage change while doing everything it can to protect the status quo.

It does this in two fundamental ways – by setting an extremely weak target and by shielding as many relevant groups as possible from the impact of the scheme through free permits, tax cuts and cash handouts.

The 5% target emissions reduction target Prime Minister Rudd announced is completely globally irresponsible. Instead of setting a precedent of a country willing to put its best foot forward and play its responsible role on the world stage, it takes us back

to the bad old days of special pleadings from every country. To add insult to injury, Australia will go into the Copenhagen negotiations with a fixed position – no target stronger than 15% – which is contrary to the spirit of the process and can only serve to undermine global progress.

If other countries follow Rudd's lead, Australia's 5% target is consistent only with a plan to see greenhouse gases go beyond 550 parts per million in the atmosphere (some say 650 ppm), a recipe for runaway climate change and global catastrophe. If we are to have any reasonable chance of avoiding runaway heating, Australia would need to reduce emissions by at least 40% below 1990 levels by 2020, on our way to building a zero emissions economy as soon as feasible.

Importantly, a 40% target would not see Australia taking a lead. It is equivalent only to us playing a reasonable and equitable role in the global emissions reduction effort. A truly ambitious global agreement – a plan to pull out all stops to prevent catastrophe by reducing carbon well below 450 ppm – would see Australia taking on an even more stringent target.

Beyond the target level, the scheme's design is fundamentally flawed. The whole point of emissions trading is to drive emissions reductions and behavioural change by shifting investment signals from polluters to clean options. The price signal caused by polluters having to buy permits provides the stick, while the sale of permits delivers large amounts of cash which the Government can use as a carrot. By investing that cash in energy efficiency, public transport, switching to renewable energy, stopping logging and assisting communities that will need to readjust, the Government would help people reduce both emissions and the increased carbon costs they would face.

This scheme, on the other hand, gives the biggest polluters almost all of their permits free, neutering the price signal to them, and then uses the drastically reduced cash flow to neutralise the price signal for everybody else by delivering tax cuts and increased

welfare payments. Only a tiny proportion of the revenue raised by the scheme will be used to reduce people's carbon liability by reducing their carbon emissions.

50% of all revenue raised will go to shielding polluters from the scheme's impact through free permits and, what's worse, this is projected to rise over time! 47% will go to shielding householders from the impact through the short-sighted mechanism of cash handouts instead of the long-sighted approach of energy efficiency to reduce costs and pollution. A measly 3% of the scheme's revenue will actually go towards helping anyone reduce emissions and driving the new renewable energy and energy efficiency revolution.

This was a tremendous lost opportunity. By investing the billions of dollars raised through putting a price on polluters into emissions-reducing options, we could have had twice the bang for our buck, building a sustainable future through a "Green New Deal". We could have rolled out energy efficiency in homes, commercial buildings and factories across the country. We could have paid to roll out intelligent networks and

to take the electricity grid out to the new renewable energy hotspots that should be the focus of our new, zero emissions energy infrastructure. We could have done this while still leaving money to increase welfare payments to meet the cost-of-living increases that will come with both climate change and action to prevent it.

There are plenty more flaws with this scheme, not least the short-sighted decision to completely shield the transport sector from any impact and to actively prevent 'additional' activities – the scheme's emissions cap will also act as a floor, meaning that any actions people take voluntarily to reduce their emissions will simply make it cheaper for big polluters to meet the target, rather than 'adding' its impact on top of what polluters have to do.

The Rudd Government has failed this critical test of leadership. It has betrayed all those who voted in 2007 for a Government that would take climate change seriously. The Greens, however, have not forgotten and will not give up. We will do everything we can in the Senate and on the streets to ensure that this scheme is "greened up". ▲



Protesters gather outside Parliament House, Canberra



Jamie Parker

Mayor of Leichhardt Council NSW
Cr Birrabirragal/Balmain Ward

It is said there is no such thing as an overnight success in the music world. It often takes years of playing in small venues with even smaller crowds before the musician can 'come out of nowhere.' And so it is for The Greens in Leichhardt!

As a Councillor, and for our local group, there have been hundreds of meetings with residents, press releases, stalls and letter-boxing. These efforts have taken us over a decade from one Councillor to an effective majority.

Our success is the result not just of our activities, but the content of our action and our efforts to 'do politics differently'.

I was elected as the first Green on Leichhardt Council almost ten years ago. That term was four and a half years of struggling to get even a seconder for a motion!

In 2004 I was relieved to be joined by another three Greens Councillors.

The support for our work over that term led to our amazing results at the September 2008 NSW local elections. We received double the ALP vote and achieved close to 50% of the total vote with 6 out of 12 councillors.

We conducted exhaustive election campaigns (including our fantastic volunteers letter-boxing the electorate three times) but really, we reaped the rewards of the work we had put in in the preceding years.

In Leichhardt we have focused on the four Greens principles of grass roots democracy, peace and non violence, economic and social justice, and ecological sustainability.

Locally we have expressed these values in the ways we have conceptualised the Council. For we Greens, our goal has been to build a council that is a champion of the local community. Of course we need constantly to improve our service delivery, but we need to do so much more than that.

We need genuinely to embody active citizenship and participatory democracy - to give the community a voice, to inspire and to lead. We want Council to be far more than a passive apolitical service organisation; especially as the state government works to roll back the rights of citizens on environment and planning issues.

In our local context we have pursued these goals in three ways:

1. Transparency and Accountability - we have abolished the fees for freedom of information requests and have been committed to including residents' voices through Council-funded precinct committees and open public meetings on key issues.
2. Inclusiveness - respecting the input of all parties and residents and where possible seeking compromise.
3. Community leadership - working with residents to support campaigns which start with public meetings to bring together key experts, the community and Council on specific Council issues and wider issues like public transport and privatisation.

We have always been careful not to get bogged down in the bureaucratic functions of the Council with meetings and committees as so many politicians fall into, but instead to include the local group members and community in every step we take.

We have made great advances in reducing Council's carbon footprint, supporting appropriate development and heritage, and acting as strong advocates for public transport.

In working to build an open and ethical forum for Council's interaction with its community, we want to demonstrate the best in representative democracy, and to prefigure the kind of inclusive and accountable democracy we would like to see in other spheres of government.

As residents see the effective role The Greens plays in local communities, more and more are turning to our vision of doing politics differently.

In Leichhardt, I believe residents are appreciating that we can be more than just responsible managers of the Council and that our actions match what we say about putting the citizen and environment at the centre of decision-making. This grassroots approach acts as a counter balance to the power of the bureaucracy, the development industry and other governments. We look forward to building on our success in doing politics differently - by being inclusive, transparent and effective. ▲

CR JAMIE PARKER
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A LONG TIME COMING
- EVAN THOMAS

For 12 months prior to American elections, *Newsweek* assigns reporters to shadow the campaigns of the Republican and Democratic candidates. This unprecedented access is allowed under the strict condition that no information is published until after the presidential election. The reporters are able to attend confidential meetings, go beyond the daily news cycles and focus on the key moments from inside the respective camps.

Given the hype and groundswell regarding the Obama campaign, it's no surprise that *A Long Time Coming* is an interesting read. The material was always going to be compelling. There are insights into key decisions and a brisk narrative of two very different campaigns. It's hard to fault the book in its scope, or

ability to take us on the journey. Unfortunately, its tone echoes the general sense of awe and gravity that has accompanied the coverage of the Obama campaign. There are fresh stories, but the historical significance seems to be at the forefront. It is as though there is no moving past the story already created, no way through the myth. It fails to deliver the expected *Newsweek* insights.

Essentially, *A Long Time Coming* seems preoccupied with the gravity of this campaign. The reader can't help feeling as though they have heard the story before, even with its new information. It is perceptive, distilled picture which offers a solid account. An enjoyable read, but one that fails to stride into the new ground such access could have delivered.

Simon Hassington

The Spirit of Banjo

Stephen Whiteside

Banjo climbed down off his horse, and slowly scratched his head. He looked around. He rubbed his chin. Then this is what he said.
"The country's changed since I last rode upon this sun-parched plain.
Looks like all you fellows here could badly use some rain.

"I can see how much you're suff'ring in the battle to survive. You'll have to make some changes if you really want to thrive. That cotton soaks up water, and what about that rice? I know these crops are tempting, but they come at such a price.

"You're farming sheep and cattle still? I can't believe that's true!
Wouldn't it be smarter if you all ate kangaroo?
And some misguided souls I see still try to make a go Of land that's almost desert. 'Struth, I thought by now you'd know

"That this place isn't England in the Southern Hemisphere. Maybe there are just too many people living here.

The rivers all are dying, and the beautiful Coorong. Can't you see so much of what you're doing here is wrong?

"What's that you say? I've let you down? My words are a disgrace?
I've turned up unexpected, and I've shown another face?
I've trashed my own tradition, and I've made you all feel bad?
I'm a rotter? I'm a bounder? I'm a stinking, low-down cad?

"Well, I'm still your own dear Banjo, but I think in truth you'll find
When circumstances change it's only smart to change your mind;
A little self-analysis, and courage, too, it takes
To really be successful, and to learn from your mistakes.

"But I reckon you can do it, and I see you've made a start. You all drive 'round in motor cars. You don't use horse and cart.
So don't judge me too harshly, and consider what I say."
With that, he climbed back on his horse, and slowly rode away. ▲

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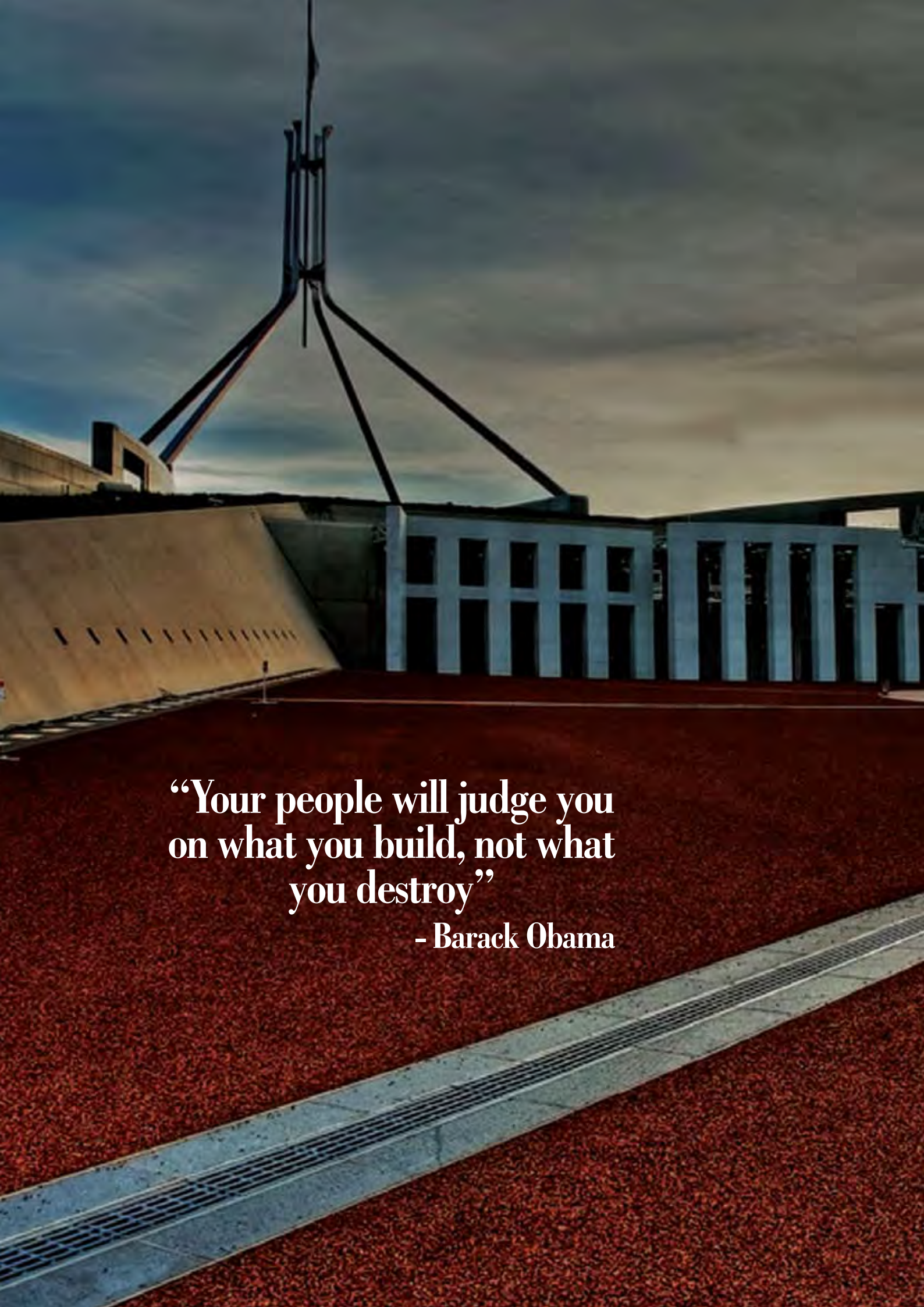
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