



# THE NIMBIN GOODTIMES

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## FOR SALE: YOUR RIGHT TO PROTEST

*New anti-protester law raises questions about corrupt corporate influence on governments*

by Scott Sledge, Northern Rivers Guardians

What sort of society turns the police to attack those who would ensure a sustainable future for all?

How do we live on our unique planet in a way that creates the greatest good for the greatest number?

Why do we allow vested interests such as mining companies to buy influence so they control what governments do?

\$5500 is the new (maximum) penalty for trespass on mine sites in NSW. The definition of a mine now includes any land subject to CSG exploration. To drill or mine without a licence, the fine has been reduced from \$1.1 M to \$5000. Illegal mining is now less expensive than protesting! Is that a bad joke? Also, police can order people to "move on" even from private property, and not return for 72 hours.

Obviously the mining companies got government action in exchange for campaign donations. To buy such favour in a democracy is quite simply corrupt.

What was the big hurry that the NSW government changed its long-established procedures for scrutiny and debate of newly proposed legislation to rush the "Santos laws" through both Houses in a single day? Was there an emergency? NSW locked by a general strike? No. Santos wanted



Knitting Nannas Angela Dalu, Dominique Jacobs and Therese Mason waiting in Narrabri police station after their arrest in the Pilliga forest.

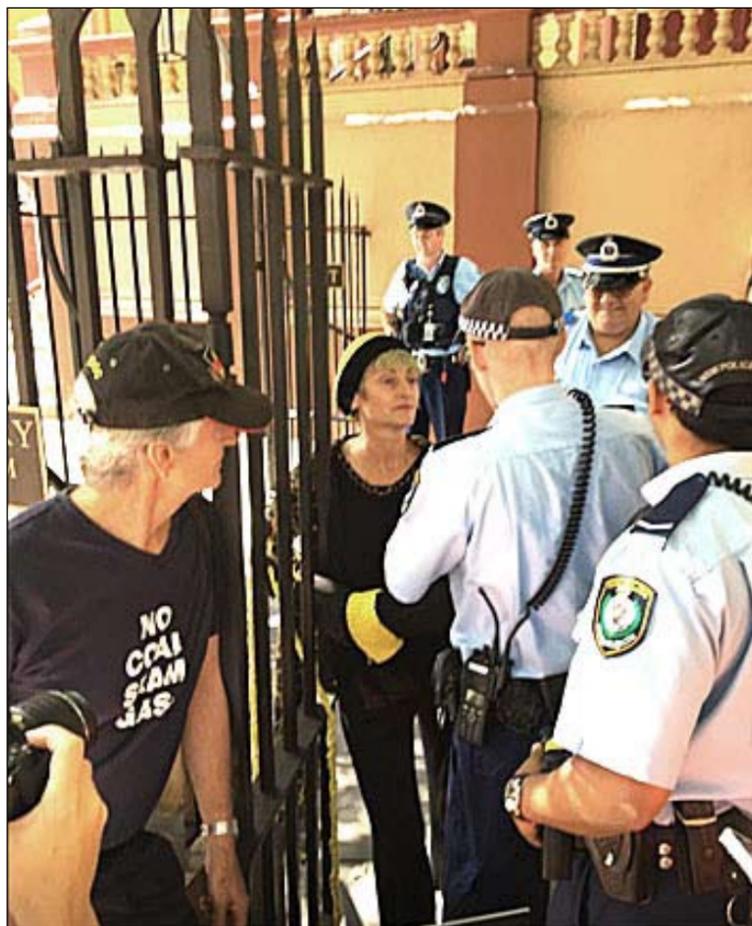
the Gamileroi people, local farmers and their allied Knitting Nannas out of the way of their CSG project in the Pilliga forest. Whitehaven Coal wanted help with protesters locking on to equipment needed to destroy the unique Leard Forest.

If a company destroys public property (such as forests and aquifers) in its greedy quest for private profit, should we not applaud the volunteer citizens who sacrifice their time and comforts to stand in the way of such destruction long enough to for the bright lights of truth to show what the real environmental vandals are

doing in the dark?

The media often shows the world what is at stake and that embarrasses the govt who feel obliged to protect companies who donate to their election campaigns. Governments call non-violent protectors names like "eco-fascists."

The disproportionately large fines are governments' way of threatening those who might dare oppose/expose the dirty doings of a corrupt system. It seems like those who would damage/destroy the world for short-term profit are favoured over those who would preserve it for us all. Who, then, are the



"fascists"? Who uses the police to enforce mining by martial law?

When non-violence is "bad" and results in repression and "pain compliance" by police, then good values are reversed, that is to say, skewed – or is that too polite a word?

Do we have to accept corruption as the "new normal?" No. We can

Knitting Nanna Clare Twomey locked on to NSW Parliament House gates.

vote for candidates/parties who renounce corporate donations.

Could we try publicly-funded election campaign information only?

• See more comment on pages 4 & 22

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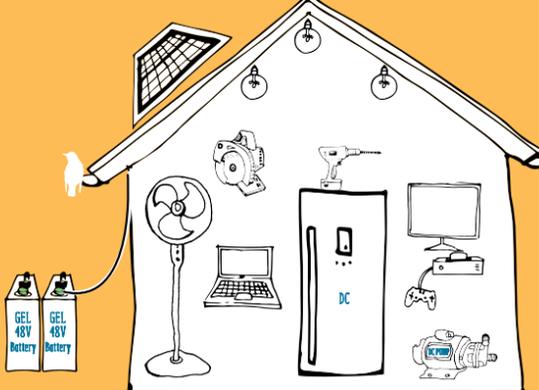
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