

The Glebe 2/9/92

# Welcome to the new nation

by JACINTA BENDER

REPUBLIC of Pymont, Friday: Three decades of neglect has led to the birth of one of the world's newest and smallest nations.

The nation is the Republic of Pymont, its population is 600 and it shares a border with Sydney.

So far, it has a cabinet of three — First Minister Otto Kruger, Arts, Culture, Education and Media Minister Virginia Spate and Environment and Foreign Affairs Minister Trevor Waters.

Ms Spate and Mr Kruger met the *Glebe* to speak about the reasons for the secession.

"We were just tired of being pushed around, it was just a climax of years of being frustrated," Ms Spate said.

The demolition of the heritage-listed Pymont incinerator and the destruction of a 19th century woolstore — both of which happened this year — were the catalyst for the secession, Ms Spate said.

But the heads of the Republic of Pymont have reserved their outrage for the Australian Government, because they believe poor planning decisions are destroying their community.

Mr Kruger, 60, was born at Pymont and he remembers what it was like before the developers moved in with plans for high-rise apartments.

"It used to have a fantastic village atmosphere and the community spirit was very, very strong," Mr Kruger said.

"It is just a complete sellout of the heritage of the place.

"We have no place to hold a public meeting."

Mr Kruger and Ms Spate said they did not oppose development but wanted housing to be available to people on low to middle incomes.

"What we don't want is for it to become a place of luxury flats, where it is bought by foreign owners," Ms Spate said.

The republic was born about two weeks ago when barricades were placed at the bottom of Miller St, Pymont, to physically separate it from the hostile



Pymont's new ministers Virginia Spate and Otto Kruger vow to fight poor planning decisions which are destroying their community

Photo: PAUL MELVILLE

nation, Australia. Those barriers have since been removed but the republic's leaders are adamant that other action will take place.

The heads of government have also written to Sydney City Council, the State Government and the Prime Minister to inform them of the secession.

Ms Spate said the Australian Government was the target of their anger

and not the Australian people.

Their declaration of independence states: "The Republic will seek ties with all peoples oppressed by developers, bureaucrats and traffic engineers."

"As in the secession of the American states from Britain, the republic believes in the principle of no taxation without representation.

"Why should its citizens pay taxes for the freeways which destroy it?"