

might have been entered into. The Court also found that the Hydro-Electric Commission of Tasmania is a trading corporation in the sense used in the Australian Constitution, and was thus subject to the power of the Federal Government.

Construction at the dam-site ceased following the announcement, and negotiations are currently under way between the Federal Government and Tasmanian State Government as to compensation to be paid in terms of lost employment and hydroelectricity production. The Federal Government has no legal obligation to pay compensation, but it made an election commitment to do so, and consequently it is generally accepted that both fairness and political expediency dictate that compensation be paid.

The decision of the High Court in this matter would appear to give the Federal Government powers to exercise similar jurisdiction over land-use and environmental decisions in the states when they relate to other international conventions on environmental matters—for example those relating to migratory birds, endangered species, and wetlands. It also increases the Federal Government's autonomy to nominate further areas for

inclusion on the World Heritage list. Until now the Federal Government has only nominated areas within states following a request to do so from the relevant state, and it was a request from a previous Tasmanian Government (which subsequently lost office in part because of its less-than-enthusiastic support for the Gordon dam) which resulted in the nomination of the South-West of the state as a World Heritage Site.

In future the Federal Government will be able to initiate the nomination process on its own, although it is expected that it would consult with the state government concerned. One area which it has been suggested might be nominated in this way is Fraser Island in the State of Queensland, that has been the subject of environmental conflict for many years.

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The Biosphere as Seen by Students from Ann Arbor, Michigan

We, graduate or graduating students at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, mainly from the College of Engineering, after having acquainted ourselves with the 'Declaration: The World Campaign for The Biosphere', have come to the following conclusions:

1. That The Biosphere, in addition to being a physical phenomenon and a biological one, as well as our life-supporting system, is also a *political* phenomenon. It connects the boundaries of all nations, and its preservation is vital to the security and well-being of each and every nation and person on our Earth. In so far as there are some people and some interest-groups which intentionally or unintentionally damage The Biosphere, and threaten the well-being of nations, such people and groups are a threat to the world community. Therefore, an appropriate response must be found to their activities which, for lack of a better term, we call political—as it ultimately involves the body politic the world over.

In short, it is our conviction that we cannot deal with specific problems of The Biosphere, and be successful in preserving it, without at the same time considering the political implications and dimensions of the phenomenon of The Biosphere. By politics we do not mean petty inter-party squabbles but a proper concern with the *polis** which now embraces the entire globe, and which The Biosphere envelopes, shelters, and nourishes. In our opinion the politics of The Biosphere transcends partisan ideologies, for it is the politics of life.

2. That education is among the most important priorities in saving The Biosphere. This education should emphasize a variety of alternative perspectives concerning The Biosphere's systems. The educational programmes must stress the belief that meaningful solutions stem from value systems—including religious, ethical, and moral, convictions.

Educational policy agendas should incorporate direct communication of the agendas' goals to the following: grass-roots organizations, religious organizations, world

leaders, international committees, international corporations, and the news-transmission media. The realization of this educational goal would create improved understanding of the responsibilities and consequences of human occupancy of The Biosphere.

3. That all the industries, and particularly large industries, in their efforts to maximize their benefit: cost ratio, make their primary objective the minimization of cost to the environment—namely that, in their analysis of the potential of any endeavour, the ecological, social, and human, consequences come *before* traditional cost-analysis. A 'Biological Cost', implemented through international taxation on natural resources, will have to be included in the total cost-analysis.

4. That knowing how technology affects The Biosphere in manifold ways, and knowing also that we cannot anticipate all the consequences (as we do not fully understand all the relationships between new technologies and The Biosphere), very special care should be taken in the implementation of new technologies. First preference should be given to those technologies which are least harmful environmentally. The concept of preservation of The Biosphere must be inherent in the development of all new technologies. When a technology becomes inconsistent with this concept, the technologist must reexamine his or her involvement and be willing to discontinue participation in technologies whose primary purpose or application threatens The Biosphere.

5. That The Biosphere is ultimately a quasi-theological phenomenon. In order to treat it with due respect and take proper care of it, we must consider The Biosphere as sacred. Upholding The Biosphere as sacred, we acknowledge life as sacred—an assumption which all past cultures shared, and one that we surely wish to preserve.

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* A Greek city-state, especially when considered in its ideal form.—Ed.