

Chainsaws in The Distance

Do you recall when Latham grabbed the issue by the throat -
And the people had the chance to save the forests with their vote?
When the giants of Tasmania came so close to being spared,
By everyone, forevermore, these treasures to be shared;

But sadly it was nothing but a visionary's dream:
"We've got to cut that timber down!" we heard Paul Lennon scream,
"We can't afford to keep them" was his brilliant deduction
"When livelihoods of families depend on their destruction."

And the CFMEU? - as a union their a farce,
You should have seen them queuing up to kiss John Howard's arse!
The bosses and the government had gathered for a cuddle,
The unions joining in to make a threesome of the huddle.

For down in old Tasmania where the trees are straight and tall
The union stands with Gunns, the mob who'd like to cut them all,
When people try to save them they will do the dummy-spit,
World Heritage protection? They don't want a bar of it.

So give a man a truck to drive and logs to load as well
And give a man a chainsaw and some timber he can fell,
Set a man astride a 'dozer in a forest he can smash
And give a man a match to burn the residues to ash;

Then give a man a bag of bait to scatter all about
To poison all the animals when seedlings start to sprout,
For when he's unemployed his self-esteem ain't worth two bob,
For God sake give that decent, honest working-man a job!

Young Latham didn't last (the people fell for Howard's fraud)
They stabbed him in the back and then he fell upon his sword;
The voters went for tax-cuts, I am sorry but I knew
For those they'd sell the forests and the rest of Tassie too!

Now Gunns are turning up the heat to make the greenies pay,
To teach Bob Brown and co the cost of getting in their way:
Those chainsaws in the distance, do you hear them as they bawl?
The ground shakes like an earthquake as the forest giants fall.

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Edited by Colin Gibson, 1986. Written in Tasmania during the forest blockading in 1986.