

## AUSTRALIAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT

### ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Since land for production and land for natural beauty are essential to humanity's material and spiritual welfare and since land is not the product of any person's labour, natural justice demands that the land be regarded as the natural heritage of all people.

Therefore all occupiers of land hold it in trust for the whole nation and have a duty not to misuse it or overexploit it, since such actions affect the well being of others, both present and future.

The nation, therefore, has every right to ensure that, in all areas, a proper balance is kept between development and the preservation of the natural environment.

To this end democratic committees will be established to reserve, repossess or maintain at least 10,000 hectares in each 100,000 hectares for national park purposes. Further, these parks will be joined to each other by ribbons of undeveloped public land at least 100 metres wide.

Effective measures will also be taken to protect our fishing resources by creating non-fishing marine parks, joined by non-fishing ocean strips and by a system of fish licensing rental payments.

In addition, selected areas of both land and sea of outstanding importance for the preservation of species, unique natural beauty, etc., will be acquired for the nation.

In the exploitation of natural forests, 100 hectares will be left untouched for every 100 hectares exploited, using a chequerboard pattern of conservation.

For the reasons previously given, the nation has the right to ensure also that privately occupied land, as well as public land, is not over-developed or over-exploited. Thus, for example, it would be good to insist that for every urban building development at least half the ground space be set aside for landscaping.

The A.R.M. is fully aware of the vital importance, both for farming and the ecology, of natural assets such as wildlife, undergrowth, trees, soil and flora.

Trees and undergrowth, for example, play an essential part in reducing droughts and floods by retaining ground moisture, creating rainfall and preventing soil erosion caused by wash off in times of heavy rain. Trees and undergrowth also prevent the blowing away of soil in times of heavy wind.

Again, wildlife can prevent the destruction caused to trees and crops by locusts and other insect pests. This is because native ground animals eat the earth dwelling larvae of these pests whilst birds eat the ground dwelling and tree dwelling larvae and eggs. All such wildlife needs the protection of trees and undergrowth.

Finally, the shade and shelter provided by trees and undergrowth significantly increases the milk yield of dairy cattle and the meat yield of beef cattle.

Therefore the A.R.M. will legislate to ensure that on all farms every 100 hectares contain 20 hectares of trees and undergrowth. To encourage farmers to implement this policy, the land set aside will be exempted from site revenue contribution. This concession, together with the abolition of taxes on earned income and

the abolition of taxes on farming materials and equipment, will give farmers every encouragement to restore or preserve trees and undergrowth and to avoid the over exploitation of their land. It will also allow them to conform to regulations preventing the destruction of the land by excessive grazing with sheep, goats and cattle.

#### BURN OFF POLICY

The natural undergrowth of the Eucalypt Forests is amongst the densest, most varied and most beautiful in the world. This vegetation is almost totally destroyed in our state forests by the policy of yearly burn offs for fire prevention purposes.

In addition, this policy removes the food and shelter of many native animals and also, because of the smoke and accidental fires causes much inconvenience and even distress to town and country people. Further, the lack of ground vegetation causes fast rain water wash off which is an important contributing cause of erosion, floods and drought.

Therefore an A.R.M. government will insist that state forestry departments put an end to burn offs and instead

1. Create a network of fire breaks in all state forests.
2. Set up a network of stations in the forests, stocked with fire fighting equipment and water storage tanks.
3. Increase substantially the number of forest rangers.
4. Establish a fleet of fire fighting helicopters carrying either water or fire extinguishing chemicals.

#### NOTE

The argument that yearly burn offs help seeds to germinate is a false one. Only the occasional "Hot Fires" that take place naturally in dense undergrowth have this effect. The "Cold" yearly burn offs have insufficient heat for this purpose. In any case there is little point in seeds germinating if the plants are immediately burnt off again.

All the above aims will be easily achievable with the minimum of cost to the nation when full site rental revenue is collected from all marketable land. This will eliminate monopoly land prices and allow the nation to purchase properties cheaply for the establishment of more national parks.

Further, the abolition of land price and taxation will make it easy for developers to afford landscaping space around their properties. In any case this will tend to happen because the collection of site rental revenue by the state will lead to competition between site occupiers for tenants. Part of this competition will lead to land landowners and developers offering their clients more landscaping and car parking space.

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DONATIONS WELCOME