



KEYWORDS: *Conservation – Heritage protection – Political dissent – Australia*

THE DAMPIER CAMPAIGN

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Abstract. The history of the campaign to save the world's reportedly largest concentration of rock art is briefly reviewed. Emphasis is given to the strategy and methodology used, and the key developments are related. It is shown how such a campaign against immensely powerful stakeholders can succeed, and how a government can be made accountable for its mistakes by cultural heritage activism. Of particular relevance are the political dimensions of such a conflict, and the need to exploit these as skilfully as possible.

Introduction

Although no attempt has been made to create a full inventory of the petroglyph corpus surviving in the Dampier Archipelago of Western Australia, it is widely believed to represent the largest such body in the world. Vinnicombe (2002) has suggested that there may be some millions of motifs, whereas another estimate would be closer to one million, on the basis of the main island, Murujuga (mistakenly called Burrup 'Peninsula' since 1979), comprising in the order of 400 000 figures (Bednarik 2002a, 2007: 233–237). Since most of the other forty-one islands of the archipelago also feature petroglyphs, that seems a reasonable estimate. Whatever the case, no other major petroglyph complex in the world — most of which the author has examined — is likely to rival this number. Almost all of the main body, at Murujuga, was rediscovered between 1967 and 1970 (Bednarik 2006), while the rock art of the other islands remains poorly explored.

This massive production of rock art is the work of the Yaburrara, a 'sub-tribe' of the Ngarluma on the mainland to the immediate east, although the Mardudhunera may also have contributed (Tindale 1974). The tribes of the coastal Pilbara region were decimated soon after the region was explored by Francis T. Gregory in 1861. The Yaburrara became the victims of deliberate genocide a mere seven years later, when they were wiped out in the course of a series of government-led massacres commencing at dawn on the 17 February 1868 at King Bay with the murder of about sixty people, and ending with the shooting of three in late March at Maitland River (Bednarik 2006: 16–20).

Since this 'depopulation' period, the archipelago became unoccupied. In response to the lifting, by the federal Australian government, of the ban on exporting iron ore to Japan, mining interests proposed the establishment of a deep-water port at Depuch Island, 100

km east of the archipelago, in 1962. This led to the impact study of the Western Australian Museum in that same year, which resulted in the recommendation that the harbour could be built, but damage to the 5000 petroglyphs on Depuch should be avoided (Ride and Neumann 1964: 11). The mining company, however, preferred not to endanger the rock art. The Museum's team had also visited the Dampier Archipelago, reporting that there are only about 200 petroglyphs there (Crawford 1964: 56). This monumental blunder is the singular reason for all subsequent planning deficiencies of the state government, beginning with the decision to construct the harbour on Murujuga. The entire phase of destruction of Australia's largest cultural monument and the need for a campaign to preserve it are both directly attributable to this one mistake.

In 1963/4, Hamersley Iron began building a harbour, a pelletising plant and a town, Dampier, thus commencing the destruction of the monument. When the author arrived on site in 1967, large numbers of petroglyphs were being destroyed, and his suggestions to engineers and developers that the rock art should be spared were met with the incredulous response, 'But these are just Aboriginal scribbles, they are of no value or significance'. Therefore the author decided to record what was being destroyed, but soon discovered that the rock art corpus was much greater than first thought, extending over much of the island. He spent several years recording 572 petroglyph sites and vast numbers of stone arrangements (Bednarik 2006).

In 1969 and 1970, he reported this work to the Western Australian Museum and sought to secure its support in the protection of the Dampier monument. No such support was forthcoming and instead, the museum participated, directly and indirectly, in the continuing degradation of Dampier rock art over the following decades. The practice of employing consultants, to

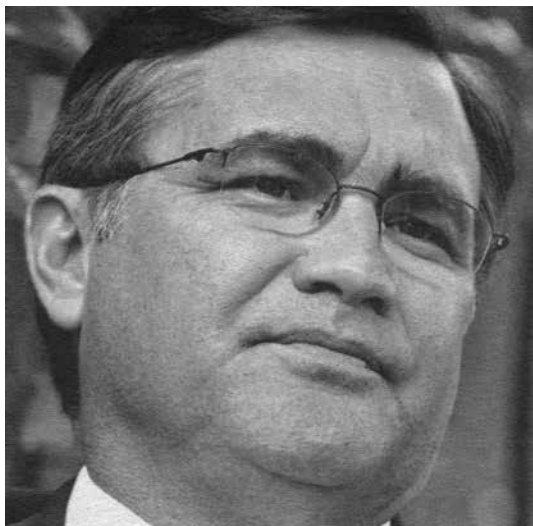


Figure 1. Former Premier Dr Geoff Gallop.

circumvent the protective requirements of the 1972 *Aboriginal Heritage Act*, began in the mid-1970s. Since then, archaeological consultants have received an estimated \$16 million in the course of facilitating the destruction of rock art and archaeological sites in the region. Yet they have never produced an inventory of Dampier cultural resources, and there are almost no publications or publicly accessible reports about their extensive activities presenting their results (an exception being Vinnicombe 1987). Until 1987, the local Indigenous communities were not consulted by any researchers involved with the state or the corporate interests.

Subsequent to his election as the Convener of the International Federation of Rock Art Organisations (IFRAO) in 1988, the author began to lobby politicians concerning the preservation of the remaining rock art at Dampier. He suggested the declaration of the archipelago as a National Park, the return of the land to indigenous ownership, and its nomination to the World Heritage List (Bednarik 1994). In response to growing support from four federal ministers, especially the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Robert Tickner, the state government decided in 1996 that there would be no further development at Dampier, all future industrial establishments would be at a vast dedicated area on the mainland, of 160 km², to be called Maitland Heavy Industry Estate.

On that basis it appeared that, after more than thirty years of continuous degradation, what remained of the Dampier Cultural Precinct would be safe at last. But governments change, and the new Labor government led by Dr Geoff Gallop reneged on the promise and announced in late 2001 that about sixteen major new petrochemical plants were to be added to the Dampier complex, exhausting literally all available land area. Gallop spoke explicitly of a 'bonanza', a 'natural-gas-led new gold rush' to take place at the archipelago (Mason 2002; Middleton 2002). This development

would literally guarantee the wholesale destruction of the Dampier cultural heritage (Fig. 1).

IFRAO versus the state government

The present phase of the Dampier Campaign commenced in February 2002, with the author's formal advice to Gallop of the opposition of IFRAO to his plans of industrial expansion (Bednarik 2002b). Gallop's carefully worded response avoided an admission that there would be further damage to the cultural heritage, but his Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Alan Carpenter, was more honest in his response and stated that there was 'no guarantee that no further sites would be destroyed' (Carpenter 2002). By April, IFRAO had begun a program of soliciting support from various quarters and had established a web-page to serve the campaign. The government's initial response was to pose an ultimatum to the Native Title groups to accept a compensation package by the end of May or receive no compensation at all. Emboldened by the international support, the Indigenes rejected the offer, and the government realised that it had misjudged the situation. In an attempt to improve its media appearance, it announced that an 'expert panel' would examine the claims made in Bednarik (2002a) and there would be a four-year study to investigate the effects of the acidic emissions on the rock art.

A public rally held at Hearson's Cove, Murujuga, on 9 June 2002 became Australia's first public demonstration in favour of preserving rock art (Fig. 2). The 600 participants, local residents mostly from Karratha, demanded unanimously that the industrial development be located at Maitland. This established clearly the strength of local support for the campaign, dashing the government's hope that the people who depended on employment with the resource companies would favour its policy. But IFRAO's strategy went far beyond this aspect, involving also approaches to the companies concerned, to trade unions, conservation agencies, and the media, to embassies of potential client countries of the resource companies, shareholders and financial backers of these companies. One of the largest proponents of the planned industries, Methanex Pty Ltd, was the first to publicly offer a constructive contribution to any endeavour addressing environmental concerns.

By July 2002, IFRAO had taken the initiative in determining the direction of the campaign, lecturing the Premier, Dr Gallop, that politically, demographically and socially, as well as environmentally, it would be much better to spread the planned massive industrial development along much of the western coast, especially as there were several very practical objections to his plan. Much of the proposed industrial land at Dampier is barely above sea level and thus subject to occasional inundation during surge tides or tsunamis (on average once per century), and the establishment of so many highly volatile installations in such close proximity should be a serious concern.

IFRAO was also the first to point out that Dampier already was a perfect target for terrorists (Martin 2003; Emery 2005), and that the harbour, where vast quantities of explosives were stored, had a single approach channel restricting the movement of large vessels considerably. If a giant ore carrier sank in the channel, half the state's economy would grind to a halt. It became apparent to the state government that IFRAO was impeccably informed, and that some of the data it cited came from inside government sources. Gradually, more of the industrial proponents began to seriously consider IFRAO's objections, while at the same time the gulf between the government agencies and IFRAO widened. Similarly, the government's discussions with the Native Title claimants, marred by heavy-handedness and insensitivity, remained inconclusive. In August, IFRAO petitioned the National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT) to facilitate the return of Murujuga to the local Aboriginal people. Ten weeks later this submission led to an unprecedented decision by the NNTT. IFRAO nominated Dampier for listing on the World Monuments Fund's list of the 100 Most Threatened Monuments in the World. A request to the federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Dr David Kemp, for nomination to UNESCO's World Heritage List won his support, and he encouraged IFRAO to pursue this matter, and to also nominate Dampier for national heritage listing as soon as the then proposed but not yet established Australian Heritage Council became operative.

By late 2002, IFRAO was outmanoeuvring the state government in every possible sense. In November, the NNTT, which is the Australian legal court deciding matters of indigenous rights, made an unprecedented ruling in the case of the Dampier rock art. Based on the submission by IFRAO, it determined that the 'public interest' had not been taken into account adequately in the case of Aboriginal custodians versus the State, and it called for public submissions — the first time in its history (NNTT 2002). Seventy-two submissions, up to 83 pages long, were received by the Tribunal within a few days. In response its Chairman travelled to Dampier to see the rock art (Pearce 2002) and it became apparent that the outcome could be the return of the land. In just seven months, the government had gone from giving the Indigenous a stern ultimatum, to finding itself with a gun held at its head: if the land reverted to Aboriginal ownership, no company in the world would entertain the thought of building a billion-dollar plant on it. On 16 January 2003, a few days before the Tribunal was scheduled to give its ruling, the government settled with the claimants on a large payout. It had been humiliated on practically all fronts, and its grand plans for Dampier looked decidedly less convincing than they did a year earlier.

The year 2003 began ominously. The head of the Department of Environmental Protection, R. Payne, was sacked, and his superior, Environment Minister J. Edwards, came under severe pressure to resign

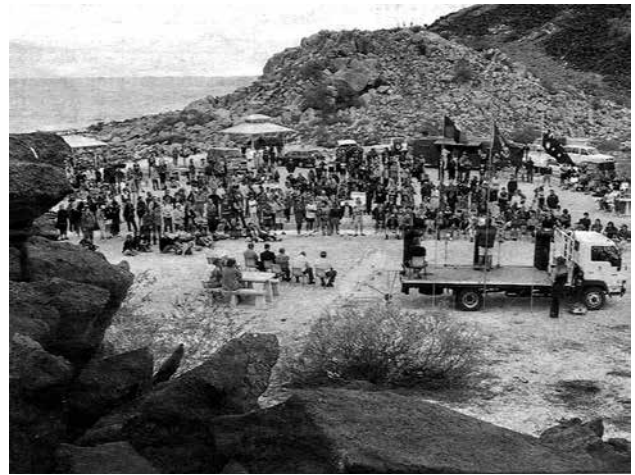


Figure 2. Public rock art rally, Binabarra (Hearson Cove), Murujuga, 9 June 2002.

(McCarthy 2003; Southwell 2003). By early March, the first indications of policy changes began to appear. The State Development Minister, C. Brown, announced that the state government would evaluate four alternative locations for future gas processing: Maitland Estate, West Intercourse Island, Cape Lambert, Boodarie and Onslow. Syntroleum was the first company to withdraw from the Dampier plan (Weir 2002), followed by the Methanex Corporation in March: the world's largest methanol plant would not be at Dampier (Wilson 2003). A third proponent, Dampier Nitrogen, was also changing its tune. A pattern now began to develop, where powerful companies demanded substantial financial inducements from the state government, usually under the pretext of 'feasibility studies', then took the money (\$30 million in one case) and left the table. The leader of the government's opposition, Colin Barnett, correctly argued that these losses of proponents were avoidable, had an alternative site been available. He explicitly stated that the rock art at Dampier was the most significant heritage issue the state had ever faced (Pennells 2003), and that 'the corporate entities are not going to want to be seen in conflict with the rock art'. He could see what the government had blithely ignored.

The strain also became apparent on the principal polluter at Dampier, Woodside. Assuming that the Campaign aimed to check their declared emission levels, they pre-empted the discovery that they had for twenty years lied to the public and the state by suddenly announcing, on 26 March 2003, that they had made a major error in calculating the emissions of oxides of nitrogen at its Dampier gas plant (Woodside Energy 2003; Anon. 2003). The 'error' related to the mass of corrosive emissions, which was now conceded to be about twice as great as listed in the National Pollutant Inventory.

At a Murujuga Forum held by the National Trust of Australia in Perth, opposition leader Colin Barnett stated that this author had convinced him to go to

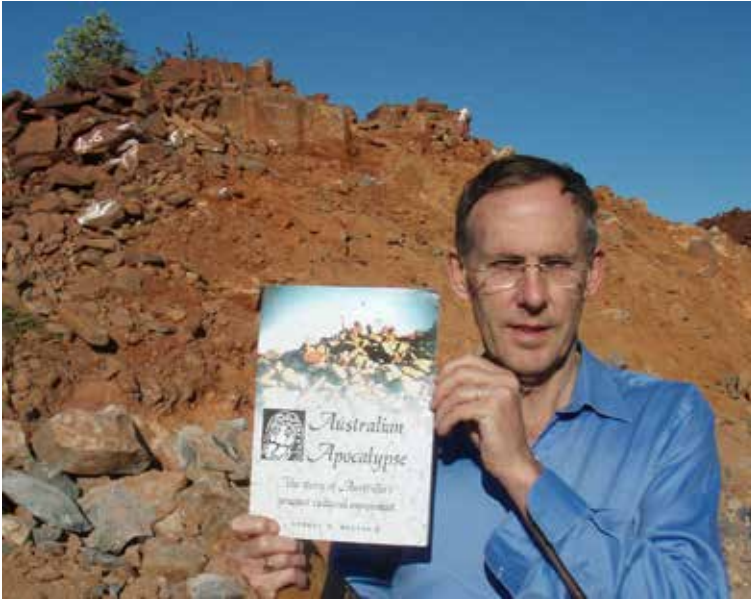


Figure 3. *The Leader of the Australian Greens, Dr Bob Brown, in front of a bulldozed and almost completely flattened hill that just two months previously bore the stone arrangements on the cover of the author's Dampier book (Bednarik 2006). All stone arrangements and rock art of this hill were completely destroyed in May 2006.*

Dampier and examine the rock art, and that he agreed on the need to save this precious heritage at all cost. He pledged that, should he become Premier, he would ensure the relocation of all future industries to alternative sites. Barnett repeated the same promise several times over the next few years (e.g. King 2006; Mason 2006a), and in fact did become Premier eventually. The future of the Dampier rock art had now become a key political issue. This certainly affected the remaining proponents who considered setting up industrial hubs at Dampier: if there was to be a change in government, they would find themselves in a problematic situation, and it is obvious that corporate players need certainty of tenure and profitability.

In September 2003, the destruction of Dampier rock art sites resumed and hundreds of decorated boulders were removed in the course of preparation work for the anticipated influx of petrochemical industries. This coincided with the inclusion of Dampier on the World Monuments Fund's 'black list' of the 100 most threatened sites — the first time an Australian site was listed.

The trials of gaining National Heritage listing

The nomination of the Dampier Rock Art Precinct to the National Heritage List was made by the author on 22 March 2004, and with it began a new phase of the campaign. The state government had now committed more than \$200 million to infrastructure on Murujuga that would remain unused if the influx of a massive petrochemical industry were to be thwarted by IFRAO's endeavours. Its credibility, already

damaged by the way companies had been able to extract vast sums of money from it and by its blunders on indigenous issues, had suffered. More defections by companies followed during 2004, such as the decision of BHP Billiton in August to locate its multi-billion dollar LNG plant in Onslow rather than Dampier.

In early 2005, a broadly based program of influencing public opinion was commenced, beginning with the travelling exhibition *Visions of the Past: the world's most endangered rock art* assembled and presented by the author. Appropriately it was opened at Karratha, immediately adjacent to Dampier, and Woodside made every possible effort to prevent its showing. But it was seen by thousands of people, there, then in nearby Port Hedland and later in Melbourne. In September, the author took the Dampier issue directly to UNESCO in Paris, bypassing the government, and addressing the World Heritage Branch in France the first time. He did so on two further occasions, to the annoyance of the government (Bednarik 2009). Much of this year was taken up by the activities of the Western Australian Cor-

ruption and Crime Commission, which was eventually going to claim numerous victims in the higher echelons of politics. The first sign was the sudden and immediate retirement of the Premier, Dr Gallop, on 16 January 2006, followed by that of his Minister for the Environment, Judy Edwards, on the following day (Murray 2006). Alan Carpenter became Premier a few weeks later. The public opinion program of the campaign received a great boost from a television program made in May, entitled *Sacred Stones* and shown on Channel 9's program *60 Minutes* on 25 June. Presenting the essential issues of the Dampier Campaign, it was viewed by 2.4 million Australians, i.e. 12% of the country's population. Yet, even as other television programs and other media coverage followed, the new Indigenous Affairs Minister gave Woodside permission to destroy still another 150 rock art sites in the following months. In November, the advocacy group GetUp!, engaged by IFRAO, secured over 24000 signatures demanding that the remaining Dampier rock art be preserved. In response Woodside, under considerable pressure from shareholders and even some of its own directors, announced that it no longer opposed National Heritage listing, citing public opinion (Banks 2006).

On 23 February 2006, John Bowler, the minister who had publicly lied on the *60 Minutes* program, was sacked for his corruption and cried in parliament that day. In fact by the end of that month, the endemic corruption in the state government had claimed the political careers of five ministers — one third of its entire cabinet — as well as some high-ranking

public servants. Even the federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Ian Campbell, another politician who had been careless enough to appear on the *60 Minutes* program, and who had procrastinated for years over the application to have Dampier listed (Wilson 2006), had fallen victim to the Corruption and Crimes Commission (Fig. 4). The Premier himself had improperly directed a minister concerning the protection of rock art, but was spared by the Commission (Mason 2007).

Malcolm Turnbull replaced Campbell, and announced within weeks of taking office that he would list Dampier on the National Heritage register by the middle of 2007. The matter was now out of the hands of the state government and those who had opposed the protection of the Dampier rock art (Mason 2006b) were on the retreat. On 3 July 2007, most of the Dampier Rock Art Precinct was declared protected, after thirty-nine months of the bitterest opposition from both government and industry. Although the already developed land was excluded, some of the inclusions were more significant. In particular, the second-largest concentration of cultural remains, on West Intercourse Island, was included, which was a severe blow for the developers, for two reasons. Mindful of its limited capacity, the Port of Dampier had planned to establish a second harbour on that island. That plan was now rendered obsolete. Secondly, it had always been assumed that West Intercourse Island would be used to anchor loading jetties for the Maitland Heavy Industry Estate. Although there is still a way to render this possible (Bednarik 2006: Fig. 109), it is not likely to be taken up by industry as there are numerous alternatives; so it now seems that Maitland is also abandoned.

Gallop's dreams of establishing the Southern Hemisphere's largest industrial concentration at Dampier had caused significant economic damage to Western Australia, through the many missed opportunities and the loss of goodwill. Nearly all of the major companies he had expected to lure to Dampier had taken his 'incentives' (Weir 2004) and then rejected his offers, mindful of the damage they would cause to the cultural heritage. Some of these companies had stated that 'only a catastrophe' could prevent them from building their plants (Phaceas 2003), yet most left during 2003 and 2004 (Pennells 2004). IFRAO's campaign was that catastrophe, and had been a complete success in thwarting the government's incompetent plans. Companies even eschewed the Dampier option when the state government refused to fund the relevant infrastructures (Williams 2004). Only one relatively small player, Burrup Fertilisers, had actually established a plant on Murujuga, and has been an environmental problem since the day that plant had



Figure 4. Minister Ian Campbell with Dampier rock art in May 2006, a master of procrastination sacked for his corruption nine months later.

been commissioned, with countless chemical spills. In addition it has been plagued by technical and financial issues, and cannot secure enough supplies of natural gas (e.g. Phaceas 2006a, 2006b, 2006c; Hampson 2008; Klinger 2009; Emery 2009). All other proponents have now defected: BHP Billiton, the world's largest miner, processing natural gas from the Scarborough field, moved to Onslow; Apache Energy, deriving natural gas from the Reindeer field, went to Devil Creek; while the plans of Dampier Nitrogen Pty, Japan DME with JFE Holdings, Methanex Australia Pty Ltd, Australian Methanol Company Pty Ltd, GTL Resources PLC, Syntroleum Sweetwater Operations Ltd, Plenty River Ammonia, Sasol Chevron, Shell, Woodside Aromatics, Chloralkali, Agrium Inc., Deepak Fertilisers and Petrochemicals Corporation, LiquiGaz Pty Ltd, the second plant of Oswal Industries, and Dyno Nobel with Plentex were all abandoned or withdrawn, as were others. The state government's obstinacy and short-sightedness had cost the State dozens of billions of dollars in investments, and up to a trillion dollars in eventual sales.

That was a heavy price to pay for the lesson it was taught by IFRAO. To avoid it, and the political stigma attached, the government only had to check on IFRAO's track record, back in early 2002: the federation has succeeded in defeating two national governments in Europe at the ballot box, and had dearly cost developers wanting to destroy rock art sites (Gonçalves 1998; Bednarik 2006: 38–42). The economic stakes were much higher in Western Australia, yet some of the strategies employed in Portugal (Arcà et



Figure 5. Colin Barnett at Murujuga, being rained on.

al. 2001) were not even rolled out here. The lesson is that overbearing and corrupt officials are in the final analysis answerable to the public, and while they tend to get away with a great deal much of the time, they *can* be taken to task – and no nation appreciates its cultural heritage being thrashed needlessly. The crux of the Dampier debacle is that there was never any reason why the industrial complex had to be established in this particular place. There are no natural resources of any kind in the entire archipelago, and the western coast of the continent is almost entirely uninhabited. Consequently there are hundreds of places suitable for towns and harbours, and petrochemical plants can be situated anywhere a pipeline can be taken to. To select a place that should long ago have been made a National Park, for its sombre natural beauty and coral reefs alone, was a planning blunder from the start. To then compound such a mistake by compromising the resource further is unforgivable.

The current phase of the campaign

On 7 December 2007, IFRAO officially requested the Federal Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, Peter Garrett, to pursue the nomination of the Dampier Precinct to the World Heritage List. More than two years later, this matter remains with the Minister, even though the World Heritage Office in Paris is literally waiting for the application. There are no known objections from industry to such listing, it makes little difference to proponents under which rules the area is protected from development. Listing would, however, involve a significant increase in tourism, and it needs to be appreciated that the region, and Karratha or Dampier specifically, totally lack the

infrastructure required for tourism.

A poll following the publication of a detailed report on the Dampier rock art in the *Australian Financial Review* on 29 February 2008 indicated that 96.18% of respondents want development at Murujuga halted in order to preserve the cultural heritage. In August, the Western Australian state government, racked by corruption and allegations of mismanagement of the economy and the State's gas supplies, called a snap election, to be held on 6 September. Opposition Leader Colin Barnett, re-appointed only a few days previously, had consistently promised effective protection of the Dampier Cultural Precinct. Against all reasonable expectations, he won the election, and Alan Carpenter, who had vigorously opposed all efforts to protect Dampier rock art since he was Minister for Indigenous Affairs under Gallop in 2002, resigned from politics.

In December 2008, Premier Barnett (Fig. 5) invited the author to his office in Cottesloe to discuss the future of the Dampier rock art. Although the spectre of further physical destruction seemed to have become a danger of the past, a new threat was developing. Woodside and its joint partners in the Browse Basin project, Shell, Chevron and BHP, planned to pump the gas from Broome to Dampier, to process it at their suitably enlarged plant at Withnell Bay. This may not be a physical threat to rock art, but it would greatly increase the acidic emissions and thereby threaten the destruction of the mineral accretions (patina) on which the rock art depends for its continued existence. In the past, Woodside had been able to dictate its terms to Gallop and Carpenter. Barnett turned out to be a much stronger leader who soon had Woodside, and the other major corporate players in the region, on a leash. His plan was to establish a new LNG plant near Broome, just as he supported the massive Gorgon LNG plant at Barrow Island (which the previous government had opposed for years) and other plants and harbours along the coast. Barnett had understood from the beginning the need to spread these flammable and volatile petrochemical plants along the coast, and in contrast to his predecessors had a long-term vision for the region. To avert the danger of the Browse Basin gas being pumped to Dampier, he hinted on 29 July 2009 that the state government controls pipeline easements and would determine where natural gas would come onshore.

Within a month he secured Woodside's support of the new plant at Broome, who now threatened their own joint venture partners to develop the project without them, if they failed to abandon the idea of a pipeline from Broome to Dampier. It still took to the end of 2009 before Shell, Chevron and BHP Billiton accepted Barnett's terms. Now even the threat of greatly increased emissions at Dampier seemed to have been contained. By the end of 2009, the seven largest sales contracts for Western Australian LNG totalled a staggering \$305 billion dollars, of which only

a small proportion was to be produced at Dampier. Ultimately, this industry would be worth around one trillion dollars to Australia, while Gallop's dream of a giant industrial centre has become a white elephant, hopefully to be phased out prematurely.

The next phase in the campaign to preserve the rock art and stone arrangements of Murujuga and the rest of the Dampier Archipelago needs to focus on gaining World Heritage Listing, on securing the establishment of a National Park, return of the land to the traditional owners, and the gradual phasing out of the existing industries. In particular this refers to the petrochemical industry, because of its nitrogen-oxide emissions, but the iron ore dust of the ship loading facilities has also been shown to threaten the rock art (CSIRO 2006). These are ambitious targets, but IFRAO has shown that the near-impossible can be achieved: confronting the combined might of government and resource industries and teaching them to respect that which, over four decades ago, was considered to be 'of no value or significance'.

Summary

The Dampier Campaign is the first significant case in the history of Australia, of cultural heritage being made a public issue on which a government is severely taken to task. Presumably it will not be the last such issue, but any future matters of this kind should be much easier to pursue, because of the precedent created by this campaign. Forty years ago rock art in Australia was the preserve of a few 'eccentrics' who exercised no influence whatsoever on the political powers of a state that did not consider indigenous heritage to be worthy of any protection. The notion of a collective heritage of humanity, whose management is the responsibility of the state on whose territory its physical expressions happen to occur, had not yet reached Australia. It had to be introduced from outside, as indeed it was. It was only by making government aware of its obligation to humanity that the principle of a mature modern nation could be conveyed: sovereignty involves responsibilities as well as rights. The lessons government has learned from the Dampier Campaign are an important factor in developing the connection of the Australian nation with the land it exercises control over.

This lesson has been gained through the failure of an economically misguided strategy determined by the WA Department of Resources and Industry, the government agency specifically responsible for the Dampier debacle. The only new plant built at Dampier in the last thirty years, Burrup Fertilisers, has been a technical and environmental failure, and the Pluto LNG plant, being built currently, has been plagued by planning delays and complications, its cost has blown out from \$5 billion to \$12 billion (and will increase further still), and it will be subjected to ongoing legal and environmentalist action because of its massive acidic emissions and other dangers. The

Dampier polluters will certainly be made accountable through the courts for their needless destruction of Australia's greatest cultural monument. Those who have presided over the world's worst case of sustained cultural vandalism in recent history, which has resulted in the physical destruction of an estimated 95 000 petroglyphs and thousands more stone arrangements, have now been sacked or otherwise removed from office, or have resigned. The reins of power in Western Australia are now in the hands of a strong leader with a vision for the future, who appreciates that we have an obligation to humanity to preserve the monuments of the past. At the beginning of 2002, the future for Australia's largest cultural monument was not just grim; it seemed hopeless (Bednarik 2002a). Today the prospects of the survival of what has been left after decades of unfettered vandalism are certainly encouraging. But more importantly, the changes in attitude engendered by this campaign will reverberate around the country.

Acknowledgments

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 and sign the Dampier Petition. Thank you!