

THE TERRORIST “WAR ON TERROR”

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Afghanistan: More And More “Mistakes”

Since the US declared its “war on terror”, international media attention has focused almost exclusively on Afghanistan. That benighted country has been occupied by a plethora of Western military forces (including those of New Zealand, primarily our Special Air Service); the fundamentalist Taliban crackpots have been replaced by the same murderous, opium-growing warlords that used to run the place and who spent all their energies, in the pre-Taliban days, in fighting each other (with horrendous civilian casualties).

These are the guys who are, once again, running “liberated” Afghanistan, with the added ingredient of an octogenarian King who had been unwanted in his own country for 30 years. The warlords and thugs are fighting each other again, human rights abuses are rampant, poverty is universal, Afghan opium poppies are once again being grown for the huge Western heroin market but, hey, these guys are on our side. Never mind the embarrassing fact that neither Osama bin Laden, the ostensible cause of it all, nor Mullah Omar, the Taliban leader, has been killed or captured. Indeed fighters from bin Laden’s Al Qaeda and the Taliban have continued to battle the American-led forces in various parts of Afghanistan.

After the enormous shock of September 11, 2001, the Bush Administration has become obsessed by bin Laden and “terrorists”. The American people are constantly being alarmed by warnings of more imminent attacks (none have transpired); the homegrown terrorists responsible for the anthrax deaths and mass hysteria that immediately followed September 11 have never been caught. All that is known is that whoever was responsible, it was not bin Laden’s suicidal/homicidal fanatics. Paying ironic homage to Hollywood culture, they go for the biggest possible bang for their buck, not piddling around posting letters with germs in them.

Bush’s entire world view has mirrored this obsession. Everything has been judged by how it fits into “the war on terror”. Thus, the 2002 Palestinian uprising and the murderous Israeli response is seen as distracting potential Arab allies from supporting the US, specifically in the planned Gulf War 2 (Bush is very keen to use “the war on terror” to finish the job that his Presidential father failed to do in 1991, namely get rid of Iraq’s dictator, Saddam Hussein). The 50 year old Indo-Pakistani confrontation over Kashmir, which has led to two wars and regularly threatens to drag these nuclear States into the abyss, is likewise seen as a distraction. The Pakistani military dictatorship, which was the prime backer of the Taliban until September 11, has been transformed into a key American ally, with a vital role to play in securing Afghanistan’s eastern border. The Kashmiri confrontation on Pakistan’s eastern border draws troops away from the vital job of doing America’s work. It is extremely ironic that the US Central Intelligence Agency was, and is, the key partner of Pakistan’s Inter-Service Intelligence agency, a state within a State, which is the prime backer of the Islamic fighters attacking India from across the Line of Control dividing Indian and Pakistani Kashmir. If Saddam Hussein was likewise sponsoring “freedom fighters” mounting deadly attacks across the borders of Kuwait or Saudi Arabia, the Cruise missiles would be raining down on Baghdad before you could say “war on terror”.

Every since the US suffered its crushing defeat in Indochina, in the 1970s, with more than 50,000 American deaths, it had been loath to ever commit ground forces to its numerous imperial wars (unless they enjoyed overwhelming superiority and losses could be kept to an absolute minimum, as in Iraq and Yugoslavia, in the 90s). Even a minor event such as the 1993 deaths of 18 Special Forces troops in Mogadishu (glorified in the recent movie “Black Hawk Down”) led to the US abandoning its military mission in Somalia. So all US wars since Vietnam have relied heavily on air power (including the B52, the dark emblem of that war). Bush followed the same path in Afghanistan, relying on the Northern Alliance (the Taliban’s Afghan enemies) and Western allies to actually do the dirty work on the ground. Thus the Americans learned, the hard way, that Afghan wars revolve around defections, bribes and betrayal and that notions of conventional military victory are meaningless. Enemies, including America’s Most Wanted, melted away, to fight another day. Eventually the US sent its Special Forces into the forbiddingly high mountains to do their own fighting, but they encountered fierce resistance (as the Russians had, in the 1970s and 80s), took casualties and the results were unclear. The US has also made it plain that it has no interest in nation building – other allies can clean up the mess of Afghanistan; America’s only interest is in defeating and punishing those responsible for attacking it. This punishment includes the usual mass murder of innocent civilians who happen to be

in the wrong place when US aircraft attack, and the indefinite inhumane detention of unidentified captives in the dog pound for people that the US has built at its Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba (itself a symbol of American imperial arrogance for the past century).

Indeed there have now been so many “regrettable accidents” involving US forces bombing or shooting up innocent Afghans that the locals have started staging protests against the American presence in their country (ten such “accidents” are listed in *Time*, 15/7/02; “Losing The Peace?”). For his part, Donald Rumsfeld, US Defense Secretary, offers no apologies – speaking of the July 2002 “accidental” strafing of a wedding party, which killed 48, he said: “There cannot be the use of that kind of firepower and not have mistakes. It is going to happen” (ibid). It is, of course, no coincidence that the US refuses to accept the jurisdiction of the newly created International Criminal Court, which could see US soldiers, generals and politicians charged with war crimes (the same issue of *Time* argues the American case; “In This Case, Might Is Right”, Michael Elliott). Not only is the US refusing to accept the jurisdiction of the new court (while simultaneously leading the campaign to get the likes of Slobodan Milosevic arraigned before the Yugoslav war crimes court in The Hague), it is waging an extraordinary diplomatic campaign to persuade nearly 180 countries never to deliver an American to the court. There is a terrible irony in the fact that one of the first countries to sign a pledge granting Americans in their countries immunity from the new court was East Timor, which has suffered more than most from war crimes.

US Bases In Central Asia

This obsession has been applied globally. The US has suddenly developed an interest in countries that it had previously never heard of, let alone known how to spell their names. Any tenuous link to bin Laden or Al Qaeda has been enough for the US to send in “advisers” (shades of how they got sucked into Vietnam in the 1960s). There is a separate article elsewhere in this issue on the renewed American military presence in its ex-colony, the Philippines. But the US military is now spread throughout the world, looking for the network set up by the elusive bin Laden. They have made contact with various Somali factions (Somalia, the world’s first “failed State”, has only the most marginal of governments); they’ve checked out Sudan, bin Laden’s pre-Afghanistan home and the target for one of Bill Clinton’s most embarrassing Cruise missile attacks (it destroyed a major pharmaceutical factory rather than the “bin Laden germ warfare plant” that it was purported to be). One hundred US “advisers” have gone into Yemen, to help the Government there against fundamentalist militants (the USS “Cole” was bombed in Aden; bin Laden himself is of Yemeni descent). The mere rumour of Al Qaeda fighters hiding out in a remote valley in Abkhazia, a breakaway republic of Georgia, was enough for 200 US Special Forces “advisers”, backed by Huey helicopters, to be sent in to train the Georgian military (and to get directly involved in the very murky wars of the Caucasus, wars directly resulting from the break-up of the Soviet Union a decade ago). Just as cunning Afghan warlords have got the naive US military to do their dirty work, by killing their enemies that they maliciously label as Taliban or Al Qaeda, so the authorities in some of these tinpot countries get Uncle Sam in to help fight their wars by inventing and/or exploiting some spurious connection between bin Laden and their internal opponents.

When Bush won (read “stole”) the 2000 Presidential election, he was correctly perceived as an isolationist, and his first few foreign policy initiatives (such as scrapping the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia and quitting the Kyoto Treaty process on global warming) confirmed that view. September 11 swung him from isolationist to global unilateralist, involved with the world but only insofar as it suited an obsessively narrow US agenda, and an involvement that consisted of State violence and terror. In the wake of the end of the Cold War, the US military had been cutting back its military presence in Europe and involuntarily having to leave countries such as the Philippines, where a massive people’s movement ended a century of US bases, in the early 1990s.

September 11 ended the US military retreat from the world. In the year since those atrocities on US soil, Bush has started building a network of forward bases from the Middle East right across Asia, from the Red Sea to the Pacific. The focus has been on the “stans” of Central Asia. Obviously Afghanistan and Pakistan, but also some of the “stans” that used to be an integral part of the former Soviet Union – Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Previously there had been no US presence in those countries. For example, in March 2002, the Pentagon announced a forward base in Kyrgyzstan, close to the Chinese border, to house 3,000 personnel – troops, communications specialists and technical support – and combat aircraft. The idea is that these permanent forward bases in the “stans”, each manned by 3,000 troops, can provide support for huge reinforcements as required. The US has no military presence in Kazakhstan but has been offered the use of airfields there, and has been negotiating for Kazakh troops to go into Afghanistan. US Senator Joseph Lieberman said: “We learned at a very high and painful price the cost of a lack of involvement in Central Asia on 11 September and we’re not going to let it happen again” (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 11/1/02; “Central Asia: US Military Buildup Shifts Spheres Of Influence”; Jean-Christophe Peuch). The US has negotiated confidential Status of Forces Agreements with these “stans” (the very same SOFAs that have caused such grief to the people of countries such as Japan and South Korea) and there is no mention of any withdrawal date for these brand new US bases.

There's money in it for the authoritarian regimes that run the "stans". For example, the US has pledged to allocate up to \$US150 million in loans and grants to sustain economic reforms (read "throw the market open to US transnational corporations") in Uzbekistan, which is the most enthusiastic US ally. Previously there were restrictions placed on these former Soviet republics because of their bad human rights records – that is seen as no longer relevant. These governments also welcome the American military presence as a guarantee against their own regional Islamic guerillas, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), which has conducted deadly raids in both Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and then sought refuge in Afghanistan. The US has included the IMU on its global blacklist of terrorist groups, alleging that it has links to Al Qaeda. Margot Light, Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics, said: "The Central Asian governments are being misguided because their own insurgency movements are likely to only grow with the presence of the US military" (*New Zealand Herald*, 26/1/02; "Now begins the real American invasion: The consequences of US engagement in Central Asia are becoming clear", Edward Helmore).

Opposition From Russia & China

This dramatic US penetration of Central Asia has not gone unremarked by the traditional Powers in that region, namely Russia and China. It's only a decade ago that the "stans" were part of the Soviet Union. Russia continues to have its own troops in the region. For example, it has an estimated 20,000 troops in Tajikistan, primarily to secure the border with Afghanistan against incursions by Islamic insurgents. Tajikistan, Kryrgyzstan and Kazakhstan are members of the Commonwealth of Independent States' (CIS) Collective Security Treaty, a Russian-led military alliance that also includes Armenia and Belarus. The Speaker of the Russian Parliament, Gennady Seleznyov, said that Russia "would not approve of permanent United States military bases in Central Asia" (*ibid*). But the "stans" are not particularly impressed by this, pointing out that Russia had not helped them fight the likes of the IMU. Indeed there are allegations that as recently as two years ago Russia was helping the IMU, in a Machiavellian policy to foster destabilisation and persuade the "stans" to accept the Russian military alliance.

For its part, China has reacted by sending delegations to the Central Asian republics and by convening a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kryrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) to discuss this development. General Fu Quanyou, Chief of the General Staff of the People's Liberation Army, said that reports of an imminent American military presence in Kazakhstan posed "a direct threat to China's security" (*ibid*). China is particularly concerned about Islamic radicals creating instability among the Uighur Muslims on its western borders.

One "stan" has stayed right out of this Great Power game. Turkmenistan has pursued a policy of neutrality since the demise of the Soviet Union. It is not a member of the CIS Collective Security Treaty and its President has boycotted most CIS Summits since 1992. It has refused Russian invitations to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. Equally, Turkmenistan has refused to allow the US or its allies to use Turkmen airfields and airspace to bomb Afghanistan.

Saudi Arabia: US Double Standard

Central Asia is not the only place where the US is building bases. By January 2002, 13 new forward bases had been established in nine countries, from Bulgaria to Turkey and Kuwait (plus the "stans", of course), with more than 60,000 US military personnel stationed at them.

Most attention has focused on Saudi Arabia and six Persian Gulf States, which have been saddled with "temporary" US bases since the 1991 Gulf War. Reaction to this substantial military presence has been most marked in Saudi Arabia, an Islamic society every bit as militantly reactionary and obscurantist as Afghanistan under the Taliban. In the decade since the Gulf War this US military presence has itself become the target of terrorist attacks, such as the fatal bombings of the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia and the USS "Cole" in Yemen. Osama bin Laden is himself a Saudi, the scion of a billionaire family; 15 of the 19 suicide hijackers on September 11 were Saudis – not one was an Afghan. The famous video purporting to show bin Laden boasting about how unexpectedly successful the attacks had been featured him talking with a Saudi mullah. Two hundred Saudis have been captured in Afghanistan fighting alongside the Taliban or Al Qaeda. Bin Laden has stated that: "There is no more important duty than pushing the American enemy out of the Holy Land (of Arabia)" (*Guardian*, 19/1/02; "Saudis tell US forces to get out", Ewen MacAskill). That goal has been consistently presented as the motivation for Bin Laden's entire international campaign.

And that goal has plenty of support in Saudi Arabia. The ruling royal family refused to provide any military help for the US in Afghanistan, which led to great resentment in the US. The Pentagon is reluctant to withdraw its 4,500

personnel from the huge Prince Sultan Air Base, near Riyadh, fearing that this would hand a propaganda victory to bin Laden. But Senator Carl Levin, who heads the Armed Services Committee, said: "We need a base in that region, but it seems to me we should find a place that is more hospitable" (ibid). The media have been running reports for some time now of a growing rift between the US and Saudi Arabia, its most important ally in that part of the world, with the Saudis wanting the US military to get out (both publicly deny it, of course). In July 2002 the Western media began to prominently report widespread anti-regime demonstrations in Saudi Arabia, protests which the feudal monarchy had tried to brutally suppress and hush up. The demonstrators were protesting the regime's pro-American, pro-Western policies.

There has since been a major turning against Saudi Arabia by significant sectors of the American Establishment (for example, see *Time*, 5/8/02; "Does The US Need The Saudis?"). Most extraordinary was the briefing provided to the Pentagon's advisory Defence Policy Board, by the highly influential Rand Corporation. It described Saudi Arabia as an enemy, whose oilfields should be seized by the US unless it meets anti-terrorist demands from the US. "(It is) the kernel of evil, the prime mover, (our) most dangerous opponent in the Middle East" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, published in the *Press*, 10/8/02; "The good oil on big US-Saudi chill", Paul McGeough). The same article quoted an unnamed US diplomat in the Middle East as saying: "If we can sort out Iraq and Detroit develops a hydrogen engine, Saudi Arabia will go back to being a fascinating benighted part of the world that people don't visit". This is not the view (publicly, at least) of Bush and Co., but an increasing school of thought in the US seems to be, if they can "sort out" Iraq (meaning, install a compliant regime), they will have an excellent source of Middle East oil to replace Saudi Arabia and they can then turn their attention to "sorting out" Saudi Arabia", without the threat of oil reprisals hanging over them.

The 2002 Palestinian uprising and Israel's murderous response unified the Arab world and gave their undemocratic governments an external cause on which to focus their peoples' attention. In this toxic atmosphere, the Arab countries (which joined the Gulf War against Saddam Hussein's Iraq) have made it abundantly clear that they will not support any unilateral US war to "finish the job" of getting rid of Saddam. This includes Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, which owe their very continued prosperity (not to mention existence) to the US military, which defeated Saddam in 1991. Indeed there has even been a rapprochement of sorts between Saddam and his Arab brothers, including his erstwhile enemies, the Saudis.

The Motive Is Oil

There is, of course, a common denominator in all this. Oil. I'll give you a new word to describe the Bush Administration – it is an oilgarchy. Oil is the heroin of capitalism (much more important than money), so control of the world's oil is a must for those wishing to both run and profit from the American Empire. The Gulf War was fought over oil – Saddam Hussein, whom the US had backed to the hilt in the 1980-88 Iran/Iraq War, had blotted his copybook by occupying Kuwait (reclaiming it as a former province of Iraq, alienated from the motherland by the British) and threatening US oil supplies from the Persian Gulf and Saudi Arabia. Despite that devastating defeat and enduring more than a decade of sanctions, Iraq is still a major oil producer and the US would dearly love to add that to its captive suppliers.

Much has already been written about the role of oil in the Afghan crisis. Major US oil transnationals wanted a pipeline from Central Asia through Afghanistan to Pakistan and on to the Indian Ocean. This was much more desirable than having to pipe oil through Iran or Russia. Until well into 2001 the US oil companies and Government were happily courting the Taliban to be the guardians of their interests; September 11 put paid to that business partnership and a much more pliable Afghan regime has been put in place to see things right for the oil barons. The government headed by Hamid Karzai has signed up for a trans-Afghanistan pipeline, pumping oil from the Caspian Sea through to a Pakistani port. The US oil company is Unocal – it is worth mentioning that both Karzai and Zalamay Khalilzad, the US special envoy to Afghanistan, worked as Unocal consultants in the 1990s.

The same motivation applies to the US military expansion into Central Asia. Richard Butler, the former United Nations arms inspector in Iraq, wrote a January 2002 letter to the *New York Times*, warning that the 19th Century's Great Game between Britain and Russia for control of Afghanistan was now being replayed, with the US and Russia as the players. Butler said: "Now the prize is oil – getting it and transporting it – and Afghanistan is again the contested territory" (*New Zealand Herald*, 26/1/02; "Now begins the real American invasion: The consequences of US engagement in Central Asia are becoming clear", Edward Helmore). Kazakhstan's oil reserves could be the world's third largest, a rich prize indeed. A Kazakh government source said: "It is clear that the continuing war in Afghanistan is no more than a veil for the US to establish political dominance in the region. The war on terrorism is only a pretext for extending influence over our energy resources" (ibid).

The Bush Administration is basically a front for the US oil industry, and securing new sources of supply has been an

overriding policy imperative since it came to power. The oil companies see this huge mobilisation of State violence as being an essential aid to seizing resources for private profit. It is an old, old alliance, that between emperors and pirates, working for their mutual enrichment.

The Politics Of Pipelines

Vice President Dick Cheney (a former energy industry executive) released the national energy policy paper in May 2001. In the chapter headed "Strengthening Global Alliances", the report recommends "that the President make energy security a priority of our trade and foreign policy" (*Progressive*, June 2002; "Oil Moves The War Machine", Michael T Klare). The closeness of the US/Saudi relationship is entirely due to oil – Saudi Arabia has 25% of the world's known oil reserves. The presence of US Special Forces "advisers" in Georgia is as much about protecting pipelines carrying oil from the Caspian Sea to the Black Sea as it is about training the local military to fight Abkhazian separatists and their alleged Al Qaeda allies. This is being positioned to be the supply route for the huge volumes of Central Asian oil that the US hopes to secure as it moves into the "stans", pipelines that will be outside of the control of either Iran or Russia. This dual focus on securing oil and fighting "terrorists" also manifests itself in Colombia, where the US is getting more and more heavily involved in South America's largest, longest and most intractable civil war. The US is now committed to help protect vital oil pipelines in that country, pipelines which have been regular targets of Leftist guerillas.

"...With the American public fixated on the threat of terrorism, however, the Administration is understandably reluctant to portray its foreign policy as related primarily to the protection of oil supplies. Thus the third reason for the merger of the war against terrorism and struggle for oil: to provide the White House with a convenient rationale for extending US military involvement into areas that are of concern to Washington primarily because of their role in supplying energy to the United States.

"For all of these reasons, the war against terrorism and the struggle for oil are likely to remain connected for the indefinite future. This will entail growing US military involvement in the oil-supplying nations. At times, such involvement may be limited to indirect forms of assistance, such as arms transfers and training programs. At others, it will involve the deployment of significant numbers of US combat troops.

"The Bush Administration has a right and an obligation to take the necessary steps to protect the United States against further acts of terrorism. Such efforts have been given unequivocal support by the public and Congress. But such support does not extend to an open-ended campaign to procure additional oil from overseas suppliers and to protect these supplies from hostile forces.

"Before committing additional military resources to such an effort, we should consider if America's energy requirements could be better provided through conservation and alternative energy systems, which would reduce the risk of US involvement in an endless series of overseas conflicts" (*Progressive*, June 2002; "Oil Moves The War Machine", Michael T Klare).

Najibullah Lafraie, the pre-Taliban Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, is now a teaching fellow in politics at the University of Otago. He explored the whole question of the oil motivation for the American-led war on Afghanistan in the *Business Monthly South* (July 2002; "Afghan oil-interest theory 'plausible'"). Talking about the US response to the September 11 attacks, he said: "It does mean, though, that the Bush Administration seized the opportunity to place the US Rapid Deployment Forces close to the Caspian and Central Asian oil and gas fields in the same way George Bush Sr. seized the opportunity provided by Saddam Hussein's attack on Kuwait to place those forces close to the oil reserves of the Persian Gulf". And, turning to the prospects of an American war on Iraq: "It seems part of a strategy to remove Saddam Hussein and install a US-compliant government, as demonstrated in Afghanistan...".

US Grab For Iraq's Oil

Which brings us to the rapidly escalating preparations for another war on Iraq. Bush has already authorised the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to organise a coup and get rid of Saddam, by assassination if necessary. Nothing new in this, it has been US policy since the Gulf War. So now both the US and Britain (led by prize lapdog, Tony Blair) are proceeding full speed ahead with plans for a massive invasion and the overthrow of Saddam, with the psychological warfare having already started in the major Western media. Australia has distinguished itself by declaring that it supports America's newly articulated policy of striking first at countries supporting terrorism (a bogus claim, as there is not one shred of evidence linking Iraq to the September 11 attacks. Saddam Hussein may be many things but suicidally stupid is not one of them). To its credit, New Zealand has made it plain that it will not support a war on Iraq. And America's usually servile European allies are also not supporting Bush on this one. Interestingly, this war fever has produced a split in the American Establishment, with senior figures publicly opposing the drive for

a unilateral war and pointing out its illegality. But essentially the internal argument is over when, how and with whom to overthrow Saddam, not if.

Bush and Blair both say that the justification is that Saddam allegedly has, or will soon have, weapons of mass destruction (no such criteria are applied to the equally dangerous Pakistani government, to give but one example). Bush Jr probably also feels a Freudian need to complete Dad's "unfinished business" from the Gulf War. But the real reason fits the pattern already established in Afghanistan and Central Asia. It is put most succinctly by the incomparable John Pilger: "The reason is that America wants a more compliant thug to run the world's second greatest source of oil" (*Observer*, 14/7/02). What happens after this war, assuming that it succeeds in its goals? "...the White House has offered no post-Saddam vision for a country which contains 9% of the world's known oil reserves and, let's not forget, some of the most abused and terrorised people on Earth. No-one in Mr Bush's Administration thinks beyond the slogan, which means that in the event of Saddam being toppled, another despot will probably fill the void and the whole process will begin again" (*Observer*, Henry Porter, "Hey, Dubya, you gotta listen up a little, pal"; reprinted in the *Press*, 31/5/02).

It should not be assumed that all Americans are spoiling for a war against Iraq. John Pilger quotes an open letter from almost 100 distinguished Americans, saying: "Let it not be said that people in the United States did nothing when their Government declared a war without limit and instituted stark new measures of repression. We believe that questioning, criticism and dissent must be valued and protected. Such rights are always contested and must be fought for. We, too, watched with shock the horrific events of September 11. But the mourning had barely begun when our leaders launched a spirit of revenge. The Government now openly prepares to wage war on Iraq – a country that has no connection with September 11. We say this to the world. Too many times in history people have waited until it was too late to resist. We draw on the inspiration of those who fought slavery and all those other great causes of freedom that began with dissent. We call on all like-minded people around the world to join us" (*Observer*, 14/7/02).

Bush's warmongering ambitions are not confined to Afghanistan or Iraq. In June 2002, he declared that the "war on terror" must be waged in up to 60 countries. Of course, if he wants to eliminate terrorists, he could start right in the US, principally the state of Florida, governed by his brother, Jeb. It provides safe haven to thousands of virulent anti-Castro Cuban terrorists, who have committed exactly the same range of atrocities as Al Qaeda. The US is home to terrorists from all over the world, mass murderers, torturers and thieves wanted in their own countries. Not to mention the tens of thousands of military terrorists trained by the US in camps such as Fort Benning, Georgia (formerly known as the School of the Americas). Indeed September 11 was already known as a day of terrorist infamy. It was the date, in 1973, of the murderous Pinochet military coup, which overthrew the elected Allende government of Chile and instituted a long nightmare of tyranny. Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger and the CIA were up to their eyeballs in that one.

New Zealand: Fighting Yet Another American War

The Labour/Alliance government was very eager to be amongst the first to volunteer for this American-led "war on terror". It later transpired that the Americans had told New Zealand that the way it responded to the September 11 attacks would be seen as a "touchstone" for future relations with the US. With little further ado the Government committed the Special Air Service (SAS) and relations with the US have warmed rapidly since then, including Helen Clark making the first State visit to the White House by a Labour Prime Minister since the 1970s and indulging in an orgy of mutual backslapping with Bush and his Cabinet.

The decision to commit the SAS to Afghanistan was the straw that broke the back of the Alliance and led, ultimately, to the split which saw its leader, Jim Anderton and his faithful followers leave the party and form their own, while the remnants of the Alliance went into electoral oblivion in the 2002 election. The SAS has always been wrapped in an absurd mystique, so successive governments keep secret everything about it. The war in Afghanistan proved no exception – however, in March 2002, Clark was embarrassed to be told that details of its activities in that country (fighting in the east, alongside Canadians) were freely available from a White House Website. The SAS is not New Zealand's only military contribution – there are also 30 New Zealanders among the British-led peacekeeping forces headquartered in Kabul. This 14 nation force is basically a Euro-army, with New Zealand being the only non-European nation invited to join. This left the Canadians with their nose out of joint and they teamed up with the American-led forces in Kandahar. The Government has made it plain that it has not ruled out extending its commitment to the war in Afghanistan. New Zealand Army officers are at Tampa, Florida, the US planning centre for the war in Afghanistan (and for the mooted war on Iraq).

Clark has made no secret of her wish for New Zealand to be favourably considered by the US for a free trade agreement between the two countries. This is basically a rehash of the Holyoake-era "guns for butter" policy,

whereby New Zealand soldiers died fighting an American war in Vietnam in return for better trade access for our primary products. Clark may very well be disappointed. James Gibney, a US foreign policy expert, said: "Even though New Zealand has made this commitment of troops to Afghanistan and has been very vocal about its support for the US, I don't think that is necessarily going to translate into progress on other areas, like the free trade agreement...There's always a certain bit of taking friends for granted...We're like the absent-minded Dad – you sometimes forget to do or say the right thing, and that can end up creating problems in your relationship with even your closest friends and partners..." (*Business Monthly South*, July 2002; "Trade-off not a done deal – warning: New Zealand 'fairly well down the list' in American thinking").

At other levels, the US is trying its old tactic of winning over New Zealand opinion makers. Dr Sabine Lautensach, from the University of Canterbury's Political Science Department, reported on her month long trip to the US in 2002, on a group sponsored by the State Department. They met representatives of the whole gamut of American government, military, security, private thinktanks and academia. She saw from the outset that the trip's purpose was indoctrination: "The US view is 'you guys are happy that we are doing the job, so why do you keep criticising us?'. They believe it is our job not to criticise but to fall into line" (www.newsroom.canterbury.ac.nz/News/Newswire/Newswire_details/1095.html; "International relations expert concerned at US agenda-setting"). She also described a "remarkable defensiveness and a failure in academic objectivity when discussion turned to the September 11 attacks". The group met some very highranking figures: "Admiral Dennis Blair, the Supreme Commander of the Pacific Fleet, talked about the policy shift from maintaining US bases, to using port calls which he believes will make the US Navy more accurate and more lethal. But, in relation to visits to New Zealand, he admitted that Helen Clark had 'won' on the nuclear visits issue and that he'd had to accept her assurance that there would be no change".

Global Spy Network Failed Intelligence Test

The post-September 11 mood has changed in the US, from one of terrified outrage demanding worldwide vengeance, to a questioning of why the Government and the vast Intelligence apparatus couldn't detect, let alone prevent these murderously spectacular terrorist attacks. The answers are embarrassing for the Bush Administration and alarming for the American people. For a considerable period before the attacks, the US was warned by foreign allies and by insiders within its own national security agencies, that some sort of attack involving aircraft was highly likely, based on information received. For instance, when Bush joined other world leaders at the notorious Group of Eight (G8) summit in Genoa, in 2001, the Italian authorities installed anti-aircraft missiles at the airport. In 2002, evidence has emerged that the National Security Agency (NSA) had actually intercepted vital clues the day before September 11 but didn't get them translated and processed in time, let alone share them with other agencies. US Federal Bureau of Investigations agents have gone public to say that, pre-September 11, they had alerted the highest levels of the FBI to their suspicions about Middle Eastern men taking flight training courses in the US, with no interest in learning how to take off or land, only in how to actually fly a passenger jet. They were ignored. All of this has been obsessively analysed in the mainstream US media (for example, see *Time*, 27/5/02; "Special Report: How The US Missed The Clues").

It's worth reiterating – this was the single biggest Intelligence failure in American history, and several thousand people paid for it with their lives. The fact of the US being the world's undisputed military super-Power and kingpin of a global electronic spying network all counted for nought. What use was the NSA with its Echelon keyword spying programme? What use was its global network of spybases, including Waihopai? After the event, all manner of pundits (including Mike Frost, the Canadian ex-spy that ABC toured through New Zealand a month after the attacks) proclaimed the answer to be more money and manpower for the spies. But one hundred times zero is still zero, and that is the likely outcome of beefing up a system built for the last war, namely that with "world Communism". Bin Laden's kamikaze pilots didn't use e-mail or satellite phones; they lived and worked unobtrusively in the US, training to carry out their mission; and they beat airport security and simultaneously hijacked four aircraft with very lowtech weapons that can be found in every office or home.

Of course, Bush and the reactionary ideologues in his government – men such as Donald Rumsfeld and John Ashcroft – seized on the opportunity to significantly roll back two centuries of civil liberties in the US. They passed laws such as the infamous Patriot Act; they have allowed indefinite mass detention without charge or trial of hundreds of captured "enemy combatants" at the Guantanamo Bay dog pound for humans, in Cuba; American citizens have been detained without charge or trial in mainland military prisons; any number of "suspect foreigners" have been disappeared into prisons and Immigration detention centres without charge or trial. In the biggest shake-up to the national security empire since the birth of the CIA in 1947, Bush has created the Department of Homeland Security, merging the domestic security responsibilities of 22 Federal agencies, with a staff of 170,000 and a combined budget of \$US37.5 billion, into one super department. But it doesn't include the FBI, the CIA, the NSA and the other Intelligence agencies, and they have been racked with internecine rivalry, duplication and refusal to cooperate, so the prognosis is not great for this new bloated bureaucratic monstrosity. Bush has had all sorts of

other bright ideas to turn the US into a bigger, better East Germany – for instance, the Department of Justice proposed to recruit millions of Americans into the Terrorism Information Prevention System (with the catchy acronym of TIPS), which would have left in the shade the former East German Stasi secret police and its army of civilian informers. In July 2002 this particular section of the Homeland Security Bill was rejected by the House of Representatives (but the rest of the Bill passed). There is also a plan to operate a Department of Lying, utilising the newly created Office of Strategic Influence within the Pentagon. Its brief will be to distribute news items, including false ones, to foreign media organisations as part of a campaign to influence public sentiment and policy makers in both friendly and unfriendly countries (particularly in the Muslim world).

So not only is the US waging a terrorist “war on terror”, it is also waging war on its own people, as it lashes out blindly at the consequences of being the world’s current Empire. The chickens have come home to roost.

WHY A WAR AGAINST IRAQ WOULD BE ILLEGAL UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW

- Moana Cole

Moana Cole is currently completing a Masters of Law research paper at the University of Canterbury on the legality of the war against Afghanistan.

“To initiate a war of aggression... is not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole” (Robert Jackson, US representative at the Nuremberg trials).

New Zealand must urge General Assembly and Security Council members and all Heads of State to denounce US unilateral action of planning and preparation for warfare against Iraq as contrary to its Charter and Customary International Law. As the judgment of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg noted, “resort to a war of aggression is not merely illegal, but is criminal”.

The principle of renunciation of the use or threat of force is now one of the fundamental principles of international law and, as such, is stated with the utmost clarity in Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter, which imposes definite obligations on states participating in international affairs. States are bound in their international relations to renounce “the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the UN”. Thus, any use of force by a state must be regarded as unlawful if it is not subject to an armed attack.

The US seeks to justify a pre-emptive strike on Iraq on the basis of self-defence. Self-defence presupposes an attack in which the permissible force must “be immediately subsequent to and proportional to the *armed attack to which it was an answer*”. The legality of pre-emptive self-defence has been rejected on the basis that use of force used to deter future use of force constitutes punitive rather than defensive action.

The UK seeks to justify a war with Iraq based on Iraq’s failure to comply with weapons inspectors and thus breaching Security Council Resolution 678 (1990). The Security Council has not identified Iraq as in material breach of the ceasefire resolution for its current failure to comply with the weapons inspectorate; therefore the Security Council cannot condone a pre-emptive military strike as a proportional response to non-compliance with weapons inspectors.

The US and UK claim they are motivated by a concern over Iraq's potential possession of non-conventional weapons. However, Scott Ritter, who personally led the inspections, investigations and destruction of Iraq's chemical and biological weapons programmes said on July 23 2002: "There is no case for war. The UN weapons inspectors enjoyed tremendous success in Iraq. By the end of our job, we ascertained a 90-95% level of disarmament. Not because we took at face value what the Iraqis said. We went to Europe and scoured the countries that sold technology to Iraq until we found the company that had an invoice signed by an Iraqi official. We cross-checked every piece of equipment with serial numbers. That's why I can say that Iraq was 90-95% disarmed. We confirmed that 96% of Iraq's 98 missiles were destroyed” (“A War Based On Lies”, 27/8/02; John Pilger). The International Atomic Energy Agency reported that it had eliminated Iraq's nuclear weapons programme “efficiently and effectively”.

The Security Council's significant power to act in international affairs must be delimited by accepted principles of international law. It is precisely the aim of an international rule of law to restrain the arbitrary use of power in international society. Equally, the legitimisation of power via dubious legal processes must not be permitted.

New Zealand should also be concerned about the humanitarian implications of any further military action against Iraq. Article 24 of the Charter directs the Security Council “to act in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations” when acting to maintain peace and security. The promotion of human rights is one of these fundamental “Purposes and Principles.” The Security Council remains always obligated by the UN Charter to “promote and encourage respect for human rights”. Thus, the Security Council may not violate human rights, even when acting to maintain peace and security. Iraq has been subject to numerous violations since January 16, 1991.

The Gulf War

The basic principles of the laws of war are those of distinction and proportionality. Under the principle of distinction, belligerents are required to distinguish between civilians and combatants at all times and to direct attacks only against military targets. This is the fundamental principle of the laws of war. The corollary principle of proportionality is designed to ensure that attacks against military targets do not cause excessive civilian damage. The Geneva Conventions define the principle of proportionality as prohibiting any "attack which may be expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, damage to civilian objects ... which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated". Indiscriminate weapons, which cannot be directed solely against military targets, by their very nature, violate the principle of distinction.

The 1991 Gulf War subjected Iraq to the most concentrated bombing campaign in history, the Pentagon announcing it conducted 110,000 aerial sorties dropping 88,500 tons of bombs. The war resulted in 67,000 Iraqi deaths as well as grave damage to Iraq's infrastructure with losses estimated at \$US170 billion. Deliberate bombing of water treatment facilities during the Gulf War originally degraded the water quality leading to the outbreak of diseases such as cholera and typhoid. The Security Council is under a legal obligation to prevent such flagrant violations.

Sanctions

According to the report, "Iraq Sanctions: Humanitarian Implications and Options for the Future", sanctions-based "holds" have blocked the rebuilding of much of Iraq's water treatment infrastructure. Additionally, sanctions have blocked the rebuilding of the electricity sector that powers pumps and other vital water treatment equipment. This has resulted in 800,000 Iraqi children "chronically malnourished." Even with conservative assumptions, the total of all excess deaths of the population under the age of five exceeds 400,000. Combined with the deaths of older children and adults, this adds up to a great and unjustifiable humanitarian tragedy.

Continuing Military Strikes

Since the 1991 Gulf War, further military operations have been launched against Iraq, by aircraft and Cruise missiles at a rate of one strike per week. Some of these attacks targeted sites in Baghdad or other populated areas and resulted in civilian casualties.

The Security Council's failure to address the human rights and humanitarian impact of the war and subsequent sanctions has prompted regular expressions of concern from UN agencies, commissions, panels and other bodies. The Security Council is bound to respect the full range of human rights standards in the major international legal instruments as an extension of its underlying obligations under the UN Charter. It must ensure that its actions comply with these standards.

New Zealand must urge the Security Council to resist recent trends in becoming an important political aid in constituting an integrated strategy designed to overthrow the government in Iraq in order to dominate this strategic and oil-rich region by justifying the use of force.

INTELLIGENCE AND TERRORISM BILLS – WHAT’S HAPPENING?

- Bob Leonard

Both National and Labour governments have over the last few years treated New Zealanders to an array of new laws that are seriously eroding our privacy and making us even more vulnerable to the ceaseless probing of so-called Intelligence agencies. The last Bill to be passed into law was the Crimes Amendment (No. 6) Bill, known affectionately as the Swain Bill (*after Paul Swain, the Minister responsible for it. Ed.*). As far as we know the Act came into force in February 2002 (refer to PRs 23 and 24 for details). A Supplementary Order Paper attached to the Bill was the objectionable part because it exempted the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) and the Security Intelligence Service (SIS) from anti-hacking provisions of the Bill. Passed in the face of vigorous public criticism the Swain Act greatly expanded the intrusive powers of the GCSB and the SIS by “legalising” their computer hacking activities.

The Telecommunications Act was to be amended soon after to grease the technical skids for electronic interception of all manner of communications both domestic and foreign. But at the time of writing there is still no sign of such an amendment. We have been in contact with Parliamentary sources very recently and they can find no reference to it in the *Parliamentary Bulletin*. We assume it is just a matter of time before it appears.

What About The Terrorism Bill?

In a knee-jerk Labour government response to September 11, the then languishing and obscure Terrorism Suppression Bill [aka the Terrorism (Bombings and Financing) Bill] very nearly got rammed through Parliament with no opportunity for public comment back in late 2001. But thanks to a crescendo of public outrage at this sneaky business, we did get a chance to comment (see our submission in PR 24). We also asked to be heard before the Foreign Affairs and Defence Select Committee. And sure enough we got our chance, on a February 2002 morning in a Christchurch hotel conference room.

GATT Watchdog’s Leigh Cookson suitably revved up the committee, chaired by Labour’s Graham Kelly, before our testimony. She alleged that the Committee had initially intended to carry out its business in secret and this struck a chord with Select Committee member, Green MP Keith Locke, who supported the allegation. This in turn pushed the button of New Zealand First MP, Ron Mark, and things got a little heated with counter allegations of libel and impugning of honour. The gentle and fair-minded Mr Kelly calmed things down and Anti-Bases Campaign’s Murray Horton and Bob Leonard followed Leigh. We characterised ourselves as peaceful dissidents alarmed at the Bill’s all-encompassing powers to imprison us and declare us, and countless others of Leftwing persuasion, as terrorists, without a smidgen of due process. We had to suppress our startled smiles when the edgy and humourless Mr Mark accused us of Leftwing bias. It was Murray’s reference to potential misuse of repressive legislation by a Rightwing government that didn’t sit well with Mark for some reason.

Coverage of our testimony in the Christchurch *Press* the following day (12 February 2002) was a pleasant surprise. You never know what will seem newsy to a reporter. Under the headline “Allegation upsets Mark”, was a box highlighting in bold type: “We believe Operation Deep Freeze should be demilitarised, and that Waihopai is essentially an arm of US intelligence”. Great, if somewhat irrelevant, publicity for ABC’s central *raison d’etre* that I had included to underline our long history of dissent from the Establishment. The fact that Murray and I had locked horns with one Helen Clark over the American military at Christchurch Airport as far back as 1986 (when she was chairing exactly the same Select Committee, under the previous Labour government) seemed to please Mr Mark. It was a stimulating morning and we felt we had been listened to.

In March 2002 the Bill was reported back to Parliament by the Committee, bereft of a scathing minority report by Keith Locke. It was apparent that public testimony had made some impression and led to a few improvements in wording. But the Bill is still a nasty piece of work and totally unnecessary. Keith Locke’s suppressed minority report deserves wide circulation and ABCer’s believe it is a discredit to the Committee that they refused to include it in its report to Parliament. Keith’s overriding concern is the broad definition of terrorism in the Bill that could see labelled as terrorists a great array of peace and social and political activists who support the activities of liberation movements, support union actions, or otherwise dissent on a variety of vital issues. And being locked up as a possible terrorist could happen on little more than the whim of the Prime Minister who needs only “good cause to suspect” involvement in terrorism. Imagine how Muldoon might have used such sweeping powers at the time of the Springbok Tour in 1981.

The Terrorism Suppression Bill has been sitting out the election period ominously awaiting a second reading. After September 11, 2001, all five UKUSA-Echelon spying partners (USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand)

rushed to combat terrorism with draconian legislation - ineffective overreaction in the extreme. Perhaps little New Zealand has moved more slowly on its Terrorism Bill because of some second thoughts about blindly following the wildly flailing US military machine (reminiscent of King Kong swatting at a biplane). But no doubt the Bill will rear its ugly head later in 2002 under the new minority Labour government. Helen Clark has shown little inclination to buck the tide of Bush and Co. And there is little hope that her former liberal tendencies will be revived by the likes of Peter Dunne or the spent political force that is Jim Anderton.

A small ray of hopeful light came from Australia in late August 2002 with news that its tough counter-terrorism legislation is now "...likely to be blocked in the Senate". The Government has held to a hard line on some of the worst features of the Bill which would give the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) extraordinary powers of arrest and detention (*see article elsewhere in this issue for details. Ed.*).

Since this was written, the Terrorism Suppression Act has become law, pushed through by the Government under Urgency, in October 2002. Only the Greens voted against it. More in the next issue. Ed.

Extra Funding For Counter-Terrorism Efforts

Fighting terrorism in the South Pacific requires not just legislation that threatens the civil rights of New Zealanders, it also takes big bucks. According to a media statement from the Prime Minister (30 January 2002):

"Eight government agencies and departments will share extra funding [for counter-terrorism activities]. It totals \$26.915 million in operating expenditure and \$2.894 million in capital expenditure running from now until 2003/4. ...the SIS, the GCSB and the External Assessments Bureau, will together receive an extra \$11.723 million over the financial years. \$2.894 million of capital funding will be shared between Intelligence agencies, Civil Defence and the Defence Force.

"The funding will also improve our Intelligence agencies' ability to collect and evaluate foreign and domestic intelligence. A particular focus of their efforts will be to prevent New Zealand from being used as a safe haven to plan and facilitate terrorist attacks elsewhere.

"The increased funding is a measured response to the international security environment which we now face, and demonstrates again New Zealand's commitment to international efforts to combat terrorism," Helen Clark said.

The Prime Minister acknowledged in the media statement that we are remote and an unlikely target for terrorism. But somehow the Government can manage to find millions of dollars to throw at vague and remote possibilities, while many New Zealanders are deprived of proper health care and educational opportunities, not to mention many other social and environmental needs, for lack of dollars. As Green Co-leader Rod Donald is fond of asking, where is the value for money in bolstering the already inflated, and arguably wasted, Intelligence budgets?

We will never know because it's all top secret. And there is no public accountability for the money spent. We doubt that even the Prime Minister, who is in charge of the Intelligence services, will ever have a clue as to how those millions of dollars were spent. But if the Sky Tower Casino in Auckland is protected from being blasted by a Boeing 767, it will all have been worthwhile.

SIS Advertising For Spies

"Prime Minister and Minister in charge of the Security Intelligence Service, Helen Clark, said today that the Security Intelligence Service is advertising again for career intelligence officers.

"Helen Clark said that the Service had advertised for officers last year (2001), its first public advertisement in 20 years. There was a strong response, with over 850 applications, and the Service was able to fill its vacancies with high quality candidates.

"Helen Clark said that on 30 January 2002 extra funding had been announced for counter-terrorism activities. She said with its share of the additional funding, the SIS would be able to increase its staff numbers over time, probably to around 140. That would follow a long period of reduction, from the peak of 159 in 1982/83 to about 110 before 11 September 2001.

"I welcome the decision of the Director of the SIS to advertise openly for staff. The Service needs to tap into the widest pool of available talent in order to obtain staff of the highest quality. The decision to advertise is also consistent with the greater openness about the Service, which the Director and I are pursuing.

"While there will always be limits for security reasons on what can be said publicly about security intelligence work, in my view moves like this normalisation of recruitment procedures are good for the Service and are in the public interest,' Helen Clark said" (press release from the Minister in Charge of the SIS, 3/5/02).

SIS Anti-Terrorist Hotline Still Active

"A hotline to report suspicious activity, set up by the SIS after the September 11 terrorist attacks, is still active as the public helps in the fight against terrorism. To the end of June (2002), there had been about 400 calls to the number. 'Quite a number of these have been useful and we plan to keep the 0800 number. The rate of calls has decreased since it was first established', a spokesman for the SIS said" (*Press*, 10/9/02). Presumably the people ringing this "Dob In A Terrorist" line are the ones frustrated that they can no longer ring the Dob In A Dole Blutdger/Benefit Cheat/Solo Mother set up by the National government in the 90s.

John Poindexter Back At The Top Of Bush's Spy Empire

John Poindexter was one of the leading National Security advisers in the Reagan Presidency (1980-88) and as such, one of the two leading figures (along with Oliver North) in the Iran-Contra scam. To quote from "Encyclopaedia Britannica" (1999 Standard Edition), this was a:

"US political scandal in which the National Security Council (NSC) became involved in secret weapons transactions and other activities that either were prohibited by the US Congress or violated the stated public policy of the government. In early 1985 the head of the NSC, Robert C McFarlane, undertook the sale of antitank and anti-aircraft missiles to Iran in the mistaken belief that such a sale would secure the release of a number of American citizens who were being held captive in Lebanon by Shi'ite terrorist groups loyal to Iran. This and several subsequent weapon sales to Iran in 1986 directly contradicted the US government's publicly stated policy of refusing either to bargain with terrorists or to aid Iran in its war with Iraq, a policy based on the belief that Iran was a sponsor of international terrorism. A portion of the \$US48 million that Iran paid for the arms was diverted by the NSC and given to the Contras, the US-backed rebels fighting to overthrow the Marxist-oriented Sandinista government of Nicaragua. The monetary transfers were undertaken by NSC staff member Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North with the approval of McFarlane's successor as head of the NSC, **Rear Admiral John M Poindexter**. North and his associates also raised private funds for the Contras. These activities violated the Boland Amendment, a law passed by Congress in 1984 that banned direct or indirect U.S. military aid to the Contras.

"The NSC's illegal activities came to light in November 1986 and aroused an immediate public uproar. **Poindexter** and North lost their jobs and were prosecuted, President Ronald Reagan's public image was tarnished, and the United States suffered a serious though temporary loss of credibility as an opponent of terrorism".

That was then. In February 2002 it was announced that Poindexter will head a new US Intelligence agency, the Information Awareness Office (IAO). Its job will be to supply Federal officials with instant analysis on what is being

written on e-mail and said on phones all over the US. Domestic espionage in other words.

To quote the *Guardian* (18/2/02; "No more Mr Scrupulous Guy: How one of the two brains behind the Iran-Contra scandal this week became one of America's most powerful men", John Sutherland):

"...The IAO is one of two new offshoots of the Pentagon-based DARPA – the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (it's venerable ancestor, ARPA, invented the Internet). The other new agency is called the Information Exploitation Office. Its mission is to supply similarly instant analysis about overseas enemy targets. IEO will employ the computerised sensor networks that have proved so successful in Afghanistan. And, from now on, America - with IEO guiding its smart weaponry - will launch sneak attacks. No more Mr Nice Guy.

"IOA and IEO will get a big chunk of the \$US48 billion of the taxpayers' money George Bush is pumping into his war on the evildoers. Never again will it be said that US Intelligence agencies went to sleep on the job - or that they were too careful about the American citizen's civil rights to do that job. No more Mr Scrupulous Guy.

"Poindexter is frighteningly smart and very unscrupulous. He graduated top of his class at the Naval Academy in 1958 and went on to a PhD in physics at the California Institute of Technology. He returned to uniform as America's best-educated sailor. He wasn't a desk warrior. Poindexter commanded missile destroyers. He won medals to hang alongside his academic diplomas. He is the model for Tom Clancy's hero, Jack Ryan.

"After the assassination attempt on President Reagan in 1981, Poindexter was called in to review White House security. Reagan was impressed and appointed him a national security adviser, in 1983, with the rank of vice-admiral.

"At this point, things started to go wrong. He and Oliver North were found to be up to their necks in the Iran-Contra (guns for hostages) scam, which blew up in 1986. Poindexter was charged and found guilty of conspiracy, obstruction of justice, and the destruction of evidence in 1990; this was overturned on appeal the following year. The case against them was that they meticulously wiped out 5,000 incriminating emails - but forgot about the back-up tapes. Even smart guys goof sometimes. Poindexter was also accused by a Costa Rican government commission of being involved in cocaine trafficking to raise funds for the contras, though this was never proved.... His excuse for his behaviour was brazen: 'I made a very deliberate decision not to tell the President so that I could insulate him from the decision and provide some future deniability for the President if it ever leaked out'. In other words, he gave himself the right to run America's foreign policy behind the back of the Commander in Chief. Who the hell voted for John M Poindexter?

"Both North and Poindexter have gone on to do well. North has a radio chat programme that rivals Rush Limbaugh in Rightwing virulence. Poindexter was recruited by Syntek Technologies, a firm in bed with DARPA. His hand was back in the hi-tech cookie jar. As a company vice-president, Poindexter helped develop Genoa - an 'intelligence mining, information harvesting' system designed to explore (clandestinely) large computer databases. Listen in on America's electronic conversations, that is.

"Poindexter is, once again, one of the most powerful men in America. His job description is "crisis manager". How do you put a man with Poindexter's record back in the manager's box?..." .

US Too Embarrassed To Prosecute UK Peace Activist

Lindis Percy is an absolutely tireless campaigner against US bases in Britain, primarily (but far from exclusively) Menwith Hill. Along with her fellow activist, Anni Rainbow, she runs the Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases (CAAB), which produces a regular newsletter and has an excellent Website. We have long since lost count of the number of times she has been arrested for entering these bases, or protesting outside them. She has racked up serious jail time with the amount of remands in custody that she has endured, and quite often has to prioritise competing court appearances, because she has many charges against her at any one time. Sometimes it all gets too much for Uncle Sam and his loyal British servants. The following story appeared in the *Guardian* (29/6/02: "Embarrassed US Blocks Case Against Peace Fighter", Richard Norton-Taylor):

"Criminal charges against Britain's most dogged peace campaigner who was accused of illegally entering a secret US base have been dropped because the Americans did not want embarrassing evidence to emerge.

"Lindis Percy, a 60-year-old health visitor, was held in custody for 11 days in March 2002 after spending over an hour inside RAF Croughton, near Northampton. Despite its official name, it is a US Air Force base used for receiving and transmitting communications from US aircraft, including nuclear bombers. Over 300 US personnel are located at the

base, according to the Ministry of Defence. After she was arrested by MoD police, Ms Percy was charged with aggravated trespass. Her case was due to be heard at Northampton magistrates court this week.

"She said yesterday she was furious about the decision. She wanted to seize the opportunity to question US witnesses about activities at the base where a new radome 'golf ball' - satellite ground relay station - is being built. She said she also wanted to expose security lapses there. She said she entered the base to undertake 'research'. She had no intention of committing any damage.

"The Crown Prosecution Service says the charges were dropped because US personnel refused to assert that Ms Percy had caused alarm or distress. The case raises serious questions about the relations between US personnel and the MoD police at what are nominally RAF, but in reality American, bases in Britain.

"The US and the MoD are increasingly embarrassed by the activities of Ms Percy. She is prevented by injunctions from entering five US bases here, including the large eavesdropping station at Menwith Hill, near Harrogate, North Yorkshire, which will be used in the Bush 'Son of Star Wars' Missile Defense Program. She is threatened by the MoD with bankruptcy proceedings for failing to pay legal costs of nearly £50,000".

You can contact Anni Rainbow and Lindis Percy, Joint Co-ordinators of the Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases (CAAB) at:

8 Park Row, Otley, West Yorkshire, LS21 1HQ, England, UK; Tel/fax no: +44 (0)1943 466405 OR +44 (0)1482 702033 email: anniandlindis@caab.org.uk or caab@btclick.com Website: <http://www.caab.org.uk>

Somebody Loves Us

"For some years now I have received my most valuable information regards the Anzac sphere from the good offices of Murray Horton and *Peace Researcher*. Kiwis can be very proud to have such a diligent and knowledgeable researcher of seemingly tireless energy available to inform them of honest alternatives to the continuing corruption of power, south and north. I especially am thankful for this splendid effort from my very good neighbours from Aotearoa".

Robert S Rodvik, Author/media analyst (Canada).

Death In The Family

The ABC committee extends our deepest sympathy to our close friend, Dennis Small (former co-editor of *Peace Researcher* and a regular writer for many years). His mother, **Dorothy Small**, died in April, aged 89, in Christchurch. Dennis had lived with his mother for a long time and in her last few years had been her fulltime caregiver, so her death (just weeks short of her 90th birthday) is a very big blow to him.

Dorothy Small was a remarkable woman. For 65 years (until she had a heart attack, in 1999) she taught dressmaking and sewing, in her home workshop. She was an institution in Christchurch, putting on fashion parades in her younger days. She threw herself into all sorts of volunteer work, ranging from overseas medical relief projects to alleviating the suffering of stray dogs (she was a great dog lover and there was always one at her place). It's worth remembering that, in her day, it was most unusual for a woman to run her own business, particularly one who was singlehandedly bringing up two sons. She was immaculate in appearance and anyone meeting her for the first time would guess her age to be decades younger than what it was. She will be sorely missed, not only by Dennis and the rest of her family, but by all of us.

We've Moved To Kiwibank

We're pleased to announce that we've closed the ABC and *Peace Researcher* accounts at WestpacTrust and have moved them to Kiwibank. We started off banking with the locally owned Trustbank and were amongst those involved in the vigorous protest campaign when that sold out to Australian bank Westpac, in 1996. We are now delighted to be able to put our money into a publicly owned and New Zealand owned bank. Not that Kiwibank has been without glitches (which we'll charitably ascribe to teething troubles).

Talking of glitches, WestpacTrust hit us with a beauty in 2001, right in the final build up to that year's national speaking tour by Canadian ex-spy, Mike Frost, when we were handling thousands of dollars into and out of our accounts. A cunning (and never caught) thief stole one cheque from each cheque book. All our transactions require two signatures. However s/he forged one of our signatures on each cheque and presented them at WestpacTrust, which promptly paid out. We knew nothing of this until we received the bank statements. We went to the bank to complain and were told that, as a matter of bank policy, they don't check any cheques below a certain amount

(which they refused to reveal. The thief had obviously done this before, as each cheque was for just less than \$500, so you can safely assume that is the magic number). All up we were nearly \$1,000 out of pocket. Fortunately WestpacTrust fairly promptly reimbursed us and apologised. We complained to the Banking Ombudsman – she backed WestpacTrust, saying all banks prefer to carry the cost of theft and fraud rather than employ the extra staff needed to verify all cheques! Reflect on that little revelation. On the other hand, Kiwibank has told us that it checks all cheques, so let's see how we go with them.

AN ACTIVIST RESPONSE TO WAR

Murray Horton

This is an extract from the speech "New Century, Old Battles: An Activist Response To Globalisation, War And The Election", delivered by Murray in the course of a national speaking tour in April, June and July 2002. The full speech is available upon request and is online at www.converge.org.nz/watchdog in Foreign Control Watchdog 100, August 2002. Ed.

...Until 2001, the pendulum had swung most markedly in the direction of the huge anti-globalisation movement and the billions of people that it represents.

Things changed again, in the most dramatic way possible, with the terrorist atrocities of September 11 and the US-led war in response to them. This has provided the already very reactionary Bush government with the excuse to swiftly implement a police State apparatus in the US, and to revert to an extremely old form of globalisation – imperialism, backed up by naked military force. This has taken two parallel courses – one has been to emphasise the most oppressive functions of the State, namely an apparently endless and borderless "war on terror", backed by a massive increase in the resources and powers lavished on the military, cops and spies. The second course has been to demonise all dissent, including the anti-globalisation movement (undefined "terrorists" have replaced "Communists" as the 21st Century's bogey men) and to argue that the only way to "defeat the terrorists" is to ram through the globalisation agenda. Thus the US House of Representatives gave Bush fast track authority to negotiate trade and investment agreements, a measure that had been languishing for years. For its part, the Labour/Alliance government tried to ram through repressive new laws with no debate, laws such as the Terrorism Suppression Bill *, and has none too subtly tried to link its sending the Special Air Service (SAS) into Afghanistan and the value of NZ spybases such as Waihopai, with its chances of getting a free trade and investment agreement with the US. The trigger happy unilateralism of the US, drunk on its own perceived might, is its own worst enemy and will increasingly alarm and alienate the allies riding on its coat tails. *You can read ABC's submission on this Bill on the [Submissions page](#)

The State as an institution is suddenly back in fashion, but, unfortunately, for reactionary reasons – to fight wars, to exact revenge, kill and torture enemies, and to frighten and bullshit people, including its own, into acquiescent silence. The transnational corporations (TNCs) see this huge mobilisation of State violence as being an essential aid to seizing resources, principally oil, for private profit. It is an old, old alliance, that between emperors and pirates, working for their mutual enrichment.

There is, of course, nothing new about war as an essential part of both capitalism and especially of its logical development, imperialism. It is just that it has been presented in the First World as something that doesn't affect us, but something that we do to "them". Thus we have had the daily bombing of Iraq, coupled with the decade of genocidal sanctions that have killed hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children. Countries such as Colombia, Angola and Sudan have had decades of relentless war, with millions dead. Sometimes these fringedwellers of Empire become of strategic importance and suddenly we are told that what happens there is of vital significance to us. In an obscene sort of beauty pageant, their wars become "fashionable". Thus, Indochina was the obsession of the 60s and 70s and Central America of the 80s. When was the last time you saw a TV news report from either of those regions? The world is now paying the price of having ruined Afghanistan as an expendable pawn in the 1970s and 80s Cold War. I take an interest in the Philippines – since the 1980s the local military, with US backing, has practised "low intensity conflict", a military model first tried out on Central America. The use of death squads, terror and large counter-insurgency tactics are the distinguishing characteristics. Of course, there have been some long-running small wars in the First World, such as Northern Ireland, and these have been fully exploited to train for urban counter-insurgency and its accompanying police State.

September 11 changed this hands-off policy, so after a quarter of a century of the "Vietnam syndrome" (i.e. a singular reluctance for US troops to be put in harm's way, a reliance solely on air power, and a preference for the dead bodies to be those of non-American allies), the US is now directly engaging in a multitude of small wars – in Afghanistan, the southern Philippines, Yemen, and throughout Central Asia and the Caucasus. The potential is very high for Uncle Sam to come a gutser in one or more of these "Bush wars", maybe in several simultaneously. And they are highly alarming to even the most servile of American allies, who didn't sign up to fight the rest of the world in perpetuity. They don't share Bush's war comic phraseology about an "axis of evil". Even prior to Bush's ascendancy to the Presidency the US military had adopted a policy of "full spectrum dominance". That slogan applied to war from, and in, space – Bush has

enthusiastically adopted the bizarre Star Wars concept – and that mindset, of nakedly violent global dominance, is now the openly practised obsession of the US, virtually to the exclusion of all else.

Undeniably, we the activists have suffered a setback in the wake of the backlash from September 11, with the US and its satellites waging an old fashioned imperialist war against anyone they don't like, and Western "democracies" adopting the trappings of the police State, using the excuse of "anti-terrorism". But the current anti-globalisation movement sweeping the world is the most hopeful development in decades. That mass movement will continue to grow, mature and strengthen and it will also be an anti-war movement. Indeed, the first major post-September 11 anti-globalisation protests took place, most appropriately, in New York, in early 2002, in opposition to the meeting of the World Economic Forum. The enemy is now in plain sight and the battles will be that much more sharply defined. The naked militarism and imperialism of the US presents a challenge at one level; on the other hand, it does us a favour by stripping away any illusions people may have about the essential nature of capitalism: Do as you're told or we'll kill you.

So, what is the activist response of New Zealanders to "the war on terror"? Simple, all of us, in whatever campaigns with which we're involved, need to incorporate an anti-war position; we need to work together to build an anti-war movement that is part and parcel of the anti-globalisation movement. The Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA) grew out of the anti-war movement of the 1960s and 70s; so, in many respects, we are returning to our roots. It feels good. And if you want a specific New Zealand anti-war campaign to get your teeth into, then join the Anti-Bases Campaign (ABC) in fighting for the closure of the Waihopai spybase*. I am the Organiser for both CAFCA and the ABC. Usually, in CAFCA talks, I don't mention my ABC work. No longer. It is part and parcel of what CAFCA and the broader anti-globalisation movement is campaigning about. * *You can read about Waihopai, Echelon and the UKUSA Agreement in the [Waihopai page](#)*

More than any token commitment of SAS troops to Afghanistan, Waihopai is New Zealand's key contribution to the American military and Intelligence Empire. Basically it is an American spybase operating from New Zealand, flying a New Zealand flag, staffed by Kiwis and paid for by New Zealand taxpayers. ABC has been fighting it since it was first announced, in 1987 (under the previous Labour government). We might be nuclear free and out of ANZUS but that essentially symbolic situation matters little while we are such a key part of the American-led Intelligence network. New Zealand is one of only five countries to belong to the UKUSA Agreement, which operates the notorious Echelon electronic spying project – many much bigger US allies aren't part of this inner circle and NZ actually helps the US spy on them, as well as whichever enemy is the current target. So that's what must be New Zealanders' unique contribution to the global anti-war movement – close the Waihopai spybase...

NO WARP

The NO WARP (Network Opposed to Weapons and Related Production) home page has gone on-line - in time for the fifth annual bash of the NZ weapons and weapons related producers and exporters (which was held in Wellington on October 1-2, 2002).

You can find the Webpage, on the Peace Movement Aotearoa Website at:
<http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/nowarp.htm>

Other contact details are:

**NO WARP!
PO Box 9314
Wellington
tel (04) 382 8129
fax (04) 382 8173
email pma@xtra.co.nz**

The NO WARP Website will have information and the latest updated research on New Zealand weapons and related producers and exporters.

RESISTANCE TO AMERICAN BASES ON OKINAWA: A SOURCE OF INFORMATION

The island of Okinawa is an armed camp, courtesy of the American military occupation that has been continuous and all-pervasive since the end of World War II (see *PR 22* for detailed background on this saga).

Over the years that *Peace Researcher* has reported on the tragic occupation of Okinawa, an island territory of Japan, we have had difficulty making contact with those struggling against the multitude of US bases there. The main problem is undoubtedly the language barrier. But early in 2002 we finally established communications with a former resident of Kadena Air Base now resident in Oregon, USA. Anna Kakazu has been attempting to develop a Website about Okinawa. It has been recently updated and has a wealth of information and contacts.

If you are interested in the vital Okinawa bases issue, here is the Website:

[Http://nomorebases.tripod.com](http://nomorebases.tripod.com)

We will try to keep in contact with Anna Kakazu since she and her Website are currently our best source of information on the trials and tribulations of the anti-bases movement on Okinawa. The focus of our anti-bases movement in New Zealand is embarrassingly small compared to the situation on the tiny island of Okinawa – over 30% of its land area is occupied by US bases. A comparable occupation of New Zealand would see almost the entire North Island covered with landing strips, hangars, countless warplanes, thousands of military personnel, and a plague of social problems as the foreign forces prey upon the local people. The Okinawan people deserve our support in their heroic struggle against the might of the American military and government, with deplorable complicity by the Japanese government.

FBI CHIEF IN “SNEAK” VISIT TO NEW ZEALAND

- Bob Leonard

It is very likely that if the events of September 11 2001 had never happened we would not have been paid a visit in March 2002 by Robert S Mueller III, head of the American Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Although the conference he attended was hush hush, he did not escape media attention. The US VIP visit made the national TVNZ *One News*, but Mueller had yet to be identified. This was soon followed by both the *New Zealand Herald* and the *Press* publishing the same large colour photo of Mueller boarding his US Air Force C-20 Gulfstream aeroplane and pointing a finger toward the tarmac (“...and don't try to follow me...”). The FBI has been widely pummeled in recent months for its apparent failures in apprehending terrorists who might have had something to do with the September 2001 attacks in the US, including the continuing investigative fiasco over the lethal anthrax letters. Casting about for comment on the visit the *Herald* approached researcher and author Nicky Hager for his views on the purpose of the conference. *PR* thinks his comment had just the right tone: “They are like funeral-home owners – they have conferences”. Luxury conferences are clearly an integral part of the global struggle against terrorism.

Also notable in the *Herald* article was the fact that Anti-Bases Campaign's own Murray Horton had his say: “[Mueller's visit] was reminiscent of a meeting in the early 1970s at the Mt Cook Hermitage when the CIA director Richard Helms attended”.

Mueller was trying to leave Queenstown Airport on the quiet after attending an international security summit held at the exclusive Millbrook Resort.^[1] According to the news accounts the two-day (11-12 March) summit was attended by both British and NZ security service agents and had the blessing of PM Helen Clark. She thought it was “good for New Zealand”. No doubt any time somebody important from the US deigns to visit little NZ, it's bound to be good for us.

Peace Researcher commends the *Press* and the *Herald* for doing a bit of digging on this one. Such visits by security bigwigs from foreign countries are interesting if not alarming. The public is kept in the dark as much as possible and even Defence Minister Mark Burton's office apparently knew nothing about the visit. But the American authorities did not hesitate “to take over” a bit of NZ real estate to protect their own perceived interests. The truly alarming bit is that the NZ government is all too ready and willing to yield authority to a foreign power, especially if that power is the United States. Recall the incredible fuss over the Clinton visit in 1999 which involved another occupation of poor little Queenstown (not to mention Christchurch's Cathedral Square), and the US military occupation and virtual sovereignty for over 40 years of a sizeable chunk of Christchurch Airport.

“Millbrook Resort has been under strict surveillance, possibly including CIA agents, since the weekend when the group arrived. Media were escorted off the grounds and agents in golf carts patrolled the area” (*Press*, 13/3/02). “Any slightly suspicious camera-toting visitors, normally not out of place on a Queenstown holiday, were politely bailed up and briefly interrogated by special agents wearing ear-piece wiring before being asked to leave Millbrook yesterday” (*Radio NZ National News*, 12/3/02).

Intrepid Green MP Keith Locke got up Helen Clark's nose when he did a bit of his own digging at Parliamentary question time. “Mr Locke asked under what authority US special agents interrogated people around the Millbrook Resort. ‘I suggest he phones the United States embassy if he wants to make those sort of allegations,’ Ms Clark said.” (*Press*, 14/3/02). Doesn't that just say it all so well? The Prime Minister tells an MP to ask the Americans about who gave them authority to take over a New Zealand resort and harass the locals.

Keith also got stuck into the Minister of Police, George Hawkins, about foreign law enforcement officers at Millbrook. Hawkins denied that the foreigners were armed, and he branded their blatant takeover of the resort as “normal security co-operation between New Zealand Police and foreign officials”. But according to the *National News* report, “About 20 special agents, *some of whom appeared to be armed*, surrounded the restaurant grounds” (emphasis added). That was at the Gibbston Valley Winery where senior American and British officials dined on the Sunday night before the conference began. Was the Minister of Police telling New Zealanders the truth?

No Such Plane Exists

As a final note, it is interesting that Mueller apparently did not use the American military facilities at Christchurch Airport. According to the *Press*, “A Queenstown Airport control tower spokesman said one aircraft arrived from Guam (*a US possession, Ed.*) and the other flew in from Kiribati. Mr Mueller flew to Canberra, and the second jet flew to Hawaii”. We checked our flight records for American aircraft at Christchurch Airport and found an Air Force

plane, described as a C-37 (ID number 90904 DV), arrived on 9 March and departed on 12 March. Was its visit related to the Queenstown conference? It's hard to say. We have never seen such an entry before in the many years of flight records that ABC holds. And we could not determine what a C-37 aircraft is in an Internet search. A C-37 apparently doesn't exist.

[1] Mueller's NZ visit was part of a trip that included Australia and several Asian countries, all of which were visited to discuss "security matters" and to lay down the American line on the "war on terror". Ed.

“THE SECOND FRONT IN THE WAR ON TERROR” US Military Back In Philippines With A Vengeance

Murray Horton

President George Bush has had no more loyal ally than Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in his “war on terror”. Yes, Gloria has been even more loyal than New Zealand’s Prime Minister, Helen Clark, and that’s saying something. Before the dust had even settled from the September 11, 2001 attacks, Gloria had declared the Philippines’ full support for the war effort and thrown the country open to the US military. Behind the scenes, the two governments attempted to push through the highly controversial Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement (MLSA), allowing the US military to use Philippine support facilities for ten years.

There were immediate rewards – the US earmarked \$US70.2 million in military aid for the Philippines in 2002 (up from \$US22.1 million in 2001). This repeats the pattern of US aid throughout the Marcos dictatorship, namely that military aid outweighs any money for anti-poverty programmes. And this military aid comes with strings attached – the August 2002 American Service Members Protection Act allows the US to withhold such aid from countries that refuse to sign a pledge giving US troops immunity from the newly created International Criminal Court (to prosecute war crimes). So the pressure was put on the Philippines to sign such a pledge.

The Philippines played no direct role in the war against the benighted people of Afghanistan (unlike New Zealand) but it allowed US warplanes to overfly Philippine airspace, and warships and planes to refuel in Philippine ports. Right from the very beginning of the “war on terror”, it went much further than that. Before 2001 was out, US military “advisers” had arrived in Mindanao to train the Armed Forces of the Philippines and to assist them, in a non-combat capacity, in their battle with the Abu Sayyaf Group, a ragtag bunch of murderous kidnappers operating in the southernmost Philippines, primarily the pirate islands between Mindanao (the major southern island) and Borneo. This area is situated in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao - ARMM* (Basilan, four other provinces and one city, with a combined population of 2.5 million), which is the poorest region of the Philippines. Three quarters of the population live below the poverty line; maternal and infant health and basic education indicators are the worst in the country.

** The ARMM arose out of the 1996 peace agreement between the Government and the Moro** National Liberation Front (MNLF). Nur Misuari, the veteran MNLF leader, became the first Governor of the ARMM. In 2001 he was replaced as MNLF leader, due to dissatisfaction with corruption and incompetence. In November 2001 he led an unsuccessful and bloody uprising aimed at thwarting the election of his successor as Governor. Misuari fled to Malaysia, was arrested and returned to the Philippines, where he and some of his supporters remain in prison, awaiting trial for rebellion. ** Moro – generic name for Philippine Muslims. Ed.*

Abu Sayyaf

As with Afghanistan and Osama bin Laden himself, Abu Sayyaf was an example of what US Intelligence agencies call “blowback”, i.e. a Frankenstein monster invented by the Philippine military itself, to split and discredit the much larger, legitimate and credible Muslim guerilla armies that had been fighting a major war for self-determination since the 1970s. Comprised of former *mujahedins* (holy warriors), who had fought the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the 1980s, Abu Sayyaf even had a historic link with bin Laden, dating back to its very early days, and it was originally described in the Western media as Muslim separatists. But it is nothing more than a bigger and more ruthless manifestation of that old Mindanao tradition, namely pirates/kidnappers/bandits. An authentic terrorist organisation, a criminal gang, with a penchant for beheading its unfortunate victims (including one American hostage) and a capacity to terrorise whole populations greatly disproportionate to its size (just a few hundred at its core). Basically, it has nothing in common with the genuine Muslim separatists, who have extensive political and cultural networks and their own armies in Mindanao, namely the MNLF and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Abu Sayyaf committed various atrocities throughout the 1990s but hit the global media big time in 2000 when it spectacularly kidnapped dozens of Western tourists from another country (Malaysia) and held them hostage for months, until rewarded with a multi-million dollar ransom (paid out by Libya’s Colonel Gaddafi).

Abu Sayyaf got a taste for the international limelight and for being multi-millionaires, so in 2001, it struck again, kidnapping Americans from a Filipino resort and outrunning the Philippine Navy to get them back to its stronghold on the southernmost islands. Macapagal-Arroyo vowed to pay no ransom and promised “total war” (as had President Estrada before her), succeeding only in imposing the usual death and destruction on innocent civilians. Over 55,000 were displaced in and around the island of Basilan (in Mindanao as a whole, more than 150,000 people have been displaced by the war against the various Muslim armies). But money talks and Abu Sayyaf has a good working

relationship with the military. It escaped from an “escape proof trap”, rounding up more hostages in the process and beheading one of the Americans for good measure. Then it vanished into the jungle, still holding hostage an American couple (veteran missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham) and one Filipina (Ediborah Yap). That was the status quo when the US advisers arrived on the island of Basilan (pre-September 11, the US had shown little or no interest in Abu Sayyaf, even when it was holding American hostages).

From the outset, this American military deployment in Mindanao rang alarm bells (but not among Mindanao's Christian majority, who welcomed it, and who are being courted by the President as an important bloc of voters in her bid for re-election in 2004). This was the first time since the 1950s that US military advisers had been allowed to take an active part in a Philippine war (and that had only been a handful of Americans, in the war against the Communist Huk guerillas). The post-Marcos 1987 Constitution expressly forbids any foreign military bases, troops or facilities, except under a treaty. As columnist Randy David wrote: “Independent nations must fight their own wars, especially when these are being waged within their own territory against some of their own people. Governments that enlist foreign help in quelling local insurgencies compromise their independence. They deserve the contempt of their citizens...The deployment of US troops in Mindanao represents to me a reversal of the 1991 paradigm shift in Philippine-US relations. It is worth asking if we are being quietly led back to an era of presidents handpicked by America” (*Philippine Daily Inquirer* {PDI}, 13/1/02).

The broadbased progressive movement that had fought against the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) throughout the 1990s reconstituted itself to fight this American military presence on Philippine soil. Nor was the opposition confined to Leftists – plenty of Senators and Congressmen (including those of the Right) and even the Vice President, Teofisto Guingona, publicly opposed the American military becoming directly involved in Philippine affairs. This was the main reason why Macapagal-Arroyo did not refer the matter to the Senate, claiming to have executive power in foreign policy matters by dint of existing treaties and the Constitution. The President assumed command of the Visiting Forces Agreement Commission, thus sidelining Guingona, who had previously chaired it in his capacity as Foreign Affairs Secretary (he had embarrassed both governments by itemising US breaches of the VFA during earlier exercises). She was both unrepentant and pugnacious, saying that anyone who opposed the American military presence was “not a Filipino...If you are not a Filipino, then who are you? A protector of terrorists, a cohort of murderers, an Abu Sayyaf lover. You care more for terrorists than for your own soldier who defends you. You care more for bandits and the camp of Osama bin Laden than your own country, which seeks to help you...We're either for or against democracy, freedom and prosperity. There can be no bystanders...” (*PDI*, 9/2/02). This all proved too much for Guingona who, in June 2002, announced his resignation as Foreign Affairs Secretary (whilst remaining Vice President). He considered what was happening to be unconstitutional. The opposition has had its effect however – the US continues to push for the signing of the MLSA; the Philippines has not yet said that it is ready to do so.

Balikatan

In January 2002 it was announced that the US and Philippine military would hold a joint exercise entitled Balikatan 02-1 (it translates as “shoulder to shoulder”). In the decade since the US military had been kicked out of its previous gigantic Philippine bases (the best known of which were Subic Naval Base and Clark Air Force Base, on the main island of Luzon), there had continued to be an annual series of these Balikatan exercises, held under the auspices of the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty, as the politicians and generals in both countries tried to soften up Philippine public opinion to allow the US military back in. But Balikatan 02-1 would be different – it would last six months (as opposed to the few weeks of standard exercises), it would be a live ammunition exercise in a war zone, and it would be in a part of the Philippines (namely Basilan and southernmost Mindanao) not previously used for such exercises. And the American commander was to be the chief of the US Special Operations Command for the entire Pacific. To spell out how important it was to the US, General Richard Myers paid the first ever visit to a Balikatan exercise by the chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (they have been running annually since 1981). The Terms of Reference were very ambiguous on the subject of any Filipino command role in the exercise.

There is a historical irony in this – the 1899-1901 Philippine American War was a genocidal affair, with the Americans only being able to colonise the country after the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Filipinos. The Moro Wars in the Muslim South continued until 1911 and the US was never able to subjugate the Muslims (guerilla warfare against the Americans continued for another couple of years). Yet, at the turn of the 21st Century, here was the US military back in Muslim Philippines. Nor was Balikatan confined to Mindanao – parts of it were to be conducted in Cebu whilst, simultaneously, 400 US military personnel took part in the month-long Balance Piston 02-1 exercise operating out of the former Clark Air Force Base in Central Luzon.

“A Permanent-Temporary Presence”

The pretence of the Americans simply training the Philippine military didn't last long. Before the exercise had even started, it was stated that 660 Americans (including 160 Special Forces troops) would be joining the 7,000 Philippine military personnel in the hunt to find and rescue the American hostages, and could return fire if fired upon. Indeed, in June 2002, there was a firefight between US troops and suspected Abu Sayyaf gunmen, on Basilan. That same month it was announced that US troops would go on combat patrols with the Filipinos, which would greatly increase their chances of getting directly involved in any fighting.

This was starting to look more and more like the US getting directly involved in a dirty little local war (not even that really, simply a police operation against a criminal gang). This would be the first time since WW2 that American troops had fought on Philippine soil. Indeed even the training aspect is more theoretical than real. Philippine Air Force pilots complained that they weren't allowed to fly the US warplanes used in the Balance Piston exercise, describing their flights in them as simply joy rides. “We try to learn from the chats, by observing when we're included in the crew” (*PDI*, 4/2/02). Not that the US military couldn't do with a little more training and better equipment itself. In February 2002, a Chinook helicopter crashed at sea off Mindanao, killing ten GIs (eight of them from an elite Special Forces unit), the biggest single loss of US military lives since September 11.

As in the Vietnam War, the US military set out to win “hearts and minds” on Basilan, assisted by US NGOs. For example, they showed Hollywood movies such as “Shrek” to the local kids. The sergeant in charge of the nightly movie showings said the aim was to “basically share our culture with Filipinos and, at the same time, learn from them” (*PDI*, 27/2/02). It could be an uphill battle – media photos of guntoting US troops at a Mindanao bank caused uproar among locals. In March it was announced that another 300 non-combat US troops, primarily Navy Seabees*, would be arriving on Basilan to carry out “civic action work” – building roads and bridges, medical missions, etc. A small contingent would stay beyond the end of the exercise to carry out a “humanitarian project”. * *Seabees* = *CBs* = *Construction Battalions*. *Ed.*

It was made plain from early on that Balikatan 02-1 (which ended in July) would be just the start of what is aimed at becoming a permanent US military presence back in the Philippines. The modus operandi are these “exercises” as allowed for under the 1999 Visiting Forces Agreement. Thus, it was admitted that there would be four such Balikatan exercises in 2002, with the rotation of US troops in and out of the country ensuring what the State Department called “a permanent-temporary presence”. Another 2,665 US troops arrived in Central Luzon in April for Balikatan 02-2 (boosting the number of US troops in the country to more than 3,800, the highest number since the bases closed in 1992). More than 5,000 US troops are expected for Balikatan 2003. Paul Wolfowitz, the US Deputy Defense Secretary, visited the Philippines in June 2002 and said: “It would be a very misleading impression to suggest, especially to Filipinos, that as soon as the Burnhams are rescued the Americans will lose interest in the Philippines. This is a much bigger question ... We are very much committed to helping the Government across the board” (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 5/6/02).

Nor will that American military presence be aimed exclusively or even predominantly at the Philippines – the Pentagon sees its renewed presence as vital in projecting American military power into the entire South East Asian region. Indonesia, for example, is seen as a potential hotbed of Muslim extremism, and Malaysia is also regarded warily. The Americans started pushing for the Philippines to host a multinational military exercise (named “Team Challenge”) that would involve military forces from a number of Asia/Pacific countries, and which would be explicitly based on scenarios of China as the aggressor/invasor in its ongoing dispute with the Philippines over the Spratly Islands.

Even as far as the Philippines is concerned, the major US media started running stories urging the Pentagon to get involved in fighting the war against “the real bad guys”, namely the estimated 12,000 guerillas of the MILF (for instance, see *Time*, 25/2/02; “Picking a fight”). Philippine military officials helpfully started trumpeting the MILF's alleged links to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda group, which is the itchy trigger finger name as far as the US is concerned.

Hostages Killed

On June 7 2002, the immediate objective of the US military presence was accomplished. Filipino Scout Rangers, the Special Forces of the Philippine Army, caught up with the Abu Sayyaf members holding the three hostages, on the Zamboanga Peninsula (mainland Mindanao) and attacked. To coin a phrase, the operation was a success but the patient died. Martin Burnham and Ediborah Yap were killed; Gracia Burnham was wounded but rescued and returned to her family in the US. That same day the Philippine military tracked down Abu Sabaya (the nom de guerre

of one of the most high profile Abu Sayyaf leaders and the one holding custody of the hostages throughout their more than one year in captivity), and rammed the boat he was using to try to escape. He was allegedly shot and seen to fall into the sea. His body has never been recovered. It was later revealed that Filipino Intelligence agents had been able to get close enough to him (delivering food and the like) to plant a tracking device on him, that enabled the US and Philippine militaries to follow and find him.

But this did not signal an end to the US military presence – Macapagal-Arroyo announced that the end of Balikatan 02-1, on Basilan, would be followed by a sustained programme of “security cooperation and counter-terrorism training and assistance”, spread throughout the country (*PDI*, 2/7/02). Between 80 and 100 US Special Forces troops will remain on Basilan until October 2002, when another Balikatan will start, taking place in Sulu province (which includes the island of Jolo, another Abu Sayyaf stronghold) and in the traditional areas on Luzon. Low profile joint exercises involving units of the rapidly expanding US Special Forces continue to be held on the beautiful and environmentally fragile island of Palawan (Abu Sayyaf snatched their hapless hostages from a Palawan resort in 2001). In July, the annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training joint naval exercise was held, involving 1,400 Americans and an equal number of Filipinos, in and off various parts of Luzon. This is also a “winning hearts and minds” affair, featuring doctors, dentists and even vets.

So the scene has been set for the “permanent-temporary presence” of the US military back in the Philippines. To claim that it is there as the “second front in the war on terror” is nonsense. The Abu Sayyaf Group is simply a gang of criminals of the kind that have plagued the southern Philippines and South East Asia for centuries. Any link with Osama bin Laden is entirely historical and dead. The Philippines has been fighting internal wars on several fronts for decades – against the Muslim separatist armies in the South and the New People’s Army (NPA) of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) across the whole country.

For the first time the US is now getting directly involved in the civil war with the Communists. In August 2002 the Bush Administration added the CPP and the NPA to its list of “foreign terrorist organisations”, along with Jose Maria Sison, the alleged leader of the CPP. Ludicrously the US has publicly linked the CPP with bin Laden. Nothing could be more unlikely – the two are mortal enemies. The relevant US Executive Order freezes any assets held in the US or controlled by US persons. Sison (who did a speaking tour through New Zealand in 1986, following his release from years of torture and imprisonment without charge during the Marcos martial law dictatorship) lives as a political refugee in Dutch exile, along with other leading figures of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (which includes the CPP). American pressure led the Dutch government to declare a freeze on the assets of both him and the CPP. And that American pressure resonated in New Zealand, where the Reserve Bank posted the US notice on its Website and stated: “Note that the United States Order does not have legal force in New Zealand. However the United States has indicated it will penalise any institution that does not take action to support the United States, if that institution has assets in or links to the United States” (Reserve Bank of New Zealand Website, 23/8/02).

But primarily the Pentagon wants to be back in the Philippines to suit its own interests, not the internal security concerns of its former colony. Its major political and military targets lie elsewhere, far from the Philippines – in the obsession with Saddam Hussein and latterly with bin Laden. The Philippines has always been a home away from home for Uncle Sam, and is now likely to be the base for American power projection into the whole East Asian region. The Philippine people have kicked out the US military once before. Now it seems that they will have to do it all over again. I have no doubt that they are up to the job.

SPOOKY BITS

- Murray Horton

SIS Advertising For Spies

"Prime Minister and Minister in charge of the Security Intelligence Service, Helen Clark, said today that the Security Intelligence Service is advertising again for career intelligence officers.

"Helen Clark said that the Service had advertised for officers last year (2001), its first public advertisement in 20 years. There was a strong response, with over 850 applications, and the Service was able to fill its vacancies with high quality candidates.

"Helen Clark said that on 30 January 2002 extra funding had been announced for counter-terrorism activities. She said with its share of the additional funding, the SIS would be able to increase its staff numbers over time, probably to around 140. That would follow a long period of reduction, from the peak of 159 in 1982/83 to about 110 before 11 September 2001.

"I welcome the decision of the Director of the SIS to advertise openly for staff. The Service needs to tap into the widest pool of available talent in order to obtain staff of the highest quality. The decision to advertise is also consistent with the greater openness about the Service, which the Director and I are pursuing.

"While there will always be limits for security reasons on what can be said publicly about security intelligence work, in my view moves like this normalisation of recruitment procedures are good for the Service and are in the public interest,' Helen Clark said" (press release from the Minister in Charge of the SIS, 3/5/02).

SIS Anti-Terrorist Hotline Still Active

"A hotline to report suspicious activity, set up by the SIS after the September 11 terrorist attacks, is still active as the public helps in the fight against terrorism. To the end of June (2002), there had been about 400 calls to the number. 'Quite a number of these have been useful and we plan to keep the 0800 number. The rate of calls has decreased since it was first established', a spokesman for the SIS said" (*Press*, 10/9/02). Presumably the people ringing this "Dob In A Terrorist" line are the ones frustrated that they can no longer ring the Dob In A Dole Bludger/Benefit Cheat/Solo Mother set up by the National government in the 90s.

John Poindexter Back At The Top Of Bush's Spy Empire

John Poindexter was one of the leading National Security advisers in the Reagan Presidency (1980-88) and as such, one of the two leading figures (along with Oliver North) in the Iran-Contra scam. To quote from "Encyclopaedia Britannica" (1999 Standard Edition), this was a:

"US political scandal in which the National Security Council (NSC) became involved in secret weapons transactions and other activities that either were prohibited by the US Congress or violated the stated public policy of the government. In early 1985 the head of the NSC, Robert C McFarlane, undertook the sale of antitank and anti-aircraft missiles to Iran in the mistaken belief that such a sale would secure the release of a number of American citizens who were being held captive in Lebanon by Shi'ite terrorist groups loyal to Iran. This and several subsequent weapon sales to Iran in 1986 directly contradicted the US government's publicly stated policy of refusing either to bargain with terrorists or to aid Iran in its war with Iraq, a policy based on the belief that Iran was a sponsor of international terrorism. A portion of the \$US48 million that Iran paid for the arms was diverted by the NSC and given to the Contras, the US-backed rebels fighting to overthrow the Marxist-oriented Sandinista government of Nicaragua. The monetary transfers were undertaken by NSC staff member Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North with the approval of McFarlane's successor as head of the NSC, **Rear Admiral John M Poindexter**. North and his associates also raised private funds for the Contras. These activities violated the Boland Amendment, a law passed by Congress in 1984 that banned direct or indirect U.S. military aid to the Contras.

"The NSC's illegal activities came to light in November 1986 and aroused an immediate public uproar. **Poindexter** and North lost their jobs and were prosecuted, President Ronald Reagan's public image was tarnished, and the United States suffered a serious though temporary loss of credibility as an opponent of terrorism".

That was then. In February 2002 it was announced that Poindexter will head a new US Intelligence agency, the Information Awareness Office (IAO). Its job will be to supply Federal officials with instant analysis on what is being

written on e-mail and said on phones all over the US. Domestic espionage in other words.

To quote the *Guardian* (18/2/02; "No more Mr Scrupulous Guy: How one of the two brains behind the Iran-Contra scandal this week became one of America's most powerful men", John Sutherland):

"...The IAO is one of two new offshoots of the Pentagon-based DARPA – the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (it's venerable ancestor, ARPA, invented the Internet). The other new agency is called the Information Exploitation Office. Its mission is to supply similarly instant analysis about overseas enemy targets. IEO will employ the computerised sensor networks that have proved so successful in Afghanistan. And, from now on, America - with IEO guiding its smart weaponry - will launch sneak attacks. No more Mr Nice Guy.

"IOA and IEO will get a big chunk of the \$US48 billion of the taxpayers' money George Bush is pumping into his war on the evildoers. Never again will it be said that US Intelligence agencies went to sleep on the job - or that they were too careful about the American citizen's civil rights to do that job. No more Mr Scrupulous Guy.

"Poindexter is frighteningly smart and very unscrupulous. He graduated top of his class at the Naval Academy in 1958 and went on to a PhD in physics at the California Institute of Technology. He returned to uniform as America's best-educated sailor. He wasn't a desk warrior. Poindexter commanded missile destroyers. He won medals to hang alongside his academic diplomas. He is the model for Tom Clancy's hero, Jack Ryan.

"After the assassination attempt on President Reagan in 1981, Poindexter was called in to review White House security. Reagan was impressed and appointed him a national security adviser, in 1983, with the rank of vice-admiral.

"At this point, things started to go wrong. He and Oliver North were found to be up to their necks in the Iran-Contra (guns for hostages) scam, which blew up in 1986. Poindexter was charged and found guilty of conspiracy, obstruction of justice, and the destruction of evidence in 1990; this was overturned on appeal the following year. The case against them was that they meticulously wiped out 5,000 incriminating emails - but forgot about the back-up tapes. Even smart guys goof sometimes. Poindexter was also accused by a Costa Rican government commission of being involved in cocaine trafficking to raise funds for the contras, though this was never proved.... His excuse for his behaviour was brazen: 'I made a very deliberate decision not to tell the President so that I could insulate him from the decision and provide some future deniability for the President if it ever leaked out'. In other words, he gave himself the right to run America's foreign policy behind the back of the Commander in Chief. Who the hell voted for John M Poindexter?

"Both North and Poindexter have gone on to do well. North has a radio chat programme that rivals Rush Limbaugh in Rightwing virulence. Poindexter was recruited by Syntek Technologies, a firm in bed with DARPA. His hand was back in the hi-tech cookie jar. As a company vice-president, Poindexter helped develop Genoa - an 'intelligence mining, information harvesting' system designed to explore (clandestinely) large computer databases. Listen in on America's electronic conversations, that is.

"Poindexter is, once again, one of the most powerful men in America. His job description is "crisis manager". How do you put a man with Poindexter's record back in the manager's box?..." .

US Too Embarrassed To Prosecute UK Peace Activist

Lindis Percy is an absolutely tireless campaigner against US bases in Britain, primarily (but far from exclusively) Menwith Hill. Along with her fellow activist, Anni Rainbow, she runs the Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases (CAAB), which produces a regular newsletter and has an excellent Website. We have long since lost count of the number of times she has been arrested for entering these bases, or protesting outside them. She has racked up serious jail time with the amount of remands in custody that she has endured, and quite often has to prioritise competing court appearances, because she has many charges against her at any one time. Sometimes it all gets too much for Uncle Sam and his loyal British servants. The following story appeared in the *Guardian* (29/6/02: "Embarrassed US Blocks Case Against Peace Fighter", Richard Norton-Taylor):

"Criminal charges against Britain's most dogged peace campaigner who was accused of illegally entering a secret US base have been dropped because the Americans did not want embarrassing evidence to emerge.

"Lindis Percy, a 60-year-old health visitor, was held in custody for 11 days in March 2002 after spending over an hour inside RAF Croughton, near Northampton. Despite its official name, it is a US Air Force base used for receiving and transmitting communications from US aircraft, including nuclear bombers. Over 300 US personnel are located at the

base, according to the Ministry of Defence. After she was arrested by MoD police, Ms Percy was charged with aggravated trespass. Her case was due to be heard at Northampton magistrates court this week.

"She said yesterday she was furious about the decision. She wanted to seize the opportunity to question US witnesses about activities at the base where a new radome 'golf ball' - satellite ground relay station - is being built. She said she also wanted to expose security lapses there. She said she entered the base to undertake 'research'. She had no intention of committing any damage.

"The Crown Prosecution Service says the charges were dropped because US personnel refused to assert that Ms Percy had caused alarm or distress. The case raises serious questions about the relations between US personnel and the MoD police at what are nominally RAF, but in reality American, bases in Britain.

"The US and the MoD are increasingly embarrassed by the activities of Ms Percy. She is prevented by injunctions from entering five US bases here, including the large eavesdropping station at Menwith Hill, near Harrogate, North Yorkshire, which will be used in the Bush 'Son of Star Wars' Missile Defense Program. She is threatened by the MoD with bankruptcy proceedings for failing to pay legal costs of nearly £50,000".

You can contact Anni Rainbow and Lindis Percy, Joint Co-ordinators of the Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases (CAAB) at:

8 Park Row, Otley, West Yorkshire, LS21 1HQ, England, UK; Tel/fax no: +44 (0)1943 466405 OR +44 (0)1482 702033 email: anniandlindis@caab.org.uk or caab@btclick.com Website: <http://www.caab.org.uk>

Somebody Loves Us

"For some years now I have received my most valuable information regards the Anzac sphere from the good offices of Murray Horton and *Peace Researcher*. Kiwis can be very proud to have such a diligent and knowledgeable researcher of seemingly tireless energy available to inform them of honest alternatives to the continuing corruption of power, south and north. I especially am thankful for this splendid effort from my very good neighbours from Aotearoa".

Robert S Rodvik, Author/media analyst (Canada).

Death In The Family

The ABC committee extends our deepest sympathy to our close friend, Dennis Small (former co-editor of *Peace Researcher* and a regular writer for many years). His mother, **Dorothy Small**, died in April, aged 89, in Christchurch. Dennis had lived with his mother for a long time and in her last few years had been her fulltime caregiver, so her death (just weeks short of her 90th birthday) is a very big blow to him.

Dorothy Small was a remarkable woman. For 65 years (until she had a heart attack, in 1999) she taught dressmaking and sewing, in her home workshop. She was an institution in Christchurch, putting on fashion parades in her younger days. She threw herself into all sorts of volunteer work, ranging from overseas medical relief projects to alleviating the suffering of stray dogs (she was a great dog lover and there was always one at her place). It's worth remembering that, in her day, it was most unusual for a woman to run her own business, particularly one who was singlehandedly bringing up two sons. She was immaculate in appearance and anyone meeting her for the first time would guess her age to be decades younger than what it was. She will be sorely missed, not only by Dennis and the rest of her family, but by all of us.

We've Moved To Kiwibank

We're pleased to announce that we've closed the ABC and *Peace Researcher* accounts at WestpacTrust and have moved them to Kiwibank. We started off banking with the locally owned Trustbank and were amongst those involved in the vigorous protest campaign when that sold out to Australian bank Westpac, in 1996. We are now delighted to be able to put our money into a publicly owned and New Zealand owned bank. Not that Kiwibank has been without glitches (which we'll charitably ascribe to teething troubles).

Talking of glitches, WestpacTrust hit us with a beauty in 2001, right in the final build up to that year's national speaking tour by Canadian ex-spy, Mike Frost, when we were handling thousands of dollars into and out of our accounts. A cunning (and never caught) thief stole one cheque from each cheque book. All our transactions require two signatures. However s/he forged one of our signatures on each cheque and presented them at WestpacTrust, which promptly paid out. We knew nothing of this until we received the bank statements. We went to the bank to complain and were told that, as a matter of bank policy, they don't check any cheques below a certain amount

(which they refused to reveal. The thief had obviously done this before, as each cheque was for just less than \$500, so you can safely assume that is the magic number). All up we were nearly \$1,000 out of pocket. Fortunately WestpacTrust fairly promptly reimbursed us and apologised. We complained to the Banking Ombudsman – she backed WestpacTrust, saying all banks prefer to carry the cost of theft and fraud rather than employ the extra staff needed to verify all cheques! Reflect on that little revelation. On the other hand, Kiwibank has told us that it checks all cheques, so let's see how we go with them.

AUSTRALIA DSD & East Timor; DSD & “Tampa”; New Powers For ASIO

- Murray Horton

DSD Knew East Timor Massacres Planned – And Did Nothing

DSD. Defence Signals Directorate, Australia's (bigger) equivalent of NZ's Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB). Along with the GCSB, it is a member of the top secret UKUSA Agreement (the others being the relevant Intelligence agencies of the US, UK and Canada). Operates a network of Waihopai-like satellite interception spybases around Australia.

In May 2002 East Timor finally joined the international community of independent nations, emerging from the narcoleptic torpor of several hundred years as a Portuguese backwater and the absolute nightmare of a quarter of a century of Indonesian genocide. Support for East Timorese independence is now, of course, the status quo for all decent Western nations and all their leaders were there for the big day. But that is a very recent state of affairs – for the 24 years of Indonesian occupation the West regarded it as a necessary (if regrettably brutal) means of ensuring stability in the region and, harking back to the Western obsessions of the mid 1970s - when the invasion occurred - of stopping East Timor from “going Communist”. So the US and Britain armed and trained the Indonesian military; Australia regarded Suharto's dictatorship as its most important South East Asian ally and took advantage of the occupation to profit mightily from the offshore oil in the Timor Gap; New Zealand did its bit by toeing the party line and supporting Indonesia.

To his credit, Matt Robson, the then Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs, told the truth when he went to the East Timor independence ceremony, in Dili: “A number of countries need to be a little more modest about their contribution to Timor. A large number of Western countries had a strong relationship with Indonesia, and benefited enormously from the sale of arms” (*Press*, 21/5/02; “Robson slams East Timor help”). He slammed previous New Zealand governments, both Labour and National, for supporting the Indonesian occupation. “The failure in New Zealand's foreign policy over Timor needed to be examined. We need to draw lessons in relation to East Timor because (our attitude) was completely opposite to all the UN conventions that we signed up to and then turned a blind eye” (*ibid*). He also said: “It's a dreadful and shameful period of history. It was really the United States and Britain, the big two, saying to Indonesia, ‘We will give you the green light’...New Zealand went out of its way in the 1980s and 1990s to keep East Timor off the international agenda. They wanted a better relationship with Indonesia, so they just turned a blind eye to it” (*New Zealand Herald*, 18-19/5/02; “A President and his ‘Ruby Blade’”, by Audrey Young).

It was only in September 1999, as the Indonesian military and its murderous militias ran amok in East Timor, in spiteful reaction to the vote for independence, that the West decided that Indonesia had overreached itself and was now a liability. It suddenly switched to supporting East Timorese independence. As President Clinton boarded Air Force One to fly to Auckland for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit, he signalled that Indonesia should leave and that the West would assume military responsibility for East Timor. By the time his plane touched down his loyal satellites, Australia and New Zealand, were falling over themselves to commit peacekeeping forces and to hope the world would not notice their 180 degree foreign policy switch. The rest, as they say, is history (rather like what happened in regard to South Africa as black majority rule became inevitable).

Up until that point (and quite possibly beyond it) the now leaders of East Timor were regarded as subversives and terrorists, people to be spied on and denied visas (both of which happened to Jose Ramos Horta, who is now East Timor's Foreign Minister. New Zealand, under the 1975-84 Muldoon government, denied him entry; Australia spied on him (once getting an Australian Secret Intelligence Service agent to be his lover). Indonesia was the West's ally; Fretilin, the political organisation heading the armed struggle for East Timorese independence, was not.

These uncomfortable ghosts from the past came back to haunt Australia (and the West), in March 2002, when raw intelligence data, collected by Australia's Defence Signals Directorate (DSD), was leaked to the media. The leaks revealed that Australian Intelligence knew in advance that the Indonesian military was planning to use the militias to massacre and terrorise the East Timorese in the event of a pro-independence vote in 1999. The DSD knew for at least six months that Indonesia planned to do exactly what it ended up doing. But nothing was made public or anything done about it so as not to prejudice DSD spying on Indonesia, and the importance Australia attached to Intelligence ties with Indonesia. Not to mention the political embarrassment that would follow the admission that Australia was spying on a major ally. Spying on Indonesia has always been one of the DSD's top priorities.

“The main source of intelligence was DSD, for which interception and decryption of Indonesian signals had been the

highest priority since the 1980s. During 1999 about 150 people worked at DSD's largest intercept station at Shoal Bay, near Darwin, 'listening with earphones to Indonesian radio traffic, recording encrypted signals, and monitoring satellite telephone conversations'. Small teams of Navy signals intelligence personnel from Shoal Bay served on Royal Australian Navy frigates and patrol boats operating close to East Timor to intercept radio communications. Two Royal Australian Air Force P-3C Orion aircraft modified for signals intelligence gathering were also used" ("Deliverance: The Inside Story of East Timor's Fight for Freedom", by Don Greenlees and Robert Garran, Allen & Unwin, 2002. Extracts published in the *Melbourne Age*, 22/5/02).

The leaked transcripts are believed to have come from disgusted senior Australian military sources reflecting deep disquiet at Australia's reaction to the 1999 massacres, with Canberra at first blaming it on "rogue elements" within the Indonesian military. On the contrary, the transcripts very clearly reveal a chain of command from the highest levels of the Indonesian military and government down to the field commanders. A token few of those generals (but not the top ones really responsible for the atrocities) recently stood trial, in Indonesia, for multiple war crimes in East Timor in 1999. But Australia has never offered this damning Intelligence evidence to assist any war crimes trials.

This is the first time that raw DSD data relating to a contemporary event has been leaked and it provides a fascinating insight into the murky world of Australia's spies. Two kinds of intercepts were leaked: "Secret Spoke" (ordinary phone calls) and "Top Secret Umbra" (scrambled or encrypted calls). They show that two units of Indonesian special forces went into East Timor, early in 1999, for undercover operations; they establish a clear link between the militia commanders and the highest ranks of the Indonesian military (and that the military was ready to murder the key militia leader if he changed sides); that, when a covert campaign to intimidate East Timorese to vote against independence failed (to the enormous surprise of Indonesia), the military and Government organised the massacres, destruction of all infrastructure and the forced deportation of one third of East Timor's population across the border into Indonesian West Timor (where huge numbers remain to this day). One intercept shows that even after the international peacekeeping forces (primarily Australian and New Zealand troops) had arrived, the Indonesian military had sent in special forces to murder East Timorese leaders and Indonesian deserters.

Don't expect too much to change anytime soon. The retired general who helped to set up the West Timor camps into which the East Timorese were forcibly driven, was recently made head of Indonesia's National Intelligence Body. When Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, visited Indonesia in 2002, he accepted an Indonesian proposal to step up exchanges with this agency. Throughout Indonesia the same methods are being used as in East Timor – militias set up by the military to terrorise restive populations from Aceh to West Papua and brutal military suppression of various autonomy movements. As for Australia, it sees Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim country, as a vital ally in the "war on terror" to which Australia has committed itself so wholeheartedly. And most importantly, in light of Australia's current obsession with boat people, Indonesia is seen as being key to stopping that flow. Australian Intelligence will doubtless continue to put its relationship with the Indonesian military and Intelligence as its top priority, overriding any obligation to make public (let alone do something about) the human rights abuses and war crimes that continue to be committed the length and breadth of that country. That's what they call Realpolitik.

Nor can New Zealand feel smug. No doubt the GCSB was privy to exactly the same information gathered by DSD and also knew what was going to happen in East Timor. Indeed, Phil Goff, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, was personally told by one of those who was in an ideal position to know. As an Opposition MP, Goff (along with other MPs, including then Alliance MP, Matt Robson) went to East Timor as a United Nations observer for the August 1999 independence referendum. "We talked (before the vote) to one of the Indonesians heading up an unlikely group called the reconciliation and friendship groups, and I remember his words. He said: 'If these ungrateful people decide to vote for independence, we will take everything we can carry, and what we cannot carry we will destroy'. We thought 'what an arsehole'. But he was probably the only Indonesian who told us the truth because that's precisely what happened" (*New Zealand Herald*, 18-19/5/02; "A President and his 'Ruby Blade'", by Audrey Young).

DSD Spied On "Tampa" Messages

Governments have always claimed that their electronic spy agencies (the GCSB, in New Zealand's case) intercept only foreign communications, never domestic ones. So although the DSD's actions in sitting on the intercepts it had from the Indonesian military (planning massacres in East Timor) were morally abhorrent, it was only doing what it is tasked to do – spying on foreigners, even supposed allies. For years the Anti-Bases Campaign has asserted that, by definition, these spy agencies must be spying on their own people, particularly when one party in the international communication being intercepted is a local. The spy agency bosses, their political so-called masters and the likes of New Zealand's Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security, have all fudged this question or refused to give a straight answer. Proof of spying on their own citizens is very, very difficult to obtain. The activities of covert agencies are kept very secret and only very occasionally stumble into the daylight.

Well, now there is some proof. And it concerns one of the most disgraceful episodes in recent Australian history (there's no shortage of candidates). In August 2001 the Norwegian container ship "Tampa", captained by the redoubtable Arne Rinnan, rescued a boatload of mainly Afghan and Iraqi illegal refugees, from the usual death trap boat favoured by the repulsive people smugglers. He had been asked to rescue them by Australia, because they were in the part of the Indian Ocean for which Australia is responsible for search and rescue. However, when he tried to deliver them to the nearest part of Australia (Christmas Island), the "Tampa" was refused entry and then commandeered by the Special Air Service. September 11 happened while the "Tampa" saga was in full swing and the Prime Minister, John Howard, facing defeat in the imminent Federal election, fused the emotionally loaded issues of "Australia is being overrun by boat people" and "the war on terror" and snatched electoral victory from the jaws of certain defeat. Howard's equation was "refugees= terrorists" (despite the obvious fact that these people were fleeing the very regimes that are the West's enemies, such as the Taliban in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein's Iraq).

Howard shamelessly used the "Tampa" boat people and an outright lie (that, in a separate incident, boat people threw their kids into the sea to force Australia to rescue them and take them in) to whip up the racist hysteria and xenophobia that is never far beneath the surface of our "multi-cultural" neighbour. The redneck vote that had previously gone to Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party swung back behind the Liberal Party and Howard had the racists' mandate. The "Tampa", which had been seized by State-sanctioned pirates, was forced to unload its wretched human cargo at the Pacific dumping grounds (such as Nauru) which are being bribed by Australia to take the people it doesn't want. How ironic that Australia, founded as a human rubbish dump for the underclass of England, such as my own paternal ancestor, (Aborigines will tell you that the first unwelcome foreign boat people arrived in 1788) is now using the same policy on its tiny Pacific neighbours. There is a whole other story about the way Australia treats the illegal refugees that do make it to the mainland – locking them up for years in brutal detention camps in the middle of the Outback – but that's not our issue.

Only two players emerged with any credit from the "Tampa" scandal – one was the captain, Arne Rinnan, who stubbornly stuck to his guns and did what all seafarers are obliged to do – rescue those in peril on the sea. The other was New Zealand, which offered to take in 130+ of the "Tampa" boat people, who are now settled in this country. When the "Tampa" sailed into Auckland, in 2002, on Captain Rinnan's final voyage, he got a hero's welcome from some of them.

In February 2002 senior Howard government sources told the media that the DSD had passed onto to Peter Reith, the then Defence Minister, intercepted radio and electronic communications to and from the "Tampa". These included conversations between Captain Rinnan and the Maritime Union of Australia (the MUA is an old enemy of the Howard government and one which had spectacularly defeated that government when an all-out attempt had been made, in the 1990s, to physically drive that union out of Australia's ports. It was the biggest industrial battle in recent Australasian history). These intercepts were both improper and illegal, as they involved spying on Australians in Australia, and they were used to help shape public opinion in the build up to the November 2001 Federal election (which Howard won). So they were doubly illegal, as they were used for the benefit of a political party. In its submission to the 2001 Intelligence Services Act, the DSD "confirmed that clear limits would be placed on its operations, including a legal obligation to respect the rights of Australians to privacy and an absolute prohibition on eavesdropping on Australians within Australia" (*New Zealand Herald*, 13/2/02; "Howard hit by spy agency scandal", Greg Ansley).

Initially the Government did what all governments do in such circumstances – invoked national security as a reason to neither confirm nor deny. But this scandal was too much for even the supine Labor Party (still in shock from losing an election it had had in the bag, so it had rallied behind the Government on the "war on terror" and "lock up the boat people" policies). Simon Crean, the Leader of the Opposition, said it was outrageous and un-Australian. "This isn't a genuine defence matter. This is about spying on Australian citizens to assist with putting together a political strategy around the 'Tampa'" (*Press*, 13/2/02; "Probe into Aust Govt spy charge").

So the Government was forced to do something extremely unusual – depart from the traditional "no comment" and admit that the intercepts happened but deny that any wrongdoing had happened. Specifically, it denied targeting communications to and from the MUA or the International Transportation Federation. Howard told Parliament: "The national interest of Australia required that the Government take the action it did, and the operation of the Intelligence services were, on my advice, wholly consonant with the law, save and except for the inadvertent breach" (*Press*, 14/2/02; "Spying claims dog Aust Govt"). Howard refused to give any details of the one "inadvertent" breach that he admitted to, saying that they were common in the DSD, because of the huge number of intercepts. Captain Rinnan said that he suspected that the "Tampa's" satellite phone was being tapped: "We can hear some clicking on the line and I was also complaining about that to the soldiers who boarded the ship, only suspecting it (was tapped), we could not prove it" (*ibid*).

Our sister organisation, the Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition, stated the obvious when pointing out that the DSD is an integral part of the UKUSA Agreement partners' Echelon spy system. AABCC's spokesman, Denis Doherty, said: "The 'Tampa' incident is just the tip of the iceberg. Government claims that this was a small and one-off infringement of the rule forbidding monitoring of Australian citizens' communications are deliberate disinformation...Yakima near Seattle covers the Pacific, Sugar Grove, near Washington, monitors trans-Atlantic communications, Morwenstow in Cornwall (UK) covers the Atlantic to the west and Europe and Asia to the east and Waihopai in New Zealand is responsible for the South Pacific. The spy base at Geraldton, near Perth, monitors satellite communications in the Indian Ocean. This inevitably includes communications to and from Australia. The bases at Shoal Bay (near Darwin) and Pine Gap (near Alice Springs) are also involved in this lawless activity. Phone calls to and from Australia to Europe go via the Indian Ocean satellite. For example, if my wife phones her brother in London, that conversation is monitored from Geraldton... The AABCC welcomes this exposure of the lawless activities of DSD and supports calls for an inquiry into its unbridled power to violate the privacy of the Australian people" (AABCC press release, 13/2/02; "Government Lying On DSD Spying").

Draconian New Powers For ASIO

ASIO. Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, equivalent to the NZ Security Intelligence Service (SIS).

In the wake of the September 11 2001 atrocities and subsequent "war on terror", governments all around the world have scrambled to beef up airport security (in April 2002 I flew, for the first time in a year, and entertained hundreds of rush hour travellers at Wellington Airport by being searched several times until the man with the metal detector worked out that what was setting it off were the metal domes on my denim jacket. MH.). Plus, they rushed through ill-considered and draconian "anti-terrorist" laws. New Zealand was no exception and our critical analysis of the Terrorism Suppression Bill can be found on our Website www.converge.org.nz/abc at both the *Peace Researcher* and Submissions pages.

Australia however, as is its wont, has taken "anti-terrorism" a whole lot further. The Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2002 – part of a package of six anti-terrorism bills which were due to go before Parliament later in 2002 - passed the lower House in May 2002 but had to be pulled from the Senate agenda at the last minute because of a revolt by Government backbenchers. It is extremely uncommon for Tory MPs to not back their own party on something as fundamental to reactionaries as "fighting terrorism", so it must be a pretty nasty piece of legislation. It is.

The ASIO Bill introduces powers to ban "terrorist-linked" organisations, but has such an incredibly wide definition of such groups that it could apply to virtually every sort of Australian-based international or domestic campaigning group. And humanitarian aid organisations. It was the latter realisation that provoked the backbench revolt. The Government rushed around trying to find a compromise to satisfy its own Liberal Party. Previously there was no defence of honest or reasonable mistake – the Government introduced an element of intent. The Bill made all terrorist offences (as defined in the Bill) subject to a reverse onus of proof i.e. the accused would have to prove his or her innocence, rather than the State having to prove guilt. The Government backed away from this in relation to preparatory offences, such as being found in possession of an "item" connected with a terrorist (in itself, a breathtakingly wide net) but the reverse onus would still apply to terrorist training offences. The real sticking point was the proscription powers, similar to the 1950s laws which were introduced to ban the then Communist Party of Australia (laws which were chucked out by the High Court). The Government argued that any "terrorist-linked" organisation could only be banned with the agreement of four Ministers, but the backbenchers were opposed to such banning powers in principle.

The rest of the Bill (accepted by Government backbenchers) is horrifying. For the first time, it gives ASIO the power to detain people ("terrorist suspects"). It's worth remembering that throughout the Western world, Intelligence agencies have not had this power – not the CIA, MI5, not even the good old NZSIS (in 1974, when the late Bill Sutch was arrested and charged with Official Secrets Acts offences arising from his contacts with Soviet diplomats – the only such case in New Zealand history – it was the Police who did the actual arresting, etc, on behalf of the SIS. Sutch was acquitted, and died, in 1975). Nor are there any plans to give the SIS powers of arrest and detention, despite abominations such as the Terrorism Suppression Bill.

But the Australian Bill proposed to give ASIO the power to indefinitely detain suspects (for up to 48 hours at a time, with the right of renewed detention for a further 48 hours and so on) without charging them and with no right to silence. In fact, refusing to answer questions carries a five year prison sentence. Such "terrorist suspects" can be indefinitely detained on the basis of information inadmissible as evidence in a trial and on a significantly lower standard of proof. The Bill would allow suspects as young as ten to be detained and strip searched. Journalists, doctors and priests could be jailed for refusing to divulge information about a terrorist suspect. Suspects could have

access to a lawyer after 48 hours in custody but an ASIO officer would be present during all discussions. The lawyers would be vetted by ASIO beforehand and would face up to two year's jail if they revealed details of cases to an unauthorised person. People could be jailed for life for possessing a "thing" connected to terrorism, even if they had no idea that the thing would be used for the purposes of terrorism. The definition of a terrorist threat is extremely broad.

Michael Rozenes, the former Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions, said that the Bill was not aimed at finding evidence against the actual terrorist suspect, but rather at people with information about them. He described the legislation as: "a gross departure from every standard that currently governs the way in which we legislate for criminal and other conduct. So this is a novel proposition that you can take a person when he or she is not the subject of charge or suspicion, have their liberty removed from them, put them into indefinite custody and not have them have the ability of being advised by lawyers of whether they should speak or not. There ought to be judicial supervision of the process which we do not have, there ought to be legal advice available to the detainee which we do not have, and there ought to be a privilege against self-incrimination" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 1/5/02; "ASIO admits children face strip search").

Not surprisingly, lawyers, civil libertarians, unions, aid agencies, religious groups, academics and journalists have attacked the proposed law and its companions as anti-democratic, putting Australia on a par with Malaysia's notorious Internal Security Act or the former Soviet Union. It looks very much like the Howard government wants to convert ASIO from an Intelligence agency to a fully fledged secret police force. Despite the fact that the Attorney-General can not identify one single terrorist threat to Australia, the Government is strongly defending its proposed new powers. John Howard told a Melbourne radio interviewer: "We are a close ally of the United States, properly so, we have taken a strong stand properly against terrorism. The idea that it can't happen in Australia is wrong and misguided – it can. We have to be vigilant, but the vigilance of course can't and won't stop us going about our daily lives...I want to arm us with what is needed, consistent with our traditions as a liberal democracy, what is needed in order to fight terrorism. We think this legislation which goes a little further than in the past, particularly in relation to the 48 hour period, we think that is justified in relation to the sort of threat that we now face. You have this eternal dilemma. People say what's the Government doing about the new terror threat. When we do something about it we are then accused of going too far" (*Press*, 4/5/02; "Anti-terror proposals defended").

Before breaking for the winter, the Senate did pass the Bill allowing organisations to be banned as "terrorist threats" and have their assets seized. The Bill giving ASIO detention powers was defeated, at least for the time being. But it remained in Parliament and was reintroduced in August 2002. Earlier in the year the Parliamentary Joint Committee on ASIO, the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) and the DSD had examined the proposed legislation and recommended that significant changes should be made, such as denying ASIO the power to detain people under 18. The Government was having none of that and countered with a proposal to give ASIO power to detain children as young as 14. It also rejected the Committee's recommendation for a sunset clause that would have rendered the legislation invalid after three years. It is believed that the Government has offered to limit ASIO's proposed powers of detention without charge to seven days (compared to the eight hours that the Police are allowed to hold someone without charge). Once again, this Bill faced a battle in the Senate.

The same applies to an amendment to the Telecommunications Interception Legislation Amendment Bill 2002, which would have given the spy agencies powers to intercept domestic electronic communications without a warrant. The Government temporarily gave up the fight on that one, to the extent that its own backbenchers voted against it. But it also was due to be reintroduced. There is total hypocrisy in this redefinition of "terrorists" – Australia became a haven of Nazi and Axis war criminals after WW2 and they were undisturbed; Croat terrorists, namely the fascist Ustashi, conducted a campaign of bombings and terrorism within Australia and against (the former) Yugoslavia, from Australia, for decades. Not only were they not prosecuted, evidence emerged of their close links with the Australian military and the ruling Liberal Party (which is in power today). This same Government, which denies refuge to Afghans and Iraqis, has taken in 250 members of the South Lebanese Army, Israel's former puppet army throughout the nearly 20 years of its occupation of southern Lebanon (before it was driven out by Hezbollah). This bunch of torturers and murderers includes a fair crop of war criminals. But none of these people are terrorists, not as far as the Government is concerned.

And the Howard government has no doubt about who is going to pay for this national security State – the sick and disabled. The 2002/03 Federal Budget, released in May 2002, commits more than \$A2.8 billion extra to Australia's defence and security forces to "combat terrorism". The Treasurer, Peter Costello, said: "The Government's first responsibility is to defend our citizens and our national security assets" (*Press*, 16/5/02; "Budget uses sick to aid security"). The Government wishes to avoid further embarrassments such as the "Tampa" affair and the Easter 2002 protest at the Woomera detention camp (in the Dead Heart of the Outback) which succeeded in freeing a number of the boat people detained there. The Budget commits \$A219 million to build a new detention camp on Christmas

Island and \$A455 million over four years to process asylum seekers at Christmas Island and the Cocos Islands (Australian territories but as far away from the mainland as possible). To pay for this, among other measures, prescription charges were increased to \$A28 per script and qualifying for disability pensions has been made tougher.

So those are the priorities of our biggest and most important neighbour – more powers and money for the military and spies; continual bashing of the hapless boat people (an electoral Godsend); and make the most vulnerable sectors of society shoulder the burden of paying for it all. It makes me very pleased that my Australian grandfather had the good sense to get out of there a century ago and never go back. He was an Australian boat person who came here for a better life – funnily enough, New Zealand didn't treat him like a criminal. It is that thread of common humanity and common decency that is so conspicuously lacking from Australia's public life at present. So, next time the bright boys on this side of the Tasman suggest that the answer to all our problems is to become a state of Australia (changing our name to New Tasmania perhaps), remember that this is the shonky bunch we'd get as a government. No thanks. "Aussie, Aussie, Aussie, no, no, no".

HAREWOOD MILITARY FLIGHTS CONTINUE TO DECLINE

- Bob Leonard

In this our annual report on American military/Intelligence flights at Christchurch International Airport *Peace Researcher* is pleased to reveal yet another decline in the frequency of those flights in the period June 2001 through May 2002 (a flight-year as defined by NZ diplomatic flight clearance). The table below tells the story over 12 years. While the frequency of dedicated Antarctic support flights has increased to some extent in the last couple of years, military flights have dropped to 15, or just over one per month, in that same period

Flight Year	Antarctic	Military/ Intelligence	Total	Percent Military
1990-91	32	86	118	72.9
1991-92	71	97	168	57.7
1992-93	38	85	123	69.1
1993-94	47	63	110	57.3
1994-95	33	58	91	63.7
1995-96	28	79	107	73.8
1996-97	31	78	109	71.6
1997-98	37	66	103	64.1
1998-99	63	37	100	37.0
1999-00	48	27	75	36.0
2000-01	60	13	73	17.8
2001-02	92	15	107	14.0
Totals	580	704	1284	54.8

This is not say that the US Air Force (USAF) is not still heavily involved at our airport. Since the demise of the US Naval logistics programme in 1998, heavy cargo and personnel transport to and from the American and New Zealand bases on the Ice has been the job of the Air Force. They use Starlifters, Globemasters, Hercules, the occasional Galaxy, and assorted other aircraft from time to time. The Ski-Hercules^[1] are now operated by the New York Air National Guard (NYANG), an arm of the Air Force whose specially ski-equipped planes formerly saw military service in the Arctic serving the obsolete DEWLINE (DEW = Distant Early Warning radar system for detecting Soviet missile launches over the Arctic). But the Anti-Bases Campaign considers the US military involvement in genuine Antarctic logistics as a relatively minor irritant compared to the Channel flights. These flights have served vast American military/Intelligence bases at Pine Gap and Nurrungar in Australia for decades.

As we stated in *PR 24*: “[Channel flights] remain an unwelcome violation of the spirit of our Nuclear-Free Law since all of the cargo aircraft are covered by the ‘neither confirm nor deny’ nuclear policy” (*see comment on “Peace City” in box*). Although the frequency of these flights has declined to an all-time low of just over one per month, the Channel flights effectively keep New Zealand wide-open to the militarism of George Dubya and Co. The New Zealand government has a long and deplorable record of allowing the civilian Antarctic research programme to serve as a cover for American military business on the Ice and elsewhere, including Australia and the Middle East. America’s rapidly increasing global aggression and expansion of its network of military bases, in the guise of a war on terrorism, could easily suck New Zealand into its tentacles. The groundwork has already been laid at Harewood where an American military base has existed within Christchurch for over 40 years.

[1] The NYANG Ski-Hercules flights are not included in the table because they are successors to the old Navy VXE-6 support flights that do not appear in the table. We consider them to be dedicated Antarctic flights that do not directly involve the USAF Air Mobility Command (AMC).

CHRISTCHURCH A “PEACE CITY”?

Should Christchurch be declared a “Peace City”? This proposal was put forward back in April 2002 with backing from more than 20 groups and individuals.

The proposal is now moving through due process at the City Council. Here is a backgrounder from a recent City document:

“At its May meeting the Strategy and Finance Committee received a deputation from the Peace Foundation and the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom requesting that Christchurch be declared a Peace City and proposing a number of initiatives (both short and long term) that the Council might wish to initiate to give meaning and commitment to such a declaration. Since then the Peace Foundation has also made a submission on the Draft Annual Plan requesting financial support to establish a full time position to contribute to its peace promotion work.”

ABC received a letter from The Peace Foundation asking for our support. We do indeed support this goal, but we have a problem with it as expressed here in Murray Horton’s letter to city councillor Alistair James:

10 May 2002

Councillor Alistair James
Chair, Strategy and Finance Committee
Christchurch City Council
Box 237
Christchurch

Dear Councillor James,

The Anti-Bases Campaign entirely supports the worthy goal of the City Council declaring Christchurch a “Peace City” and maintaining its leading position in New Zealand on all matters associated with peace.

However, there is a rather large problem standing in the way of this worthy goal and it constitutes the core issue of our campaign – namely that, since the 1950s, Christchurch has hosted an American military base, the only city in Australasia to do so, a base that hosts regular US military flights covered by exactly the same “neither confirm nor deny” policy that has seen US Navy ships excluded from New Zealand for nearly 20 years, a base that constitutes a glaring loophole in the fabric of both “nuclear free” New Zealand and “nuclear free” Christchurch.

I refer you to our Website www.converge.org.nz/abc (See [Other Bases page](#)).

For Christchurch to truly become a Peace City, Christchurch International Airport needs to be demilitarised. That is a matter not only for the Christchurch City Council but also for the New Zealand government.

We urge the Council to adopt such a policy.

Yours sincerely,

Murray Horton
for ABC

BOOK REVIEW

“GOING UPHILL BACKWARDS”

by Will Foote. Philip Garside Publishing, 2002. \$24.95, 128 pages

- Robyn Dann

Will Foote, who is now in his 80s, is a lifelong peace activist (he has previously written about his years of incarceration as a pacifist in WW2) and a veteran ABC member, who has been attending protests at the Waihopai spybase since the outset of our campaign. Peace Researcher has previously published reviews of other books by him. Ed.

This book is a great read especially for those of us, myself included, who do not usually enjoy reading biographies, as we soon become bored by long and minute details, “in which the worthlessness of lords and attorneys might be set forth, and conversations which had passed twenty years before be minutely repeated” (“Northanger Abbey”, Jane Austen).

This book however is just the highlights and the important bits, from his family's origins through to the present day and all told with a great sense of humour and compassion for those he writes about. I particularly enjoyed these chapters - “The Wonders of Science”, “Another Great Day In NZ Cricket”, and “A Thunderbolt from Heaven” - from his early years.

I also found his experiences as a teacher very insightful as I am currently employed as a school librarian at a poor primary school in Woolston (Christchurch) and, unfortunately for children from poor homes in our society today, many of the problems with which Will was dealing in the 1930s and 40s have not changed, nor has the level of conversation in the staff room.

The later part of the book covers his personal beliefs, namely why he became a conscientious objector during WW2 and his protests against nuclear weapons and the Waihopai spybase, as well as the three loves of his life: his family, teaching, and cricket.

A thoroughly enjoyable read, I highly recommend it.



WAIHOPAI SPYBASE PROTEST

JANUARY 24-26

KEY TIMES & EVENTS

SATURDAY 25. 11 A.M., SEYMOUR SQUARE, BLENHEIM & 2.30 P.M. AT THE BASE (WAIHOPAI VALLEY ROAD)

THEME: ANTI-WAR

The world has changed since the last Waihopai protest (2001). Reflecting that, this year's one will have an explicitly anti-war theme. It will be serious, not lighthearted like some of the more recent ones. The timing is coincidental, but this protest is taking place just before key decisions are made in the US-led drive to invade Iraq. Waihopai is NZ's key contribution to all American wars, whether in Afghanistan, Iraq or anywhere else. It is basically a US spybase operating on NZ soil, a vital outpost of the American Empire. ABC will bring a limited number of placards and banners. **Please bring your own**, relevant to the anti-war theme, linking Waihopai to the US war on Iraq, and elsewhere.

Why Waihopai should be closed

- * Waihopai is New Zealand's biggest contribution to America's wars, most notably in Afghanistan and the coming war on Iraq.
- * Waihopai does not operate in the interests of NZ or our neighbours.
- * It is not effectively accountable to Parliament or the people. It is exempt from key provisions of the Privacy Act and Crimes Act.
- * To all intents and purposes, it is a foreign spybase, working for, and providing raw intelligence directly to, the US.
- * Waihopai intercepts and records your international phone calls and e-mail.
- * Waihopai is a waste and blatant misuse of taxpayers' money.

What does Waihopai actually do?

The electronic intelligence gathering base is located in the Waihopai Valley, near Blenheim. First announced in 1987, it is operated by New Zealand's Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB), in the interests of the foreign powers grouped together in the super-secret UKUSA Agreement (which shares global electronic and signals intelligence among the Intelligence agencies of the US, UK, Canada, Australia and NZ). Its two satellite interception

dishes (shielded by giant domes) intercept a huge volume of satellite phone calls, including New Zealanders' international calls, plus telexes, faxes, e-mail and computer data communications. It gathers this data from our Asia/Pacific neighbours, and forwards it on to the major partners in the UKUSA Agreement, specifically the US National Security Agency. Its targets include international communications involving New Zealanders. The codename for this – Echelon – has become notorious worldwide. New Zealand is an integral, albeit junior, part of a global spying network, one that is ultimately accountable only to its own constituent agencies, not governments, and certainly not to citizens.

How does Waihopai involve us in America's wars?

Waihopai's "Big Ears" cover a vast area of the Pacific. Although Iraq is on the other side of the world, the US military/intelligence network that is planning that war is global and depends on global facilities. Waihopai is strategically situated in the Pacific for spying on several countries, such as Indonesia, that do not support US war plans or the so-called "war on terror". If New Zealanders disagree with US policies and warmongering, then Waihopai is located right here to monitor our own international e-mails and phone calls and report directly to Big Brother at our expense - because we pay for Waihopai with millions of our tax dollars every year. The Bush Administration has pronounced Intelligence to be the key component of all the wars that it is fighting, or planning to fight, throughout the world. Thus, much more so than any token commitment of the SAS or a frigate, the Waihopai spybase is New Zealand's key contribution to all these American wars.

Waihopai does not operate in the national interests of New Zealand or our neighbours. Basically it is a foreign spybase on NZ soil and directly involves us in America's wars. Waihopai must be closed.

Join us for the weekend of protest!

*We invite people from around the country to join us for the weekend of anti-war protest at this spybase. Come prepared for roughing it and camping out. We've hired portaloos and a marquee. We provide the food. Bring sleeping bag, groundsheet, a tent, torch, water bottle, eating utensils, clothing for all weather, and \$30 (\$15 unwaged) to cover costs. Absolutely no open fires or smoking in the camp.

*How to find our camp. Take Highway 6 out of Blenheim (the Nelson road); just before Renwick, turn left onto to Highway 63 (the Nelson Lakes road). A few kms down that, turn left down the Waihopai Valley road (winery on corner). The spybase is about 10 kms up the valley (you can't miss it - 2 huge white domes). Our camp is about 1.5 kms past the base on the left. Look for the Pleiades Vineyard sign.

We need people, money, and publicity.

I want to take part in the weekend of protest

Name -----

Address -----

Phone/Fax/E-mail -----

I enclose \$30 (\$15 unwaged) per person registration to cover costs -----

I want to make a donation to the Waihopai campaign -----

I can help with publicity in my area or network Yes/No -----

I want to join the Anti-Bases Campaign. Annual membership is \$20 -----

CLOSE THE WAIHOPAI SPYBASE NOW!

Organised by the Anti-Bases Campaign, Box 2258, Christchurch.

E-mail cafca@chch.planet.org.nz Make all cheques to ABC.

