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"Kafka in the Forest: A Personal Note on Monga Forest and Contemporary History in New South Wales"

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Herbst, Peter. “Kafka in the Forest: A Personal Note on Monga Forest and Contemporary History in New South Wales.” *Environment and History* 4, no. 2, Australia special issue (June, 1998): 239–250. doi:10.3197/096734098779555664 . After some years of absence, I found myself again active in the Australian conservation movement. A forest was to be razed, not far from where this is being written, for a relatively small yield of saw-planks. Not many species were needed; the rest simply got into the way. Access could only be vouchsafed by destroying some relatively rare and ecologically significant plants and damaging the soils and waterways. It is true that the foresters promised to respect the pockets of temperate rainforest which survive in that region. But past experience made us chary to accept their word. Besides, protection was offered only to patches of forest which exceeded a certain size. Under this rule, much of what seemed precious was likely to disappear. As an environmental group we also sought to protect the headwaters of the Mongarlowe River from pollution and siltation. The problems which I should like to discuss have arisen in the context of a conservation battle. There are many such battles; ours is not unique. But here we are concerned with politics and administration rather than with forest ecology. The problems arising out of the daily tasks of a campaign committee are here interwoven with some personal reflections about the state. All rights reserved. © 1998 The White Horse Press

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