

Miners should let Bylong be Bylong

(Sydney Morning Herald – Letters to the Editor – 26-11-10)

Peter Andrews of Tarwyn Park is a mastermind in ecology. But instead of rewarding him for his ecological achievements, our government rewards him with a "thanks very much, we'll take that for a lump of coal" attitude ("Hunter stud owner shuts the gate to stop mining companies bolting across his land", November 25).

How much more prime farming land can we afford to lose to mining? We too have a property in the Bylong Valley and have our backs against the wall in a fight that is only beginning against Kepco and Cockatoo Coal.

This is pristine, A-grade farmland with a record of producing top-quality beef. It has its own aquifers which have provided the valley with a constant source of water for hundreds of years and the view through the valley is breathtaking, with 150-year-old convict-built sandstone homesteads and churches.

My three young boys won't be old enough to remember the great experiences they had on a farm in Bylong when it becomes a coalmine. They will be old enough in the future to blame our generation for its stupid, selfish attitude to our land, air and water.

Once the coal is gone, what will be left? It is time to rewrite legislation and use common sense. Section 3A of the Planning Act is the most absurd, harmful piece of legislation I have ever read. And we are at its mercy.

Stephanie Weaver-Wong Putney