

POP GOES THE SPYBASE!

Waihopai Domebusters Severely Embarrass The Covert State

Peace Researcher 36 – August 2008

- **Murray Horton**

The spectacular action, by Adrian Leason, Peter Murnane and Sam Land of the Waihopai Anzac Ploughshares group, in destroying one of the Waihopai spybase's two huge domes succeeded beyond anyone's wildest dreams in putting that publicity shy blot on the national conscience smack bang in the newspaper headlines and lead stories on TV news, not only in New Zealand but globally. It was such a wonderful piece of classic, do it yourself, Number Eight fencing wire, Kiwi way to deal to the spybase (actually it involved them cutting through some fencing wire but I don't know if it was of the legendary Number Eight variety). Even the date on which it was done – April 30 – is one of the most auspicious in the calendar of victories over US imperialism. April 30, 1975, was the date on which the Vietnamese people finally liberated the former Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City), thus ending that most monstrous of wars (although the US is now intent on repeating the same mistakes in both Iraq and Afghanistan). Not that the Waihopai Domebusters were even aware of the significance of the date, as I later learned. And, of course, their action did not involve any army, violence or tanks smashing through the gates of a deserted Presidential Palace – although it did feature a geriatric truck that failed to even reach the spybase's outer fence and had to be abandoned.

The Domebusters were only too happy to tell the world exactly how they did what they did. It was a triumph of low tech non-violent direct action (the only things damaged were the dome itself and some fences cut to get at it). The Catholic Worker group (with whom Anti-Bases Campaign has had a long working relationship in the campaign to close Waihopai) held a 24 hour prayer vigil outside the base during the Anzac Day long weekend. That was duly ignored by the media and the spies themselves. But they certainly sat up and took notice just a few days later when three of that group, operating as the Waihopai Anzac Ploughshares, swung into action early in the morning. Plan A was to use the truck, not as any sort of a battering ram, but equipped with a hydraulic hoist to lift the Domebusters over the electrified inner fence without having to cut it or set off any alarms (way back in the 1980s' early days of wild and woolly protests, a vehicle was used as a battering ram by women to smash through the construction site gate and they then occupied the guard house, using its phone to ring the Prime Minister, David Lange, to tell him in person to shut the base). But the truck got bogged and had to be abandoned well short of its objective (it's currently on loan to a local vintage machinery club, whose officeholders especially visited the Domebusters in their Blenheim Police Station cells to ask if they could borrow it until the legal system resolves the future ownership of this "vehicle used in the commission of a crime").

Plan B: If You Can't Go Over It, Go Through It

So Plan B swung into action and that was spectacularly straightforward. They cut through the necessary fences, including the supposedly electrified high security outer one around the base (each of the two domes has its own individual fence). Apparently something was radically wrong with the electronics; no alarms went off, no floodlights came on, no spies were interrupted from their slumbers. In a later attempt to cover its embarrassment, the NZ Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB, NZ's biggest intelligence agency) said that the base's security systems had been thwarted by these sneaky buggers taking fortuitous advantage of a "peasouper fog". That story only lasted the few days until the Domebusters were released on bail, when they revealed that there was no fog (except in the spies' imaginations) but, on the contrary, it was a lovely clear moonlit morning. Oh dear.

Having got in unobstructed and undetected, the three of them set to work with the simplest of garden tools – sickles. It's a good thing that they didn't use hammers as well because the political connotations of hammers and sickles would have been too much for some of the more feverish members of the media. We'd often wondered just what the domes were made of, assuming it to be kevlar (the stuff that bulletproof vests are made of). In one of ABC's early actions we had a bullshit throwing contest (won by a strong armed man of God who is now a clergyman in a very upmarket part of Christchurch) and the dome had made a most satisfying dull boom as each plastic bag of freely available and 100% organic bullshit hit it. The GCSB said that the domes are made of rubberised material similar to that used in inflatable boats. Whatever they're made of, the dome proved no match for a sickle. It didn't explode like a burst balloon but let out a noisy whoosh of air and then slowly but surely began to deflate. The domes are kept up by air being continuously pumped from the inside (in contrast to the much more numerous domes at the US nuclear warfighting spybase at Menwith Hill in the UK, where the domes are in segments over a rigid frame, like a geodesic dome, and thus can't be popped). The Domebusters reckon that it took fully half an hour to empty and collapse and they were concerned that they would be caught before they could see their handiwork in all its flaccid splendour – they never intended to get away, getting caught is the whole point of a Ploughshares action.

Only when the dome began to deflate did the security guards discover something was amiss. Meanwhile the Domebusters went about their work of erecting a shrine and praying over it for the innocents killed in the American wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. They came equipped with banners; they took photographs to be uploaded to the newly created Ploughshares Website (www.ploughshares.org.nz) and to be distributed to the media. It was only when the dome was down that they saw torches coming towards them, presumably alerted by computerised systems that something was amiss with the air pressure in that dome. But, incredibly, the torches went away again. When they came back a second time the Domebusters felt moved to help the hapless spies by shouting "Over here" and waving. It was only then that they were detected, apprehended and eventually arrested by the Police and held in custody in the Blenheim copshop for five days while the whole country went apeshit about what they'd done.

Symbolic Base Closure Textbook Example Of Non-Violent Direct Action

And let's be very clear about what they have, and have not, done. They demolished one of the two domes (there is a third, very recent satellite dish, which has never been covered with a dome). In the immediate aftermath, Bruce Ferguson, the GCSB Director, had some success in peddling the nonsense that the function of the domes is to keep the dishes weatherproof. After a few days of this the media obviously thought: "Wait a minute, our TV network has got a bloody great satellite dish on the roof of our Auckland HQ and it doesn't need a dome over it to stop it going rusty. And, come to think of it, what about the hundreds of thousands of Sky TV dishes on houses throughout the country. None of them seem to require little white domes to enable them to function properly". The function of the domes is one of the things that instantly identifies Waihopai as a spybase (the Government has never attempted a cover story for it). They are there purely and simply to conceal from public and media view the direction in which the dish is pointing, from which can be deduced which satellites are being spied upon. Ferguson put the replacement cost at \$1 million, which seems an awful lot of money for something that is supposedly just intended to keep the weather out.

So, by destroying one dome (they thought about doing the second one as well but decided not to push their luck) they committed a purely symbolic act. Those domes are the most identifiable things about Waihopai, dominating the valley and big enough to be seen from passing aircraft. They are the very symbol of Waihopai. But that's all they are, they're not one of the integral parts of the spybase's function. Those are the dishes themselves, and the computers inside the buildings. The Domebusters made no attempt to touch those - and they could have done serious damage to the dish they exposed. They had more than 30 minutes undetected at the dish and they had the tools to inflict damage upon it if they'd so wanted. But they didn't and that is probably one of the reasons why the Police backed away from the threat to charge them with the very serious offence of sabotage. This was the very opposite of a terrorist act – nobody was hurt, nothing was bombed, set on fire or even seriously damaged. The "terrorists" were unarmed (to a comical degree) and went out of their way to be caught. It was a brilliant piece of political theatre, a perfect example of non-violent direct action affecting only property. And a most bloodstained, obnoxious bit of property at that.

So why did they do it? That doesn't require any explanation for readers of *Peace Researcher*. Waihopai is NZ's single most important contribution to each and any American war (be it in Iraq, Afghanistan or "on Terror") with intelligence gathering having been elevated to critical importance by that war machine. It fatally compromises our supposed nuclear free and independent foreign policy. They did it for all the reasons that ABC has presented why Waihopai should be closed down forthwith, in the 21 years that we've been campaigning about this spybase. In everything except name it is an outpost of US Intelligence operating with impunity on NZ soil and, to add insult to injury, we pay for it, to the tune of tens of millions per year.

Waihopai Is A US Spybase In All But Name

Another piece of bullshit peddled by the GCSB and some wilfully ignorant "experts" in the immediate aftermath was that Waihopai is a purely NZ operation, fully under "our" control and only working to gather intelligence of use to NZ. That is complete nonsense – Waihopai is but one of a global chain of such spybases operated by the Intelligence agencies of the five members of the top secret UKUSA Agreement – the US, UK, Canada, Australia and NZ. All of them (bases and agencies) operate at the behest of, and in the interests of, the US National Security Agency (NSA), the world's biggest spy agency. Bruce Ferguson immediately undercut his own assertion of Waihopai's "100% stand alone Kiwi owned and operated" status by revealing that as soon as he learned of the attack, he immediately contacted the GCSB's Bigger Brothers to alert them of possible internationally coordinated Ploughshares attacks on their spybases. Why would he bother to do that if Waihopai was truly independent? Nicky Hager wrote "Secret Power" (1996) the definitive book on Waihopai, the GCSB and their role in the international spy network. He has long since moved onto other subjects but is still an unparalleled expert on this. In the *Sunday Star Times* (11/5/08; "Waihopai: our role in international spying") he set the record straight:

“...Waihopai is entirely a New Zealand operation, not part of the War on Terror, they said. It is, in the words of one newspaper, just to ‘keep New Zealand competitive in diplomatic, political and trade negotiations’. They are completely wrong. New information, prised out by former Chief Ombudsman John Belgrave and from intelligence insiders, makes it clear that Waihopai, and the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) that runs it, have been heavily focused on supporting the US War on Terror since September 11, 2001...

“All of this makes it clear that, whatever you think of the Christian protest at Waihopai, they were correct when they described it as an important part of the Bush Administration's War on Terror. But the GCSB is generally so secret that it's easy for people to sound off in uninformed ways. Peter Cozens, head of the Centre for Strategic Studies, for instance, said the base is used strictly to collect and analyse information, often of ‘a political, trade and diplomatic nature’, for the New Zealand government. He told the *New Zealand Herald* that Waihopai is ‘entirely, totally *cosa nostra* New Zealand. It is New Zealand's mafia, if you like. It's our thing. It's got nothing to do with the Americans’.

“Incorrect. The Waihopai station, like the GCSB itself, is staffed and funded by New Zealanders. It is not a US base in the sense of US personnel being stationed on New Zealand soil. But it has everything to do with the Americans. The station is part of a network of similar stations set up at US prompting by allies around the world. The same equipment, manuals, codewords and communication systems are found in each station.

“This US intelligence system, codenamed ‘Echelon’ in the 1990s, was the subject of a 2000-2001 European Parliament inquiry that confirmed and added extra detail to the descriptions of Echelon provided by GCSB staff for my 1996 book about the agency. It uses computers codenamed Dictionaries to sift intelligence from the millions of satellite communications intercepted at the various facilities. The key to the system is that each station does not just collect intelligence for the home nation. Waihopai, like the others, has separate US, British and Australian search lists (keywords, email addresses etc) that are used to identify and collect intelligence for the US, British and Australian electronic spying agencies. Thus at the same time as Waihopai collects intelligence on the South Pacific and other subjects for the GCSB, it also functions in effect as a foreign base collecting intelligence for the intelligence allies.

“The intercepted messages collected for the New Zealand agency go by an encrypted link across Cook Strait to the Freyberg Building headquarters in Aitken St, Wellington. They are stored in a computer database inside a large vault room 12.11 on the GCSB's 12th floor until processed by the intelligence analysts. But the messages collected at Waihopai for the other allies, which mostly means the United States, are routed straight from the 14th floor GCSB information centre to Washington DC and allied agencies...

“The GCSB's role in the US-led network is well known to its own staff. When they arrive at headquarters each day, they walk along corridors displaying framed pictures of the signals intelligence bases that are the foundation of their work: photos of Waihopai and its US and allied sister stations dotted around the globe. There is no good reason why other New Zealanders should not also be allowed to know the basic facts of these intelligence ties, and whose foreign policies they are supporting”

Who Are These Domebusters?

Their profiles can be found on the Ploughshares Website (www.ploughshares.org.nz). We're proud to say that all three of them are ABC members (although one didn't join until after the action) and all three, plus a swag of their relatives, kids and fellow Catholic Workers, were at ABC's latest Waihopai protest, in January 2008. Indeed that group, complete with truck (not the same one used in the attack) made up a significant proportion of our numbers at that protest. Of the three, Hokianga farmer Sam Land is the one best known to us. He has been to more than one previous Waihopai protest; when he was living in one of Catholic Worker's Christchurch houses throughout the winter of 2007 he was a regular participant at ABC's fortnightly committee meetings and other activities; after they were bailed from the Blenheim Police Station in May 08, Sam came back to Christchurch for several weeks and resumed attending our committee meetings (he's now back home, where the winters are rather warmer). Sam's anti-bases activism is not confined to Waihopai or indeed to New Zealand – during his 2007 Christchurch sojourn he was very keen to campaign against the US Air Force base at Christchurch Airport; in October 06 he was amongst those arrested at the main gate of the Americans' nuclear warfighting spybase at Pine Gap, near Alice Springs in Australia. That action was in support of the Christians Against All Terrorism group, four of whom faced draconian charges for getting into that top secret base (see elsewhere in this issue for the, very successful, not to mention surprising, outcome of that trial). With his wide awake hat and gumboots ever present at each end of his gangly frame, Sam cuts a striking figure. He looks like a comic book country bumpkin (he reminds me of Cooch from *Footrot Flats*) but don't be deceived – he is one deeply thoughtful and very committed peace activist. He was a very welcome addition to ABC's ranks when he was in Christchurch and we look forward to working with him again in future.

Peter Murnane is one of the Auckland Dominican priests who provided a home for Ahmed Zaoui for the three years between his release from imprisonment without charge or trial and the conclusion of his case, which saw the dropping of his classification as a terrorist and being allowed to live a normal life in New Zealand with his family (another shining triumph for NZ's Intelligence agencies; see *PR 35*, December 2007; "At Long Bloody last: A Happy Ending To Ahmed Zaoui's Ordeal", by Murray Horton, which can be read online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr35-153.html>). Peter is a well known Auckland peace activist, who has campaigned vigorously against the Iraq War and, specifically, the impact of "our side's" depleted uranium weapons on the men, women and children of that unfortunate country. An Australian, he didn't wait for the long overdue Prime Ministerial apology to the Aborigines. "In 2005 I made a 2,700km Pilgrimage of Reconciliation by bicycle, from Parliament House, Canberra to Uluru in central Australia to mark 40 years as a priest and to look more deeply at the terrible injustices done since 1788 to Australia's Original People, as they were displaced from their land".

ABC has had an excellent working relationship with both Catholic Worker and Ploughshares for the two decades of our existence, not only in the campaign to close Waihopai but also that to demilitarise Harewood (the US Air Force base at Christchurch Airport). There are obvious differences – their Catholicism is a central tenet of their anti-bases activism; ABC is most definitely secular. But those differences have never caused us any problems, and have even given us a few laughs. Back in the days when Ploughshares' regular vigils at Harewood comprised almost exclusively middle aged Catholic women, the cops made a beeline for ABC's Bob Leonard, the only bearded male present, to explain what was going on as the women enacted the Stations of the Cross at one Easter protest. Bob, quite honestly, told them that he didn't have a clue and that they needed to speak to the women. The April 30, 2008, Waihopai disarmament action (the Biblical injunction to beat swords into ploughshares, from whence the group takes its name) was the first of its kind in NZ but such actions have been commonplace overseas for years, with Ploughshares activists spending years in prison as a result. Moana Cole is this country's best known Ploughshares activist, having spent a year in a US prison and been deported as a result of her part in an action to symbolically disarm a US Air Force bomber in a base in the US to protest the imminent 1991 Gulf War. Both Moana and fellow disarmer, Ciaran O'Reilly, were ABC committee members in the mid 90s and they were arrested and fined together for trespassing at the Harewood base (see *PR 3*, December 1994). Moana is now a Christchurch lawyer and she is representing the Waihopai Domebusters.

Saturation Media Coverage

As already mentioned, this one single action succeeded in getting more saturation media coverage of the Waihopai spybase than anything else in the 21 years since it was first announced. It was all over the papers, TV and radio, not only in NZ but overseas as well. And why not – spectacularly deflating a spy satellite dome is not an everyday occurrence anywhere. This is the area where the Ploughshares action was most a victim of its own wonderful amateurism. They had a media spokesperson on the day who duly announced the deflation and by whom and the why of it to a startled world. He also candidly stated that they had never really expected to succeed. He wasn't one of the Domebusters so he was only held a short time by the Police and then released. He then, for whatever reason, became uncontactable by the media.

That set the baying hounds onto me and my phone went crazy for the next couple of days. Let's clarify one thing here – this was not an ABC action, we knew nothing about it until the rest of the world learned of it. However that fine distinction was lost on the media and so ABC was suddenly being pressed for comment on all sides (by journalists who in some cases stated that they'd never previously heard of Waihopai and asked questions like "isn't it there to protect us from terrorists? What's wrong with that?"). Not only was I asked to comment about the base itself and what I thought about the action but to also explain the religious philosophy of Ploughshares (I declined that invitation, from Radio New Zealand's *Morning Report*, for obvious reasons). I had a TV crew come to the house while I was in the middle of a major mailout (the interview never screened); I was deemed unsuitable for another TV interview when I didn't meet their criteria of ever having "penetrated" Waihopai; I did one pre-dawn live studio national TV interview where I was asked if I thought Ploughshares are "religious extremists" ("no" was my answer, call them "militant activists" instead). I ended up doing one radio interview because the journalist couldn't get hold of Nicky Hager (who told me later that he was oblivious to the whole thing, being in Dunedin giving a "how to write a book" speech). And, because they are Catholics, the Ploughshares action got big coverage in publications that we normally never see (such as the Church's official *New Zealand Catholic*) and led to an invitation to me to write a guest editorial about it in *Tui Motu*, an independent Catholic monthly magazine (a publication that I'd never previously seen and with which I'd never had any dealings).

ABC put out our own press release congratulating the Domebusters for their brilliant and courageous action; we had no hesitation in declaring our support. All up, it was the most intensely sustained period of media work that ABC has ever had, suffused with the ignorance and prejudice that the media demonstrate when covering a major "outrage" story like this and it was a very high pressure few days – without ABC having done anything to earn all this attention

(beyond having campaigned for the base's closure for 21 years, of course).

The media frenzy continued when the Domebusters were bailed after several days in the Blenheim Police Station and emerged blinking into the spotlight (minus items such as their footwear, which was kept for forensic evidence). All three proved extremely articulate spokespeople for why they had done what they had done. They have been charged with causing intentional damage and entering a building with intent to commit a crime (that's an interesting one, as I'm not sure that a fenced enclosure containing a dish and dome meets the definition of a building). Initially their bail conditions were absurdly restrictive – having to report to the Police several times a week, being barred from any contact with each other, prohibited from entering the province of Marlborough except to appear in court or consult lawyers, and barred from going within 100 metres of any military installation. By June, some of those restrictions had been dropped (but not the ones about Marlborough or military installations). No date has yet been set for the trial. At the Blenheim court hearing at which they were granted bail, they were supported by a crowd of up to 50 people (the papers said 20) organised by ABC committee member Lynda Boyd. The crowd included family members of the Domebusters and those who had come specially from Christchurch, Nelson, Motueka and as far north as Auckland, as well as from Blenheim itself. Despite the freezing cold weather, the people rallied with placards, banners and chants on the steps of the court, marched through Blenheim and went out to the base. It was the first time since 1997 that ABC has rallied support for Waihopai protesters appearing in the Blenheim court. In Christchurch, there was a support action, organised by women, at the US Air Force base at the airport. Both actions got media coverage (which they otherwise wouldn't have).

Shut It Down Now

Will this have an effect on ABC's Waihopai campaign? Of course, it already has. For years, we have been granted permission by the base to bring various foreign anti-bases visitors up to its inner gate. But we were denied permission to do likewise with Cora Fabros from the Philippines when she was in Blenheim in July 2008 as part of her "Bases Of Empire" speaking tour organised by ABC. And I have no doubt that they will refuse future requests for our regular protests to come up to that inner gate (being barred from setting foot on any of the base, including the surrounding farm paddocks, was the status quo for the first decade of our campaign, a policy which led to dozens of arrests for trespass). Well that's tough but ABC is actually in this campaign to have the base closed down, not to cultivate a comfy, cosy, co-dependency "relationship" with the spies. The Domebusters have done the whole world a great big favour by literally and figuratively letting the air out of Waihopai, symbolically closing the base in the process; they embarrassed the covert State by shattering the spybase's high security aura of invulnerability; and they have done what the spies and their political masters fear most, namely exposing them to the sunlight of public scrutiny. They will pay a price for that and they are prepared to do so. ABC salutes them and we will support them throughout this whole process.

If you want to help the Domebusters, donations can be made to:

Bank transfer: Westpac, Account Name: TE WAIRUA MARANGA TRUST, Account Number: 03-1703-0036346-04 - donations are not tax-deductible.

If you do not have Internet banking, please send your cheque payable to Peace Movement Aotearoa - Special Projects, with a note saying it is for Ploughshares Aotearoa, and your name and address (if you'd like a receipt) to Peace Movement Aotearoa, PO Box 9314, Wellington 6141.

- **Murray Horton**

The Anti-Bases Campaign held our regular protest in Blenheim and at the Waihopai spybase in January 2008 (the media refer to it as our “annual” protest; in fact, there have been some years when it hasn’t been held, but it’s near enough to annual). In the normal course of events, that would be the lead story in this *Peace Researcher*. But, as the spectacularly successful April 30th dome deflation by Ploughshares demonstrated (see cover story), 2008 is not following the normal course of events when it comes to Waihopai actions. So I’ll happily defer to them in terms of *PR* coverage and just give a brief summary of ABC’s own Waihopai protest last summer.

Not that we’re complaining. For years, our standard response to those who have criticised our actions as “tame”, “predictable” and “scripted” has been that we don’t claim any monopoly on the campaign to close Waihopai; that we’re only there one day a year; and that others are welcome to do their own thing. As long as it is non-violent direct action, we are happy to support it. That had never been put to the test until this year, due to a conspicuous lack of Waihopai actions (let alone campaigning) by any other groups. But we were only too happy to declare our full support for the Ploughshares Domebusters’ action. In fact, all three of them (Adrian Leason, Peter Murnane and Sam Land), plus a sizeable contingent of their relatives and Catholic Worker colleagues, played a full part in our January activities. Without them our numbers would have been noticeably smaller.

As ABC’s photographer, Kane O’Connell, put it, his photos from January 2008 look almost indistinguishable from those he took in January 07. And indeed, our activities were very much the same. On the Saturday morning anywhere up to 50 people marched through Blenheim, starting and finishing at Seymour Square. We stopped at the Rotunda in the Forum in the centre of town where there were several speakers: Green MP Keith Locke, John Minto from Global Peace and Justice Auckland and myself, on behalf of ABC. Both John and myself asked those present to remember Graeme White, who was a regular at recent Waihopai protests and indeed fell into the category of once met, never forgotten (Graeme disappeared in Lyttelton Harbour in August 07 and his body has never been found; see my obituary of him in *PR* 35, December 2007, which can be read online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr35-159.html>).

As well as our copious supply of colourful placards and banners, we used the same props that we have used so successfully in recent years – a giant mock cheque showing the financial cost of the spybase in the 20 odd years of its existence, coffins and crosses and white face masks to represent those killed by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan which Waihopai helps the Americans and their mates to wage; the eye-catching Uncle Sam (aka Bob Leonard) who always turns up to tell us to bugger off from his little bit of America in Marlborough. This year we were unexpectedly joined by another eye-catching fellow, namely a very tall visiting American dressed just like a Secret Serviceman (complete with TV aerial protruding from his collar, dark glasses and a newspaper with especially cut eyespy holes). He spoke to us “on behalf” of America’s spies. As a piece of street theatre, he was great.

In the afternoon a smaller number (around 30) went out to the spybase where we had permission to march up the access road to the inner gate where there were further speeches demanding the place’s closure. We always have an open mike out there and a number of people spoke, such as local ABC activist, Steffan Browning and veteran peace and international solidarity activist, Maire Leadbeater, who pointed out the role of Waihopai and its sister bases in spying on independence struggles in countries such as Indonesia. Two of those who spoke outside the gate were among those who got in and deflated the dome three months later. Right up until the last minute Waihopai 08 was going to feature a real point of difference with previous demos, in that it was going to include a delegation of Japanese peace activists, including some *hibakusha* (victims of the American atomic bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945). But, right at the last minute, they had to cancel their NZ visit for various reasons, to the great disappointment of organisers in both countries (ABC has hosted Japanese peace activists at Waihopai before; in 2005, Bob Leonard escorted a group up to the inner gate, to their great delight).

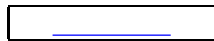
Excellent Media Coverage

ABC’s Waihopai actions may be numerically small and purely symbolic but they always get very good media coverage, far out of proportion to the actual numbers taking part. 2008 was no exception, with very good

coverage in the *Marlborough Express* (which also ran special interest stories such as a profile on the return of “veteran Blenheim protester” Evin Wood, who has been in the campaign from the outset, except for several years teaching in China recently). To the great delight of leading Auckland activist, John Minto, his hometown newspaper, the *New Zealand Herald* (the country’s biggest) actually ran an article this year on Waihopai, timed to coincide with the protest. Bringing this issue to the attention of the country’s biggest city is always a challenge and this was an excellent result. There was also good coverage from various radio networks.

Although our numbers may be small, they make up in quality what is lacking in quantity. John Minto, in his Blenheim speech, described the Waihopai protesters as the “most discerning” in the country. For example, Bob and I shared our tent with two City Councillors (one each from Auckland and Christchurch, although neither was there in his official capacity). The Waihopai protest is always a most enjoyable and stimulating three day weekend. We camped in a new Department of Conservation campsite this time, at beautiful Whites Bay, complete with beach, bush and, most importantly, minus the bogans who made our last campsite a trial. Once again we had adventures with the ABC tent, specifically the poles needed to hold it up, but nothing that the trusty Alan Liefing couldn’t fix with a pocket knife and some lifesaving insulating tape that our Catholic Worker friends were carrying.

ABC intends to keep going back to Blenheim and Waihopai. We are fully aware that one likely result of the Domebusters’ action is that we will be denied permission to go up the access road to the inner gate. That was the status quo throughout much of the first decade of our campaign and it doesn’t make much difference to us, as our intention is to regularly focus attention onto the place and demand its closure, not to actually try and storm the place there and then. The difference in 2008 is that others have, most dramatically and effectively, joined the campaign and taken it to another level. We say, welcome aboard, the more the merrier. Let’s shut this monstrosity down.



PINE GAP SPYBASE “INVADERS” ACQUITTED - Huge Defeat For The Covert State

Peace Researcher 36 – August 2008

- Murray Horton

Peace Researcher 33 reported in detail the December 2005 protest action at Pine Gap by the Australian group Christians Against All Terrorism (November 2006, “Aussie Activists Occupy Top Secret Pine Gap Spy Base: First To Ever Face Draconian Charges”, by Murray Horton, which can be read online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr33-137b.html>). Donna Mulhearn, Jim Dowling, Adele Goldie and Bryan Law made a non-violent Citizens’ Inspection right into the base, getting very near to the buildings in the inner sanctum (they reached the technical support area, the first protesters to ever do so, even climbing onto the roof of one building, before being arrested). The Federal Government decided to throw the book at them, making the Pine Gap Four the first people to ever be charged under the 1952 Defence (Special Undertakings) Act, a process which required the approval of the Attorney-General. They each faced up to seven years in prison and/or a fine of \$A46,200.

The groundbreaking case came to trial in Alice Springs in May and June 2007. The Crown tried to have all four held in a kind of house arrest during the trial to prevent them undertaking any further protests at Pine Gap while they were in town. The judge dismissed that application, remanding them on bail (there were protests at Pine Gap during the trial, including some token outer fence climbing. No further charges were laid against anyone). All four represented themselves and the judge allowed them to introduce evidence about the function and purpose of the spybase (over the objections of the prosecution. By contrast, the last time there was a Waihopai spybase protest trial – Blenheim, 1997 – the judge refused to allow any such evidence about Waihopai’s function, dismissing it all as “hearsay”, and confined the hearing entirely to the charge of trespass faced by the 20 defendants, who were all convicted).

Not surprisingly the jury didn’t take long to convict all four (they certainly didn’t deny doing it, and had gone out of their way to be arrested inside the base). They fully expected to go to prison and the prosecution asked for them to be jailed, submitting that their action was one of “striking at the heart of the national security and the national interest” (*Daily Telegraph*, 15/6/07; “Pine Gap protesters avoid jail”, Jonathan Dart). But Justice Sally Thomas was not prepared to play ball with the Government, saying that the maximum penalties were severe, considering that hundreds of people had been tried in lower courts for Pine Gap protests over the decades and none of them had been jailed.

She fined the Pine Gap Four a total of \$A3,250 and ordered them to pay a total of \$A10,075.89 for damaging the fences (namely by cutting them, to get in). The judge pointed out that this was the first time anyone had been sentenced in Australia under this Cold War relic of a law and that it would set a precedent for future cases arising from Pine Gap protests. Both sides appealed – the prosecution to increase the “manifestly inadequate” sentences, wanting the four imprisoned; the defendants, now represented by a top lawyer who had offered his services, appealed against the convictions. Both sets of appeals were heard together by the Northern Territory Supreme Court in Darwin, in February 2008.

As all four defendants had refused to pay any of the fines and reparations, they were arrested and imprisoned as soon as they set foot back in the Northern Territory for the hearing. They each served between five and ten days in prison. So far, so predictable. They had all fully expected to get lengthy prison terms for their peaceful invasion of Pine Gap. But that’s not how things panned out, quite the opposite in fact.

Complete Vindication

“Four anti-war protesters have been acquitted of national security charges for penetrating the Territory’s Pine Gap spy base. And the surprise verdict has raised doubts over whether peaceful invaders of Pine Gap can be charged under current federal laws...’It’s a vindication of a position we’ve been taking for two years - Pine Gap is not a base for the defence of Australia’ Mr Law said on the Supreme Court steps. ‘Pine Gap is an instrument of international aggression and the base of the bombing and murder of innocent civilians in Iraq. The Commonwealth Government has been trying ... to punish us to the maximum extent possible for an expression of conscience’.

“Yesterday, it took Chief Justice Martin and Justices Trevor Riley and David Angel just minutes to agree that there had been a ‘miscarriage of justice’, as the four had not been allowed to argue before a jury that Pine Gap was not a ‘defence facility’ for Australia. They also disallowed an application by the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions for a retrial. ‘What would be achieved for these individuals or the community if there is a retrial?’ asked

Justice Riley. "The defendants were deprived of a possible defence, mainly establishing that the facility was not necessary for defence purposes', Chief Justice Brian Martin said yesterday.

"Ms Mulhearn said the decision meant that the Federal Government would 'have to' review the 'draconian' Act. 'The Federal Government will have to look at the Defence (Special Undertakings) Act and the implications it has now for any activist who wants to take part in non-violent civil disobedience at Pine Gap', she said. Ms Mulhearn said they were shocked to win the case... She hoped the decision would give others the 'courage' to 'expose' Pine Gap..." (*Sunday Territorian*, Darwin, 23/2/08; "Star Wars Invaders Set Free", Phoebe Stewart).

Bryan Law (who spent ten days in prison, the longest of the four) wrote: "Since the 1970s, when protests began against Pine Gap, the Commonwealth has been threatening us with the DSU (Defence Special Undertakings Act). They can't do that any more. I'd love to be charged under the DSU. I'd love to get the documents from 1967 when Pine Gap was declared a 'space research facility'. They'll never give us access to these documents. They'll never use the DSU again..." (e-mail, 27/2/08, "Reflections From Bryan Law").

The Pine Gap Four have won their case but they certainly haven't gone away. In February 2008, before the appeal, they launched a small booklet "Liberating Pine Gap", plus a compilation CD "Rise Up And Speak The Truth", featuring peace and anti-war music from artists in Australia and around the world who donated their songs in support of the Pine Gap Four. Nor have they been resting on their laurels. For example, in April 2008, Jim Dowling was one of two people arrested for painting walls with human blood during an "exorcism" ceremony by Christians Against All Terrorism at the Brisbane office of Raytheon's weapons manufacturing facility (Raytheon is the same giant US weapons transnational corporation which has the maintenance contract at Pine Gap).

First New US Spybase To Be Built In Australia For 40 Years

Regrettably, there will soon be a new target for Australian anti-bases campaigners. In June 2008, the Government revealed that work would soon commence on a brand new US spy base in Western Australia, the first one to be built in the country since Pine Gap in the 1960s. The US Mobile Users Objective System, which will be located alongside the existing Australian satellite spybase at Geraldton (this is Waihopai's sister station) "will be linked to a network of communications satellites that will provide frontline US military units with instant access to high grade intelligence and tactical information. Once operational, the new facility will automatically provide communications support for US military operations in Iraq and the Persian Gulf. Indeed, it will also automatically provide communications support for US military operations in much of the Asia-Pacific region...The Defence Department and the US Navy signed a classified memorandum of understanding setting out governing arrangements for the station in November 2007. The conclusion of a secret memorandum of understanding rather than a formal treaty means that the agreement has not been reviewed by Federal Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Treaties. (The Defence Minister) has said the ground station will be operational by 2011" (*Canberra Times*, 17/6/08; "US spy base to be built in WA", Philip Dorling). Remember, this is being done under the "new broom" Rudd Labor government, the same one which recently made a show of honouring its election promise to withdraw Australian troops from Iraq (and even that was not all that it was made out to be). So there will be no let up for our Australian friends but we're sure that they are equal to the task. We salute them for their courage and determination, as they're confronting a much bigger and nastier beast than we have to in this country.

An Ignored Warning?

And, in a strange footnote to the April 2008 Waihopai Domebusters' action (see cover story), there was a Pine Gap Four connection to that. "Australian authorities were aware since January that a Christian peace group in New Zealand was planning an attack around Anzac Day on a spy facility with links to the United States, according to activists. The claim was made to the *Press* last night by Bryan Law, one of four Australians who broke into the joint US-Australia spy facility at Pine Gap near Alice Springs in December 2005...Law said in a telephone interview yesterday that he warned senior Australian defence and police officials three times that an action was planned around Anzac Day in New Zealand this year. He said he told them the action would include a 'Ploughshares component' and target 'US military assets'... Law said Christians Against All Terrorism had a practice of 'full disclosure' to authorities about its actions..." (*Press*, 3/5/08, "Aust 'warned' of NZ pacifists' action". Dan Eaton). This Australian "warning", by the way, was news to the Domebusters. Obviously the powers that be in Australia didn't take any notice of it either and, if they passed it on, neither did their New Zealand counterparts. I bet they do next time.

To buy the "Liberating Pine Gap" booklet and/or the "Rise Up And Speak The Truth" CD, send \$A6 for the booklet and \$A20 (those figures include postage) for the CD. Make cheques to Jim Dowling, 2705 Mt Mee Road, Ocean View, Queensland 4521, Australia, penangke@octa4.net.au

- **Herbert Docena**

Since the closure of its military bases in the country in 1991, the United States has incrementally regained, transformed, and deepened its military presence and intervention in the Philippines. The manner in which the United States has attempted to re-establish basing in the Philippines illustrates its attempts to radically overhaul its global offensive capabilities to become more agile and efficient while overcoming mounting domestic opposition to its presence around the world.

The objectives with which the United States has sought to achieve this in the Philippines - a country that is firmly within what US analysts and strategists call "the dragon's lair" - point to the emerging US strategy toward what it has officially identified as the one country with "the greatest potential to compete with the United States" - China. In this strategy, the Philippines, by virtue both of its location as well as its political disposition towards the United States relative to its neighbours, plays a crucial role.

Basing Without Bases

After George W Bush came to power, the United States began to attempt in earnest to implement what its proponents bill as the most comprehensive reconfiguration of its global military presence since World War II. The underlying rationale is clear: the positioning and forms of US military bases of the past - built as they were for the Cold War - no longer suffice for the present. The US overseas basing must therefore be transformed so as to enable the US military to become leaner and meaner, quicker and more agile.

In the Philippines, as in a growing number of places around the world, the one persistent constraint for both the US and Philippine governments, however, has been the long-standing domestic sensitivity to US bases in the country. This opposition was actually an important - if not the decisive - factor in the decision to close the bases in 1991 and in the adoption in the post-Marcos 1987 Constitution of provisions banning foreign military bases in the country.

As it has embarked on the project of transforming its global presence, the United States has also sought to adapt to and undermine domestic opposition to its bases. In this, the US military's reconceptualisation of its global military presence - no longer as merely a collection of physical structures but as a global "posture" - is illuminating. By posture, explained US Undersecretary of Defense Douglas J Feith, "We are not talking only about basing, we're talking about the ability of our forces to operate when and where they are needed". Thus, recognising that the local political situation is not yet ripe for the reestablishment of the kind of large military bases that the United States once had in the Philippines, the United States has instead moved forward to achieve this ability in various other ways.

Recurring Deployments

The United States has been deploying a growing number of its troops, ships, and equipment all over the Philippines ostensibly for training exercises, humanitarian and engineering projects, and other missions. In 2006 alone, up to 37 military exercises were scheduled - up from around 24 in the preceding years. As many as 6,000 US troops are involved, depending on the exercise. Though packaged as on-and-off temporary programmes to train US and Filipino troops, such exercises are seen as an alternative way for the US military to secure access to the Philippines. "The habitual relationships built through exercises and training", former US Pacific Command head Admiral Thomas Fargo noted in March 2003, "is our biggest guarantor of access in time of need". He continued: "Access over time can develop into habitual use of certain facilities by deployed US forces with the eventual goal of being guaranteed use in a crisis, or permission to preposition logistics stocks and other critical material in strategic forward locations".

As US troops come and go in rotation for frequent and regular exercises, their presence - when taken together - makes up a formidable forward presence that brings them closer to areas of possible action without need for huge infrastructure to support them and without inciting a lot of public attention and opposition. As the US National Defense Strategy states: "Our posture also includes the many military activities in which we engage around the world. This means not only our physical presence in key regions, but also our training, exercises, and operations". Along with troops, an increasing number of ships have also been entering the country's territorial waters and docking at various ports with growing frequency. Such ship visits are also seen as ways to establish presence. As the US Congressional Budget Office has pointed out: "[T]he Navy counts those ships as providing overseas presence full time, even when they are training or simply tied up at the pier".

Dual-Use Infrastructure

Apart from the troop deployments and ship visits, the United States has also been constructing an increasing number of structures and facilities that could be useful for the US military when the contingency arises - while at the same time allowing it to buy political support from the national and local governments. In various parts of the country, especially in the southern regions of Mindanao, the United States has been engaged in a flurry of construction activities, building or renovating airports, piers, wharves, roads and other infrastructure.

In General Santos City, for example, the United States constructed a deep-water port and one of the most modern airports in the country, connected to each other by one of the country's best roads. Why the United States was so intent on financing and building this modern airport in a small city where relatively few passenger or cargo planes land could not be explained if not for its potential military use. In Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija, where US troops routinely go for exercises, the airport has been renovated and its runway strengthened to carry the weight of C-130 planes. In Sulu, the United States is renovating the airport, upgrading roads, and building ports that can berth huge ships. All this is consistent with a US Air Force (USAF)-funded study which recommended having more deployments to have more infrastructure. By increasing deployments, notes the study, the United States can get into arrangements that "include measures to tailor local infrastructure to USAF operations by extending runways, improving air traffic control facilities, repairing parking aprons and the like".

Cooperative Security Locations

The United States is also establishing in the Philippines a new category of military installations it calls "Cooperative Security Locations" (CSLs). As part of the innovations introduced in the ongoing revamping of the global US network of bases, CSLs refer to facilities owned either by host governments or even by private companies that are to be made available for use by the US military as needed. According to the Pentagon, these CSLs are to be run and maintained by either host governments or private contractors and are as useful for prepositioning logistics support or as venues for joint operations with host militaries. While intended to be small so as not to attract attention, they could be expanded to become larger bases when necessary. In August 2005, the US Overseas Basing Commission, the official commission tasked to review US basing, categorically identified the Philippines as one of the countries where such CSLs are being developed by the United States in the region. The Philippine government, however, has refused to disclose the locations and other details about these CSLs.

Base Services Without Basing

The United States has obliged the Philippines to provide it with a broad range of locally provided services that would enable it to launch and sustain operations from the Philippines when necessary. In November 2002, the United States and Philippine governments signed the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA), which researchers with the US Congressional Research Service describe as "allowing the United States to use the Philippines as a supply base for military operations throughout the region".

The MLSA obliges the Philippine government to provide the United States with logistical supplies, support and services during exercises, training, operations, and other US military deployments. These supplies include food, water, petroleum, oils, clothing, ammunition, spare parts and components, billeting, transportation, communication, medical services, operation support, training services, repair and maintenance, storage services, and port services. "Construction and use of temporary structures" is also covered. In other words, through the MLSA, the United States has secured for itself the services that it would normally provide itself inside a large permanent base but without constructing and retaining large permanent bases - and without incurring the costs and the political problems that such bases pose.

Forward Operating Base

Finally, the United States has succeeded in indefinitely stationing a US military unit in the country. Since 2002, a unit now called the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTFP) has been deployed to the southern Philippines. Contrary to the US and Philippine governments efforts to present the troops belonging to the unit as part of temporary training exercises, this unit has maintained its presence in the country continuously for the last six years. With the Philippine government not setting an exit date, it will continue to be based in the Philippines for the long haul.

The unit, which is composed of about 100-500 mostly Special Forces troops, is headquartered inside a Philippine military camp in Zamboanga City, but its "area of operations", according to a US military publication, spans 8,000

square miles, covering the entire island of Mindanao and its surrounding islands and seas. With various military facilities now being constructed for their use, members of the unit refer to their bases in Mindanao as “forward operating base-11” and “advanced operating base-921”.

Though US and Philippine government officials have consistently claimed that the unit is not involved in actual combat, US troops themselves describe their mission as “unconventional warfare” and “counter-insurgency” operations in the country. They have confirmed that they join Filipino troops on patrol, provide them with intelligence, and assist in various aspects of their operation. Eyewitnesses claim to have seen them in the vicinity of operations. Most recently, US troops have been accused of joining Filipino soldiers when they perpetrated what was described as a massacre of innocent civilians in Sulu. In terms of profile and mission, the JSOTF-P is similar to the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-Horn of Africa) - which was established in Djibouti in eastern Africa in 2003, also composed mostly of Special Forces, and which has been described as the “model for future US military operations”.

Greatest Potential Competitor

Taken together - the increasing troop deployments, the construction of more and more infrastructure to guarantee US military mobility, the designation of facilities as “cooperative security locations” to be used by the US military when needed, the assurance of support services in case of operations, and the indefinite stationing of US troops in the country - have significantly improved the US ability to operate in and from the Philippines, thereby locking the country firmly within the US global posture.

The determination to ensure and strengthen this ability cannot be adequately explained by the supposed threat posed by local or regional “terrorist” groups in the Philippines and in Southeast Asia. As brutal or as violent as the deeply splintered Abu Sayyaf Group has been in its operations, for example, the threat that its remaining 300 or so members pose to the United States is quite low and cannot explain the magnitude, the form, and locations of US presence in the country. Not only doesn't the Abu Sayyaf pose an existential threat to the US, neither does it affect US strategic interests or limit its freedom of action in country or beyond. Nuisance does not a national security threat make.

Rather, the US military presence in the Philippines appears to be part of the US drive toward global military dominance in general, and, in particular, of the emerging US strategy towards China - the one power that has now been officially identified by the United States as posing the greatest challenge to its global supremacy. As indicated by the series of provocative pronouncements by US officials against China in the past years, the actual US moves to encircle it with military bases and other forms of military presence, and its ongoing efforts to enlist various countries on its side and assemble a de facto anti-China coalition in Asia, US military basing in the Philippines appears to be part of what its advocates have proposed as a strategy for preserving US lone-superpower status by preventing the rise of potential rivals.

Location, Location, Location

If such a strategy is indeed being put into action, the Philippines appear to be of crucial strategic importance. Since the late 1990s, a growing chorus of US military strategists and foreign policy thinkers concerned with China's rise have warned about the deficiencies in the US military presence in Asia, particularly in Southeast Asia. In their recommendations for addressing this, the Philippines has since been repeatedly explicitly singled out as among the countries in which the United States must move decisively to regain its presence. As various studies have concluded, in any possible face-off with China - whether in a long-drawn out competition or in an outright confrontation - the Philippines, by virtue of its location, can be pivotal.

At the same time, the United States does not have many other choices. Other countries in the vicinity of China are either geographically less than ideal, or else, have proven to be unwilling to consent to US requests for basing or access. While Singapore, for example, has proven more accommodating to the United States than others, its small size is seen as limiting US options. Indonesia and Malaysia, on the other hand, have not only openly castigated US actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, they have also rejected US demands to station in and operate from their countries. Even Thailand, which is a close US ally, has actually rejected US overtures to be allowed to station ships in or to deploy troops to its territory. Regardless of their attitudes toward the United States, most countries in the region simply do not see China as a threat and have therefore refused to go along any strategy that could antagonise it. Hence, the United States finds that it needs the Philippines more than ever. Not only is it ideally located geographically, its government has so far stood out among its neighbours for being far more willing to align itself with US demands. But with China also aggressively courting Filipino leaders, this too could change. As the ensuing geopolitical competition heats up, the Philippines could tip the balance one way or the other.

Herbert Docena is a contributor to Foreign Policy In Focus (www.fpiif.org) and a research associate at the Bangkok-based Focus on the Global South.

Sources

This article is a condensed version of Herbert Docena's paper, "At The Door Of All The East: The Philippines In United States Military Strategy" (Quezon City: Focus on the Global South, 2007). The full 140 page version can be read online at <http://www.focusweb.org/pdf/at-the-door-of-all-the-east.pdf>.



WEST PAPUA: Have We Forgotten The Lessons Of East Timor?

Peace Researcher 36 – August 2008

- Maire Leadbeater

In 1999 the Indonesian military seemed set to destroy East Timor as retribution against the people who had dared to vote for independence. The New Zealand government was forced to make a dramatic shift in its pro-Indonesia foreign policy. Peacekeepers were sent to confront the military that Kiwis had been exercising and training with for 26 years. One young soldier, Private Leonard Manning, was killed by an Indonesian soldier in 2000.

But now, New Zealand has resumed a business as usual accommodation with Indonesia, despite the lack of accountability for the crimes in East Timor. We sent our Ambassador along to “honour” former President Suharto when he died in January 2008*. Government foreign policy on West Papua repeats the mistakes of the past despite the clear parallels between East Timor under occupation and Indonesian misrule in West Papua. *See *Peace Researcher 25, March 2002, Special Issue, “Ghosts Of A Genocide: The CIA, Suharto And Terrorist Culture”, by Dennis Small, which can be read online at: <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr25intr.htm>. This provides a detailed analysis of Suharto, the genocidal kleptocrat who was one of the 20th Century's worst mass murderers and whose 1960s' slaughter of anywhere up to a million “Communists” was actively aided and abetted by the US Central Intelligence Agency. Ed.*

Climate Of Fear

Indigenous West Papuans have been resisting Indonesian rule for decades, and in recent years have opted for peaceful means of struggle. The military and police have mounted a systematic campaign to intimidate or destroy individuals and organisations they perceive to be “separatist”. Hina Jilani, Senior United Nations Special Representative, who visited Indonesia and West Papua in 2007, described a “climate of fear” in which human rights defenders have been singled out for intimidation.

West Papuans are also subject to less visible threats. Life expectancy is the lowest of any Indonesian province and there is an out of control epidemic of HIV/Aids – the infection rate at 2% of the population is about 20 times the rate for the rest of Indonesia. The infant mortality rate is among the highest in the world at over 100 per thousand live births. The forests, which are the lifeblood for many tribal people, are under threat from rampant illegal logging. But perhaps the biggest threat of all is that of uncontrolled migration from other parts of Indonesia.

Australian academic James Elmslie^[1] calculates that Papuan people who made up 96% of the population in 1971 will be outstripped by the migrant population by 2011. Within one to two generations they are likely to be a “small and dwindling” proportion of the population. In recent years migrants have arrived ‘spontaneously’ and have come to control most economic and commercial activity.

To make matters worse there appears to be concerted attempt to break the Papuan spirit. Nothing illustrates this more clearly than the Indonesian reaction to any attempt to raise their “Morning Star” flag in support of self-determination for the troubled territory. The flag was first raised on December 1, 1961 when the Dutch were still the colonial rulers but had begun to prepare the people for self-government and eventual independence.

Now the flag is banned and those who dare to raise it in West Papua risk the fate of Filip Karma and Yusak Pakage, who are serving 15 and ten years in prison for taking part in a demonstration in 2004 at which the Morning Star flag was flown. Following sizeable demonstrations in March and April 2008 11 young people are in jail facing serious charges because they dared to display the flag or wore the symbol on their clothing. A recent decree bans having a “separatist symbol” on a bag or T shirt.

Bizarrely, the Auckland-based Indonesia Human Rights Committee was also singled out for condemnation by a spokesperson for the Indonesian President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. He condemned us for planning to raise the “separatist flag” which he said would only give “false hope” and “provoke confrontation and conflict”.^[2] “False hope” of what – freedom, a better life? The West Papuan people have not yet surrendered their dreams of freedom. It is more than six years since the “Special Autonomy” law was passed with its promise of greater local control over resources. However, while Jakarta receives billions of dollars from its largest taxpayer, the Freeport McMoran Mine in West Papua, the territory remains grossly underdeveloped and an estimated 82% still live below the poverty line.

Agus Alua, the Chairman of the Papuan People's Council (MRP - Majelis Rakyat Papua) set up under the Autonomy

law, is a high profile critic of the implementation of the law. He says the military build up and the formation of pro-autonomy militia groups undermines any hope of improving the lot of Papuan people. ^[3] New Zealand is a super power in the Pacific and once played honest broker for Bougainville, why not help out West Papua? Sadly our Government is very reluctant.

Preserving Harmonious Relations With Indonesia At All Costs

I have reviewed correspondence with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and declassified Government documents to trace the course of New Zealand diplomacy over the past seven years. For a brief time in the early 2000s a stronger stand was contemplated, but the dominant theme - preserving harmonious bilateral relations with Indonesia at all costs - prevailed. New Zealand hasn't always been on Indonesia's side over West Papua. When the Republic of Indonesia started life in 1949, the Netherlands government retained control over West Papua (then called West New Guinea). West Papuans were elected to a Council with governance responsibilities and representatives took part in meetings of the South Pacific Commission, precursor to the Pacific Islands Forum. New Zealand and Australia were supportive of these moves. New Zealand politicians and diplomats unequivocally affirmed their commitment to the principle of self-determination when the issue was debated at the United Nations. ^[4]

But in 1961 Indonesia escalated its claim to control the territory and the United States under President Kennedy decided to intervene. An agreement was brokered in New York between the Netherlands and Indonesia which allowed Indonesia to take administrative control after a token period of United Nations (UN) administration. The Act of self determination promised under the New York agreement took place in 1969, but the process of the so called "Act of Free Choice" was a travesty of democracy. Before it took place peaceful demonstrations met with violent reprisals and the 1,022 Papuan men who were selected by the Indonesians to take part in the "vote" did so under duress.

At the time, the New Zealand media gave these events prominence and much of the reporting was highly critical of Indonesia's role: "a tormented and impoverished little country is being subjected to the farce of what must be the most contrived 'free election' outside the Communist bloc." ^[5] But New Zealand was one of the 84 nations which voted for the United Nations to "recognise" the Act of Free Choice. In the years since Indonesia assumed control, West Papua, (named Irian Jaya by Indonesia until 2000) is believed to have lost at least 100,000 of its people to the ongoing conflict. Resistance to Indonesian rule has changed over time from a low level guerrilla struggle in the mountains to a wider campaign of non-violent resistance.

For a few years after New Zealand sent peacekeepers to East Timor, the bilateral relationship with Indonesia was somewhat destabilised. Indonesia was going through many changes following the fall of the 32 year Suharto dictatorship and there were internal power struggles within the political and military elite. In the upheaval some chinks of light broke through. There was a brief "Papuan Spring" in 2000 when reformist President Abdurrahman Wahid was in power and gave his backing to a reconciliation approach including an agreement to rename the province Papua and allowing a national congress open to all to take place. His initiatives were derailed by the generals, but this was also a time when New Zealand was more active on the Papuan issue. Foreign Minister Phil Goff met with Free Papua Movement (OPM) Spokesperson John Ondawame, against his officials' advice. The Minister later cautiously hinted that New Zealand might be willing to play a neutral mediation role – if that was acceptable to both parties.

Phil Goff was unusually forthright when he met with an Indonesian delegation and stressed that while New Zealand wished to see a "stable, democratic, prosperous and united Indonesia, Indonesia's unity was dependent on how Jakarta sought to resolve separatist tensions, rather than external statements about Indonesia's territorial integrity".

^[6] But in the following year, New Zealand seemed less willing to push the diplomatic boundaries. New Zealand warmly welcomed the 2001 Special Autonomy legislation for Papua in October 2001 ^[7], and ever since official statements express the view that the "best route to a peaceful solution in Papua" ^[8] is the full implementation of the special autonomy package.

Defence Ties Resumed

One litmus test of the relationship between New Zealand and Indonesia is the ease with which New Zealand's Jakarta-based diplomats have been able to gain permission to visit West Papua. Jakarta is highly restrictive about who can visit – especially foreign journalists who are inclined to write about the social deprivation and the human rights abuses suffered by the indigenous population. But New Zealand diplomats have had easy access in the last

few years. The decision to resume defence ties from 2007 appears to have cemented this warming relationship.

The Foreign Minister, Winston Peters, says that the new bilateral officer exchanges will strengthen the bilateral relationship and that “engagement rather than sanctions are more likely to result in further positive progress...”.

[9] The trouble is the leopards haven't changed their spots. Colonel Burhanuddin Siagian, head of the Jayapura sub-regional military command was indicted by UN investigators for murder and torture dating back to his time in East Timor in the run-up to the 1999 independence referendum. He is widely feared in West Papua because he openly advocates the repression of political dissent by violence: “What is absolutely certain is that anyone who tends towards separatism will be crushed by TNI (the Indonesian military). In the interests of the Republic of Indonesia, we are not afraid of human rights”. [10]

At present the defence ties are relatively low key and include reciprocal visits of senior military personnel as well as sponsoring an Indonesian officer to attend the NZ Defence Force's Senior Staff Course. New Zealand has also embarked on a programme of training the police in West Papua in “community policing” and “conflict management”. In 2007 32 West Papuan police (only ten of them indigenous Papuans) attended a workshop in Jayapura at which participants were told how New Zealand Police try to build community relations and anticipate and prevent conflict.

[11] I guess they did not ask the Tuho people for a reference (*for details see Peace Researcher 35, December 2007, “A Bad Case Of ‘Terrorism’ Hysteria”, by Murray Horton, which can be read online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr35-156.html> Ed.*).

Military & Police Are A Law Unto Themselves

While there is always a possibility that the training might have a positive impact on some individuals, police violence in West Papua is a structural problem. The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Manfred Nowak, reported in March 2008 on his investigations in Indonesia, in November 2007, which concluded that police ill-treatment of detainees was prevalent in the context of ongoing impunity and lack of effective legal sanctions for those who commit abuses. He noted that at some police stations, including Wamena in West Papua, severe beatings were ongoing during his inspection visit. [12]

Peter King, a leading Australian academic and writer on West Papua, describes both the Indonesian military and police as “quasi states” to illustrate their deep involvement in corruption and lack of accountability to the civilian government. In West Papua he notes that of the 137 cases brought by the police in a logging scandal in 2005, not one has resulted in conviction. [13] Not only is New Zealand hobnobbing with dubious new friends, there is also a new determination on the part of officials to distance themselves from any group or person connected in any way to the self-determination cause.

When New Zealand considered extending its current bilateral development aid officials advised on a cautious approach to working with certain non-Government organisations (NGOs), including Church groups. “We fully appreciate that in a free society New Zealand NGOs have every right to make their views known and that some will continue to support the Papuan separatist cause and inevitably irritate the Indonesian authorities. At the same time, care is needed to ensure that there is no justification for accusations that NZAID funding is being channelled to NGO activities that support Papuan separatism and thus undermine New Zealand Government policy”. [14]

Public Pressure Needed To Break NZ's Official Silence

New Zealand's privileged access to West Papua includes access to “sensitive” areas such as the Central Highlands where conflict with the military has been at its most intense. Officials are also able to visit the controversial Freeport McMoran Mine [15] and have witnessed illegal logging inside the Wasur National Park. [16] Unfortunately, this access appears to have come with the price tag of New Zealand silence. The issue of illegal logging is particularly pertinent as most of the illegally logged wood which enters New Zealand is the kwila wood used for the manufacture of outdoor furniture and decking. The Indonesia Human Rights Committee surveyed Auckland retailers and found that most of the kwila is sourced from West Papua. The cost to tribal forest communities is incalculable, but Forestry Minister Jim Anderton maintains that regulating to ban kwila imports is not possible and cites World Trade Organisation rules. In recent years the West Papuans have united around the call for peaceful dialogue with Indonesia, and the pleas for international mediation have escalated. This is not a radical demand given that Aceh (where a separatist war had raged for decades with a high toll of lives) recently set a precedent for Indonesia to accept foreign help with peace negotiations.

If New Zealand were to take the initiative and offer mediation this action is likely to send ripples around other international forums. Vanuatu is already proposing to call on the United Nations Decolonisation Committee to re-inscribe West Papua on its list of non-self-governing territories, and is hopeful of gaining more support for West Papuan self-determination within the Melanesian Spearhead Group. From the evidence it appears that New Zealand will continue to repeat the mistakes of East Timor. What could reactivate the spark of initiative shown a few years ago? Greater transparency in foreign policy making would certainly help. But in the end, just as it was for our failed East Timor policy, the answer is undoubtedly increased public pressure.

Maire Leadbeater is spokesperson for the Indonesia Human Rights Committee (IHRC), Auckland. She is the author of "Negligent Neighbour: New Zealand's Complicity in the Invasion And Occupation of Timor Leste", Craig Potton 2006. Jeremy Agar's review of it in Peace Researcher 34, July 2007, can be read online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr34-141b.html>. Ed.

IHRC is currently campaigning against the NZ Super Fund's investment in the Freeport McMoran Mine and on the issue of New Zealand's involvement in the illegal logging of kwila in West Papua's pristine forests.

IHRC welcomes new members and new ideas. Contact it at Box 68-419, Auckland 1125, maire@clear.net.nz www.ihrc.revolt.org

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[1] James Elmslie: Dr Jim Elmslie's paper, "West Papua: Genocide, Demographic Change, the Issue of 'Intent', and the Australia-Indonesia Security Treaty". Presented at the Conference "Paths to Justice and Prosperity", 9-10 August, 2007, Sydney University

[2] Xinhua , Jakarta 29/11/07 quoted Presidential Spokesman Dino Patti Djal

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[4] For example Prime Minister Holyoake told the UN in 1963 that a "just and lasting solution" for the Papuans "must be based on the principle of self-determination". *Annual Report*, Department of External Affairs, year ended 31/3/63.

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[14] Cable, New Zealand Embassy Jakarta to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Wellington, "Indonesia, Papua and Perceptions of New Zealand", 30/1/07.

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REVIEWS: “AMERICA IN PERIL”

Bob Aldridge, Hope Publishing House, Pasadena, California, 2008.

Peace Researcher 36 – August 2008

- **Bob Leonard**

(Unless otherwise noted, quotes in the text are from the book).

The “peril” in the title does not refer to terrorism. This sobering book is about the neo-conservative peril that threatens to gut the US Constitution and destroy what is left of the democratic process in America. As I write, politics in America has all but completed tortuous process of selecting Presidential candidates using state primary elections and caucuses – an unbelievably complicated and drawn-out process for the two dominant parties, the Republicans and the Democrats. It’s important because it is sorting out the two main contenders to replace George W Bush in the November 2008 national election. Two-term President-select Bush cannot seek a third term under federal law (but don’t be surprised if he attempts to subvert that law as he already has done with much existing and newly-passed legislation since 2001). This important book is about King George W and how he and his neo-con powers-behind-the-throne have moved with blinding speed to convert the US of A into an Orwellian fiefdom thanks mainly to the tragic, but ever so “fortuitous”, events of September 11, 2001, only a few months after the Bush coronation.

“America In Peril” is a book of over 300 pages with detailed referencing at the end of each of its ten main chapters. Although hardly exhausting the vast and ever-growing literature on the Bush Administration, Bob Aldridge has drawn from an impressive array of materials to produce a totally credible and horrifying picture of what is happening in America. This book has appeared in the nick of time and it should be widely read by all American voters - this year they have a chance to stop the juggernaut of the neo-con agenda by casting informed votes in the November Presidential and Congressional election, and by working diligently to insure that their votes actually get counted (see *Peace Researcher* 30, March 2005 “Dubya Steals Two In A Row”, by Bob Leonard for insights into the election fraud that made Bush President; read it online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr30-112.html>).

Why bother reviewing a book like this in a New Zealand journal? Two reasons: first, it hardly needs saying that what happens in America affects New Zealand and rest of the world, and second, we have our own versions of neo-cons in Aotearoa (as exposed in Nicky Hager’s “The Hollow Men”, reviewed by Jeremy Agar in *PR* 34, July 2007, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr34-141a.html>). Everyone on the planet needs to know just how easily the unthinkable can happen, even in a so-called democracy. This review will give you some idea of the “unthinkable” by touching on a few of the more horrifying topics in Aldridge’s book.

The Neo-Conservative Agenda

Chapter 1 is primarily devoted to an excellent discussion of neo-conservatives, their origins, their goals, and their strategies. The final part of the chapter is devoted to conspiracy theories surrounding the events of September 11, 2001 (I believe this section detracts from an otherwise valuable book. As a firm believer in parsimony I generally do not subscribe to conspiracy theories. The success of the 9/11 attacks can be simply and convincingly attributed to governmental and military/intelligence incompetence and stupidity on a massive scale. And little has changed since 2001).

What is a neo-conservative? A neo-con American believes in all three of these: bedrock family values, a free economy with limited Government intervention, and a foreign policy backed by a strong military. Blunter definitions include unfettered belief in Pax Americana (read American Empire) and the emergence of the US as the unchallenged superpower – a benevolent hegemony. According to Aldridge, leading neo-cons started out as Democrats (1960s) but by the 1980s with the ascendance of Ronald Reagan to the Presidency they had changed their political stripes to far Right conservatives within the Republican Party. Reagan himself is a prime example of this phenomenon. He was a liberal in his younger days, and president of the Screen Actors Guild, a union. But his conversion began in the ‘60s and by the time he became Governor of California he was well and truly on the Right. In the ‘70s he became a conservative radio fixture with regular short messages to the nation that had a clear political slant. He used his acting skills and slick delivery to the fullest.

The Clinton Presidency slowed the conservative tide, but it did give them time to organise carefully for the new millennium. In a section titled “Political Conquest Through Rigged Elections” Aldridge describes the now infamous Presidential elections of 2000 and 2004. See *Peace Researcher* 30, March 2005 “Dubya Steals Two In A Row”, by Bob Leonard, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr30-112.html> for an account of those elections based largely on Aldridge’s research and writing published online).

The USA Patriot* Act

(*Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act).

The fledgling Bush Administration seized upon the opportunity of 9/11 to “jump-start” its agenda of domestic control with the Patriot Act. In an atmosphere of super-patriotism (Aldridge labels it pseudo-patriotism) and panic the Congress passed this massive piece of legislation. There is no doubt the Bill had long been in preparation before the events that virtually guaranteed its passage with little debate or opposition. The Bill ran to 342 pages and it is extremely unlikely that any Congressman or Senator had even read it at the time the votes were taken. Chapter 2 (Sabotaging Democracy) describes in considerable detail the relentless executive (Presidential) and legislative programme that soon followed the passage of the Patriot Act. Most prominently, these included the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), National Security Letters, and Bush’s outrageous Signing Statements. Secrecy was, and is, the shroud that blocks any knowledge of executive abuses of power. For example, signing statements issued by Presidents have been around since the 19th Century, but Bush has elevated them to an almost routine mechanism to bypass Congressional legislative intent. In other words, the President’s interpretation of the law is the final word and no explanation need be given to Congress. Perhaps most significantly this process has applied to application of the oppressive powers of the Patriot Act. In other words, the President is well on his way to becoming Orwell’s Big Brother.

Making Big Brother A Reality

Aldridge then devotes two chapters to the Bush Administration’s concept of protecting America from terror (shouldn’t that be terrorism?) by trampling on the personal freedoms and rights of ordinary Americans. The problem of course is that anyone could be a terrorist, so everyone must be watched and the details of their lives entered into databases just in case. As you read through these pages of the book you have to marvel at the imaginations of the people who created the new programmes, agencies and systems almost without end. Could any legislator or watchdog possibly keep up? Most notable among this array was of course the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). It set the stage for a whole new array of threats to freedom, civil rights and privacy.

Aldridge prefaces his discussion of ADVISE (a Homeland Security tool): “It is encouraging to know that programmes like TIPS, TIA, MATRIX, Patriot Act II, and VICTORY have fallen through the cracks. It’s good they did, for it exemplifies how democracy should work, but we shouldn’t become overconfident. That wasn’t the end. DHS tried another programme called ‘Analysis, Dissemination, Visualisation, Insight, and Semantic Enhancement,’ a mouthful known by its acronym ‘ADVISE’.

“‘ADVISE’ is a computer system which collects massive amounts of data from blog sites and e-mail to Government records and intelligence reports”. At the time of final writing of the book, Aldridge did not know the fate of ADVISE since it was coming under severe criticism for its potential violations of privacy. It is an important example of the onslaught of invasive data-mining initiatives (12 at the time under DHS) that poured forth from the neo-cons and the thousands on the federal payroll who do their bidding. Who is to say at any given time just which are surviving and which have been abandoned, only to crop us again with a different tongue-twisting acronym?

“Big Brother’s Martial Arm” (Chapter 4) delves deeply into the encroachment of the Pentagon into domestic (civilian) activities. It should suffice to mention just one example from this chapter, a programme called Counterintelligence Field Activity (CIFA). “An ... example of ‘mission creep’ is the Pentagon’s CIFA. After 9/11 the Bush Administration declared the entire continental US a theatre of military operations for the first time since the Civil War”. Feeding into the CIFA programme is a procedure known as TALON (Threat and Local Observation Notice) which was designed to collect information on US citizens under the slightest, and unverified, suspicion of threats to the national security. “This is all happening with no Congressional oversight”.

Invading Privacy

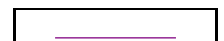
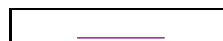
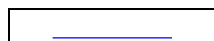
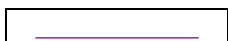
A main underlying theme of this disturbing book is the invasion of privacy of individuals, and the use of the information obtained to control them and deprive them of their democratic and human rights. The most notorious example of invasion of privacy (the subject of Chapter 5) was the National Security Agency’s (NSA) Terrorist Surveillance Programme (TSP). This one got Bush and Co in a lot of hot water when it was revealed to Congress and the public in December 2005. In complete secrecy, Bush had authorised the signals intelligence agency to spy on international phone and emails of American citizens, totally without warrants. Only the mind of Dubya could come up with the excuse that he did it “...to protect [the American people] and their civil liberties” (as quoted by Aldridge).

What is all this spying good for? Very little to judge by the now well-known fact that the NSA, CIA and FBI had detailed information on two of the 9/11 hijackers nearly two years before the attacks, but did nothing. Some of the spies themselves blew the whistle on TSP. A number of our own spies in the NZ Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) provided the masses of information on spying in New Zealand that Nicky Hager analysed and published in his seminal book "Secret Power" in 1996. The GCSB runs the spy stations at Waihopai and Tangimoana, local branches of the US National Security Agency, as every reader of this journal well knows. And there is much more for Aldridge to report: the following five chapters cover the growing cult of secrecy, pseudo-patriotism and covert propaganda, farewell to due process (*Vale Habeas Corpus*), kangaroo military courts, and Americans in denial.

Changing The Direction Of America

After ten chapters of mind-numbing and depressing reporting on the legacy of 7.5 years of the Bush mob, author Bob Aldridge asks himself in considering how to conclude the book, "What can I write that will change the direction of my country?" Chapter 11 is titled "Beyond Democracy". It is very much about spirituality and very hard to disagree with, even if one is not religious. He quotes Martin Luther King: "Do something for peace, Do anything. But do something". Imagine the power of the masses if they took that message to heart. That is effectively what peace activists do, but our numbers are few. Bob Aldridge has written an excellent book. He is an extraordinary activist for peace and we can but hope that thousands of Americans read "America in Peril" and do something. One of the simple things they can do is vote in the November elections. There are plenty of reasons to criticise Barack Obama, especially given some of the positions he has taken now that Hillary Clinton is off his back. But I have to conclude that the alternative, George W. McCain (Bush III), is too horrible to contemplate.

"America In Peril" can be ordered from Amazon books. Just Google the title or author Bob Aldridge to get the details. And that will also lead you to Aldridge's excellent Pacific Life Resource Center Website, a rich source of research papers, and updates on most of the chapters in the book.



REVIEWS: “THE THREE TRILLION DOLLAR WAR”

Joseph Stiglitz and Linda Bilmes, Allen Lane, Victoria, 2008

Peace Researcher 36 – August 2008

- Jeremy Agar

All figures are in \$US. Ed.

Joseph Stiglitz is well known as the former boss of the World Bank who criticised the increasingly extremist policies of his successors. Stiglitz wrote as a Keynesian, that is, as a moderate capitalist of the type that used to be the norm, so it's worth noting that his analysis of the world's Rogernomes, while scathing, even radical in tone, is in fact conservative. That's how far the neo-liberals have taken us in the wrong direction, how far from the old orthodoxies. Stiglitz's targets, the globe's Bushites, hold unprecedented power, not least over how we view the news. Bush and his pals have destroyed many an innocent reputation; they would like very much to destroy Stiglitz's credibility. They've been vicious, but they haven't landed a glove on him (see *Jeremy's review of Stiglitz's "Globalization And Its Discontents", in Foreign Control Watchdog 105, April 2004, which can be read online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/05/10.htm> Ed.*).

This is because his credentials (in their eyes anyway) are impeccable. And because Stiglitz would assume that any gap in his defences would be exploited, he's at pains to be cautious. The logic in this book is simple, its numbers are restrained. It would be easy, and equally valid, to add zeroes all over the place. So when Stiglitz says that the US war on Iraq has wasted three trillion dollars, he's just adding the immediate sums and assuming best case scenarios. He's wise to do so, but he's probably understating the costs. The present war, already the longest ever fought by the US, has killed probably 150,000 Iraqis. It's forced over two million to emigrate, and created about 2.2 million displaced, internal refugees. Others have died from illnesses directly caused by the war. Stiglitz estimates that by 2010, the total of dead Iraqis, from all causes, will have reached one million.

As an American economist, however, Stiglitz's focus is domestic policy. Before the invasion, the American public was assured that it would be a breeze. This was doubtless in part one of the conscious lies that had to be told to “justify” the war. It was also an expression of that deadly mixture of military arrogance, technological brilliance, tactical stupidity and evil that we have been witnessing at a so far safe distance for seven years now. Bush's economic adviser (Stiglitz held down the equivalent job for Bill Clinton during his 1992-2000 Presidency) offered the most sober advice: he thought the war would cost \$200 billion. The Defense Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, came in with \$50 billion. His Deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, thought that there would be no bill to pay at all because any money spent on killing people would be made up for by oil revenues. No worries, especially as it could be financed by loans so that no one would notice. The idea was to let future generations pay for the carnage. It needs to be recalled that Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz are key members of the cabal who set the Bush Agenda (see my review in *Peace Researcher* 33, November 2006, of “The Bush Agenda: Invading The World, One Economy At A Time”, by Antonia Juhasz, which can be read online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr33-131d.html>).

Use Of Mercenaries A Partial Privatisation

According to Stiglitz the actual price of the war has been \$400,000 per troop, and total US warfighting costs to date are \$845 billion. The numbers have been inflated by the Rumsfeld policy of contracting out the war. Blackwater, a mercenary privateer which has been accused of random violence, pays up to \$1,222 a day. You have to offer big bucks to get people to take the risk. Compare that to an Army sergeant, who earns \$50-\$70,000 a year.

Stiglitz notes that “[t]he use of contractors (*a euphemism for mercenaries. Ed.*) is, in essence, a partial privatisation of the armed forces. Yet there are good reasons why nations do not privatise their military. It makes sense for governments to privatise steel mills; or even to privatise natural monopolies like electricity or gas, provided regulatory frameworks are implemented to make sure these monopolies do not use their market power to overcharge consumers” (*for the antidote to Stiglitz's enthusiasm for privatisation, check out the written, and audio material from CAFCA's March 2008 Privatisation By Stealth Conference, which can be read and listened to online at <http://canterbury.cyberplace.co.nz/community/CAFCA/publications/index.html#Privatisation>. Ed.*).

Stiglitz goes on: “It does not make sense to privatise the military. Proponents of privatisation often argue that it encourages customer responsiveness... For the most part, those who interact with military contractors do not do so voluntarily; there is no market where they can choose to be integrated by a contractor from the United States, or by some other provider. Indeed, the incentives are perverse. The incentives of the contractor are to minimise his costs, and those incentives do not take into account the nation's broad range of public objectives”.

Profiteering, Corruption, Overpayments, Taxpayer Subsidies

“The extensive use of contactors raised still another problem: the potential for profiteering and corruption is high. Allegations of overpayments to Halliburton, the defence contractor formerly headed by Vice President Dick Cheney, are well known, but this is the tip of the iceberg. “...Whether they are giant corporations like Bechtel or General Electric or individual security guards who can earn \$16,000 a month in Iraq, contractors are driven by making money. It is unrealistic to assume that they will be motivated by the same concern for the public interest as civil servants or soldiers. The current system relies on civil servants to manage contractors and hold them accountable but they're not trained or resourced for this. Facing little competition, the big firms will be less efficient. Once firms win big contracts - often using low-ball initial costs estimates - the Government becomes so dependent on their services that it's almost impossible to get rid of them”.

Stiglitz looks at “sole source bidding” and “cost-plus” contracts. These are a long tradition in Pentagon circles, where the big contractors are routinely enabled to tack on a fixed percentage for however much they spent. This invites price gouging, corruption and inefficiency. Within the State Department there are apparently a mere 17 staffers overseeing compliance for \$4 billion worth of contracts. At this stage in his narrative Stiglitz notes that from 1998 to 2003 Halliburton gave over \$1 million to the Republicans and was granted \$19 billion “worth” of contracts. The bottom line, we might agree, is that the “contractors’ interests ran directly counter to America’s national interest”.

The extremist neo-liberal ideology which Rumsfeld imposed on the Army - analysed in detail by Juhasz in her book - has also inflated the charge to other Americans. The strategy of waging a “just-in-time” war compounds the tendency to skimp on present investments while adding a larger, later invoice as the real - and invariably higher - costs need to be met. Similarly, Stiglitz says that a strategy of “cash” accounting rather than the conventional “accrual” method (which allows for the real long-term spend) has been introduced to baffle public scrutiny. Some war items are included in other budgets. And so the venality goes on. And on. The actual current operating costs of the American war in Iraq for the average American household work out to \$138 a month.

The US government forces its taxpayers to further subsidise the war profiteers by paying the contractors’ very high insurance premiums (\$780 million a year). The Government pays if a casualty results from an “act of war”. This alone, Stiglitz calculates, will come to \$3 billion of taxpayer largesse. It’s a familiar gambit in corporate circles. The public takes the risks; the privateers get the rewards.

Inevitably, constantly, the Bushites opine that “the successful prosecuting of the war would be good for the economy”. This version of a familiar superstition emanated from Bush’s economic adviser. Unlike the neo-libs and the neo-cons, Stiglitz has a sense of history. The popular myth that wars spur civil development stems from World War 2. In that very specific context, military spending helped end the Depression. Otherwise, Stiglitz notes, “money spent on armaments is money poured down the drain: had it been spent on investment - whether on plants and equipment, infrastructure, health, or education - the economy’s productivity would have been increased and future output would have been greater”.

As a Keynesian, this is basic to Stiglitz’s world view. To the Bushites, the equation of waste with responsibility is a necessary lie. The rest of us, innocent of Beltway sophistication, have always known that killing, bombing and torturing is wasteful. Let’s just say that it’s not rocket science (it raises the point that the Depression could have been ended sooner had the world’s governments invested in their people. For most of them, though, this has never come easy). The fashion with Establishment economists is to ignore social and economic factors. Cost-benefit analysis, as this distortion is called, has allowed the Pentagon to omit from its numbers burdens borne by those who aren’t the Government. An example: a relative of a wounded soldier might quit work to be a caregiver. “These costs are very real - but hard to quantify”.

Iraq War Biggest Cause Of Skyrocketing Oil Price

How much of the increased price of oil results from the demand created by the war? A lot, Stiglitz thinks, it’s more of a factor than China’s industrialisation. In this passage Stiglitz develops his Keynesian precepts. Beyond the spending itself are the costs that result from not spending on alternatives. To borrow a popular notion from the economists, war money “crowds out” peace money. Were expenditure to switch from bombing schools in Iraq, say, to building schools in the US, the gain would be more than humanitarian. Just as destruction inflicts thousands of small and unrecognised costs so does domestic investment spin off benefits. It has what economists like Stiglitz call a multiplier effect. Stiglitz’s astonishing yet sober conclusion is that the total impact of the economics just of oil, what has happened because of diversions to the war from productive capacity, is that it has in itself cost the domestic US economy at least \$3 trillion. That’s \$US3,000,000,000,000.

For all its thorough and specialised knowledge, the central thesis of Stiglitz is accessible. We all know that if you've got some money put away, it keeps growing all by itself. We all know that once you can't pay off the credit card or meet the rent, the interest can get out of control in no time. Bush has made it a point of principle to put off the bills. The national US debt, its (dis)credit card bill, is vast. The war-related parts of the Bush budget deficits will balloon to over \$2 trillion, the interest on the loans will soar. As military experiments crowd out other research, longer-term investment is down. Stiglitz thinks that up to \$5 trillion in "forgone output" has been lost. The cumulative, spiralling losses are permanent. The annual income of the average US family is \$500 less than it would have been - forever (and if Iraqi dead were costed at the same rate as US dead, the country's waste would be valued at \$8.6 trillion).

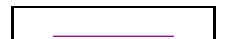
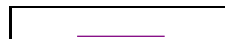
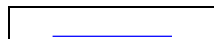
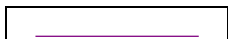
"I don't give a shit about international law. I made a commitment to the President that I'd privatise Iraq's businesses". Thomas Foley, one of Dubya's agents, was responding to a comment that his assiduous selling of Iraq's public assets was illegal. The occupation, with its "Bush Agenda" alienation of Iraq's infrastructure, while profitable, was also debilitating. "Foley and others like him failed to realise that, until Iraq was stabilised, anyone buying its assets would pay bottom dollar and then try to strip them, rather than sticking around to actually do business and invest in a dangerous country" (*the asset stripping of NZ's now renationalised railways being the textbook example among the numerous privatisations in this country. Ed.*). "And just when Iraqi firms needed the most help, the effect of US policies was to expose them to free competition, with zero or very low tariffs. This was something that American industry would never have tolerated. The policies had the predicted effects. There has been very little foreign direct investment outside of oil, and many businesses could not compete with the flood of imports and so shut down, resulting in even higher levels of unemployment".

Those That Ignore History Are Condemned To Repeat It

Stiglitz concludes by observing that some measures of international opinion rate the US as a greater threat to peace than North Korea; that Iraq is seen as the world's most corrupt country - except for Somalia and Burma; that Iraq, once the most stable and secular country in the region, has descended into religious and ethnic chaos; that the US is frittering away its global authority. And every failure was foreseeable.

Why do they keep doing it? Don't they know that wars never finish the way the belligerents planned? Corporate need drives American aggression, but there are other reasons why elite opinion in the US is unique among the liberal democracies in its readiness to back a war. Since its struggle for independence and the Civil War in the middle of the 19th Century, America has been spared. It was last invaded (by the British) in 1812. US casualties in the two world wars of the 20th Century were heavy enough, but, compared to European and Asian losses, they were light. World War 2, the conflict that still shapes the thinking of the generations which set policy, is generally regarded as a "good war", the war that rebuffed the Axis. More, it set in motion the investment in a ravaged Europe that made the US the globe's economic powerhouse.

When George Bush was a boy smiling GIs were still dispensing chocolate and nylons to a grateful world. By all accounts Bush is an incurious man, bereft of historical perspective, so when an advisor came up with "Axis of Evil" to apply to his enemies, he loved it. He might well really think that places like Iran and North Korea are direct descendants of the original Axis, that they pose the same threat as had Nazi Germany, fascist Italy and militarist Japan. He might assume that his occupying force in Iraq should be as welcome as the GIs that he used to read about in his comics. His term is almost over, but the possible succession of John McCain, who appears to endorse the whole Bush foreign policy, means that the world might have to endure at least four more years of imperial folly.



REVIEWS: “AGAINST FREEDOM: The War On Terrorism In Everyday New Zealand Life”

Valerie Morse, Rebel Press, Wellington, 2007

Peace Researcher 36 – August 2008

- Jeremy Agar

The big wars of the 20th Century, like the two World Wars, Korea and Vietnam, were “all wars about elite control”. Valerie Morse maintains that these elites have “common goals”. Readers will have their own views about the extent to which this is true, but in this context the questions are too big, and the answers can only be sketched. Morse might well have stuck to the more limited, but manageable topic suggested by her title.

Here she has some good points to make. The Terrorism Suppression Act, passed in 2002, was New Zealand's response to 9/11. Morse discusses the notorious difficulty of defining “terrorism”. She notes that the law's attempt to assess “intent” might not be a good idea. The concept, she argues, is too “broad and ambiguous”. Why not treat terrorism as a crime like any other? Even with good will, if the State tries to guess people's intentions, the wrong people might be arrested.

Author Arrested In 07 “Anti-Terror” Raids

Insofar as she was herself arrested during the October 2007 terrorism raids around the time this book came out, Morse's critique is restrained. Her crime would seem to have been that, as an anarchist and a feminist with a penchant for artistic forms of protest, she was the sort of person that irritates policemen. We all know that any connection between a Wellington librarian and international conspiracies of terror will turn out to be nil. The global enemy might be new and dangerous, but the authorities here have apparently not evolved from their previous ploddings. Since the 2007 raids we've been subjected to a public display of State confusion over their prime suspect. Is Tame Iti a guerrilla warrior, a performance artist or an actor? The Police raid him as an incipient danger. Later, another branch of the Government alters his bail conditions to aid his export as a cultural object.

Unlike the people who constitute the authorities (and too many of their critics) Morse can apprehend reality. She knows that 9/11 was “not an orchestrated conspiracy” but sees that it “delivered” an opportunity for the Bush regime to spread its own more powerful, because hugely more pervasive, terror. What impelled the American government's response to the attack on New York? Morse quotes Bush's press secretary, Scott McLennan: “The big priorities will focus on the security and economic side because they really go hand in hand”. They do indeed. Bush and Valerie Morse agree and the available evidence supports them. The elites use violence to gain economic leverage. McLennan has now come out with a book denouncing Bush. He had to spout lies, he now says, to justify an unjustifiable war. His career made him do it.

Western Fundamentalism

Morse has a problem with what she calls “Western fundamentalism”: “By this term I mean the elevation of Western modernity above all other ways of knowing and being and it includes adherence to capitalism, individualism, patriarchy, scientific rationalism, ‘Christian’ morality, commodification of the environment, private property and a belief in progress”. Here's another too big question with too many abstract nouns. Some might find it a curate's egg, good in parts, but it's a stretch to conclude, with Morse, that “Western fundamentalism equals or surpasses in stridency that of its stated enemy, Islamic fundamentalism”. In a critique of present-day terrorism in which the Taliban figure prominently it's perverse. Morse of course scorns Bush's motives. Who doesn't? He exemplifies all the obvious sins so blatantly that these days it's hard to find anyone who doesn't despise him. He's become too easy a target.

So let's get back to the big assumptions. Bush does not represent the “West”. In fact nothing could be more Western than the criticism that activists like Morse direct at Bush. Morse asserts that in our societies “banished are collectivism, equality and intuition”. Inside the Oval Office they might be, but the reason Morse is cross - though she cannot say so - is that these ideals are hers. Equality is a “western” ideal. Neither are the Taliban, medieval bigots that they are, noted for their intuitive sensitivity. They're not into global togetherness either. Eastern Muslim men, Morse laments, have been “cast in the role of the stereotypical enemy”. They're certainly the villains currently favoured by pop culture, as endorsed by Bush, but, this, too, scarcely needs saying any more. Racist prejudice is not an aid to clear thinking. Neither does it help to stereotype all the heirs of the Enlightenment as bullying elitists.

Then the tone shifts. Morse is as frustrated as everyone else by security at airports, an assault, she thinks, on our freedoms. Is she saying that passengers and their baggage should not be checked, that there is no chance of more bombs and hijackings? It could well be that the routines are overly cumbersome, and lots of people doubt that future attacks will target planes. But that's because the authorities are onto the danger. Having to take off your shoes is annoying, but travellers have to do that because of the shoe bomber. Will there be more shoe bombers? Who knows? The last one was a delusional Western man. There are plenty more copycat loonies out there.

Airline searches add to exporters' costs, we're told, a curious concern in that the rest of Morse's book is unsympathetic to the needs of business. It's directly contradictory in that she simultaneously criticises the Government for buckling to the corporate elites' lobby to subsidise their trade by transferring the costs of security to the public. Any discussion of New Zealand's border controls should include an assessment of our biosecurity, a topic which Morse ignores. Here, surely, public and private needs converge. We might not know if political terrorists have designs on us, but we do know that biological threats are real.

“Freedom” & “Good Governance”

The disproportionate worry about airports comes about because, for Morse, the right to personal privacy is basic, indistinguishable from systemic rights. Yet it's a libertarian principle, putting the convenience of the individual ahead of the safety of planes, and impatience over a few minutes delay as you come back from your OE ahead of the general imperative to intercept invasive plants and insects. That's nothing if not individualistic. Morse turns out to be a privacy fundamentalist, as “Western” as you can be. Her title's privileging of “freedom” indicates the problem. For all of us within the Western tradition freedom is a high value, but as a political slogan in the 21st Century it's been captured by neo-cons and neo-liberals. This is infuriating all right and Morse will have good answers, merely suggested here, which would reclaim freedom as a progressive ideal, but in this monograph she doesn't have the space to expound them.

Morse outlines how New Zealand's policy has been taken over by the needs of the US. NZ's Pacific aid, Morse says, grants more money for security than it grants for either regional education or health. So it's understandable that she is suspicious of the talk about the need for “good governance” in the Pacific. In doing so, though, Morse equates a misuse of a concept with a reason to reject the concept itself. There is a lot of misgovernment in the Pacific. If only Wellington told Tonga, for instance, that it wouldn't prop up a decadent feudalism, both countries would be better off. The Tongan elites misuse NZ's aid. NZ's government thinks it has to allow the corruption because it's worried about “stability” and “security”. An honest insistence on clean politics would subvert this hypocritical support for “good governance”. Unfortunately Tonga is part of a global pattern. Western foreign policy, as led by the US, has long been marked by its very insistence on aiding and abetting bad governance. The State Department's minders - Mobutu, Diem, Marcos, Batista etc, etc - have been a bunch of crooks.

So while it's timely to remind us that the call for “good governance” can be a code to justify Western manipulation the fact remains that Tonga's people do suffer because their country badly governed. A better response would be to call the bluff of the elites and agree that it would be a good idea to make policy in the interests of the peoples in whose name what is called “development” occurs.

We're given a useful list of New Zealand firms which profit from war, but - it's a habit - we're soon diverted into idiosyncrasy. There are lots of other businesses that could be critiqued, but Morse mentions only one, and that's because Fonterra “is a company built on a behaviour no other species on Earth pursues - drinking another species' milk”. Worse, Fonterra sells its milk products to “lactose-intolerant Maori, Pacific Islanders, Asians, Hispanics and African Americans”. Morse could consider that it might matter more to the people under the thumb of the Tongan royals - and the mullahs - that they're denied Western-style democracy. It's easy to decry rational thinking and modernity when you've inherited its benefits.

Another problem is that Morse prefers bashing Helen Clark to presenting a consistent argument. In her chapter devoted to showing that the Government is playing a dubious game in Afghanistan, Morse buttresses her case by citing the National Party and, worse, the *New Zealand Herald*. This isn't a good idea, not in a book which has a whole section urging us not to trust any Fairfax or Murdoch media, bastions of Western fundamentalism.

REVIEWS: “UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE” A DVD

Peace Researcher 36 – August 2008

- **Jeremy Agar**

In 1899 the Spanish were evicted from the Philippines. President Teddy Roosevelt hailed the “most gallant and heroic feat” of war that the Americans and the Filipinos had pulled off. Their victory was historically decisive, marking as it did the end of one European's colonial rule in the Pacific, Spain's demise as a big power, and its replacement by what was to become an American global reach.

One imperialism out, another imperialism in. You can see why Roosevelt's invasion of the Philippines is a significant event. At the dawn of the 20th Century, Americans and Filipinos had become entangled in a messy relationship. On the one hand, they were fellow democrats seeing off that evil old Europe. That's always been Washington's view of course. George Bush is seen reading from his teleprompter about how his country still stands “side by side” with the locals as together they “liberate” the archipelago.

As this DVD indicates, the enemy now is harder to define. The Philippines are heterogeneous. Muslim Sulu, in the south, say some locals, has never accepted its integration under Manila's rule. A long-running secessionist war drones on. In the hills are the remnants of a splinter guerrilla army, the Abu Sayyaf Group. The American presence, once overwhelming, is resented, its motives distrusted. The Constitution forbids direct US fighting involvement. American troops are meant to be training, offering help.

This short, introductory film looks at an incident in 2005 which suggested that the US in fact has violated the law by engaging one of its enemies. Because there is an Islamic component to the cultural diversity in play, the Americans go on about 9/11 and their “War On Terror”, but any relationship between people in Sulu and bin Laden would have been, at best, opportunistic and fleeting. That's if it has existed at all. The Americans need a pretext to stay on, and they want to stay on because they're propping up their mates in the Filipino elites. The stated concern of Bush and Arroyo for this poor southern island is hypocritical, as is the standard American rhetoric about democracy. This, the general strategic context, is beyond the scope of this small film, which is a usefully detailed background for understanding the complex stalemate that is Philippine politics. A hundred years after the Marines landed, the relationship between Americans and Filipinos is as ambivalent as ever.



REVIEWS: “THE PEACE MOVEMENT IN CHRISTCHURCH 1937-41, 1946-47: A MEMOIR”

Peace Researcher 36 – August 2008

- Bob Leonard

Copies of this fascinating little booklet can be purchased from the author, Will Foote, a veteran peace activist since the 1930s (he spent several years during World War Two imprisoned as a conscientious objector). Despite being nearly 90, Will is still a highly valued Anti-Bases Campaign member and was regularly attending Waihopai spybase protests until recent years.

Send \$5 to Will Foote at 79 Lowry Avenue, Redwood, Christchurch, ph (03) 3526613.

- **Murray Horton**

To describe Philip Agee, who died in Havana in January 2008, aged 72, as a whistleblower is a complete misnomer and altogether too mild. Agee was a metaphorical bomb thrower (and the enemies he made for life among his former colleagues and political masters tried very hard to libel him as a literal bomb thrower too). He was one of the real global heroes of the latter decades of the 20th Century. By his courageous actions in exposing the names and operations of his erstwhile employer, the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), he will be forever remembered as a real American patriot (naturally he was vilified as a traitor, permanently stripped of his US passport, hounded out of his homeland and subjected to all sorts of threats).

His 1975 classic book "Inside The Company: CIA Diary" went off like a bomb during that turbulent era when the crimes of the CIA throughout the Third World and against its own people were being exposed. That book was absolutely essential reading for everyone at the time. Agee was not a one hit wonder. He went for broke, undergoing a profound political transformation that saw him spend the next several decades actively working against American imperialism throughout the world.

Born in Florida in 1935 into a comfortable Catholic family, Agee attended Jesuit schools and graduated from the University of Notre Dame in Indiana in 1956. "Agee had initially seemed perfect CIA material: bright, sharp witted, bilingual and cultured" (*Guardian* Obituary, 10/1/08; "Philip Agee: The man who blew the whistle on the CIA's backing of military dictatorships", Duncan Campbell). "He told the *New York Times* in 1974 that the CIA attempted to recruit him while he was at Notre Dame, offering a package plan that included Air Force duty. He said no but reconsidered while studying law at the University of Florida. He served as an Air Force officer from 1957 to 1960 and then began his CIA career" (*LA Times-Washington Post*, reproduced in *Press*, Obituaries, 19/1/08; "Agent who lifted CIA lid").

The Political Education Of A CIA Agent

Agee served as a CIA field officer in Latin America until he quit in 1969, profoundly disillusioned with what he had done and witnessed in the 12 years he worked for the Agency. "[The current attitude] is pretty much the attitude we had in the CIA during the 1950s. When we analysed the operational climate and all the political forces in any given country, we had our friends and we had our enemies. There was no one in between. The friends were centre and Rightwing social democrats, conservatives, liberals, in some cases all the way over to neo-fascists. The enemies were Leftwing social democrats, socialists, Communists, all the way to those advocating armed struggle.

"This is the way we saw the world. It was a strictly dualistic view of the political climate in any given country where we were operating. It was very much like what we are hearing today from Washington. It was not until I got down to Latin America that I began to get a political education. Whatever my ideas when I went down there, I saw things around me every day that influenced me. I saw the terrible economic and social conditions, and the injustices that could not be ignored.

"... The aim of our programmes was to support the status quo, to support the oligarchies of Latin America. These are the power structures that date back centuries, based on ownership of the land, of the financial resources, of the export-import system, and excluding the vast majority of the population. With all of our programmes, we were supporting these traditional power structures. What first caused me to turn against these people were the corruption and the greed that they exhibited in all areas of society. My ideas and attitudes began to change, and eventually I decided to resign from the CIA.

"... I was myself involved in some of these activities. I worked, for example, with the police in Latin American countries, and they were often involved in torture. I remember one Sunday morning in the office of the Chief of Police during a state of siege in Montevideo. My boss, the CIA Chief of Station in Uruguay was present, along with the local Army colonel in charge of anti-riot forces. We began to hear a low moaning coming through the walls and, at first, I thought it was a street vendor outside. But then it became clear that it was someone being tortured in another part of the building. As this horrible sound became louder and louder, the Police chief told the colonel to turn up a radio in order to drown out the groans and screams. There is no end to such examples, and Latin America was one of the places where the worst offences occurred. But it was not just Latin America... (Nordic News Network, 10/1/08; "Philip Agee: Let Us Now Praise An [In]Famous Man", Al Burke. The Agee speech quoted was delivered in Stockholm, 24/9/01 and can be read in full at Appendix E at

<http://www.nnn.se/abf/abf.htm>). "In 1968, Agee ran CIA activities during the Mexico City Olympics. When the Army massacred student protesters there, Agee told me he was tormented by the fact that the survivors were taken away and tortured to death" (*Los Angeles Times*; "Agee's Faustian bargain", Tim Rutten; reproduced in *Press*, 18/1/08).

He was also a romantic. "Why did I leave the CIA?', Agee once asked himself at a public meeting. 'I fell in love with a woman who thought Che Guevara was the most wonderful man in the world'" (*Guardian* Obituary, *ibid.*). She was "a beautiful Brazilian Marxist who had been arrested and tortured by her country's military, which was then cooperating with US intelligence" (*Los Angeles Times*; "Agee's Faustian bargain", *ibid.*). Together with his two young sons from his former American marriage, they moved to first Paris and then London in the early 1970s where he worked with the magazine *Time Out* and other publications to expose the CIA.

Bombshell Book

It was his bombshell 1975 book "Inside The Company: CIA Diary" which immortalised Agee. It detailed what he had done and what the CIA had done during his career with it throughout the 1960s in Latin America. Published in 20 languages it came complete with a 22 page list of 250 Agency operatives (all perfectly legal at that time). In 1978 he wrote "Dirty Work: The CIA In Western Europe", followed up by a similarly titled book on the CIA in Africa, which exposed a total of another 2,000 CIA agents. He told the *Guardian* in 2007: "It was a time in the 70s when the worst imaginable horrors were going on in Latin America. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Guatemala, El Salvador – they were military dictatorships with death squads, all with the backing of the CIA and US government. That was what motivated me to name all the names and work with journalists who were interested in knowing just who the CIA were in their countries" (*Guardian* Obituary, *ibid.*). "I did not write the book for the KGB' (the intelligence agency of the former Soviet Union), he told the *New York Times* in 1974. 'I wrote it for revolutionary organisations in the United States, in Latin America and everywhere else'" *LA Times-Washington Post*, reproduced in *Press*, Obituaries, 19/1/08; "Agent who lifted CIA lid").

Ironically, Agee died the same month as Indonesia's former dictator Suharto, the genocidal kleptocrat who was one the 20th Century's worst mass murderers and whose 1960s' slaughter of anywhere up to a million "Communists" was actively aided and abetted by the CIA. For the details of this still unpunished crime against humanity, check out *Peace Researcher* 25, March 2002, Special Issue, "Ghosts Of A Genocide: The CIA, Suharto And Terrorist Culture", by Dennis Small. It can be read online at: <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr25intr.htm>.

"Inside the Company', though published in 1975, remains a basic reference on the methods and procedures by which the United States pursues and maintains its interests in the countries it seeks to control. In fact, I happened to be re-reading it a few years ago as Venezuela was being subjected to a classic destabilisation campaign whose evident purpose was to soften up the country for the coup against President Hugo Chávez which in due course took place a few months later.

"The basic procedure was all laid out in Philip's book: One could read his detailed account of how he and his colleagues had organised the downfall of Ecuador's President Velasco in 1961, and in the daily news follow the same tactics and procedures as they were being applied in Venezuela 40 years later. Then as now, the mainstream media played a central role in creating the necessary pre-coup atmosphere of diffuse anxiety, widespread malaise, and seething rebellion against a 'dictator' who happened to be democratically elected. Now as then - despite the numerous subsequent revelations of Philip and others who have followed his example - the same media have divulged little or nothing about the shadowy figures and agencies who orchestrate such processes. For the most part, the CIA and other instruments of US domination continue to operate behind a media smokescreen of wilful neglect and obfuscation" (Nordic News Network, 10/1/08; "Philip Agee: Let Us Now Praise An [In]Famous Man", Al Burke).

Agee was and remains the CIA's only ideological defector. He didn't do it for money or to live in an enemy country (it wasn't until his final years that he moved to Cuba, where he died). Other ex-spies have written books which have caused ripples (in 2001, the Anti-Bases Campaign hosted Mike Frost, a former Canadian spy turned author, on an NZ speaking tour; see *PR* 24, December 2001, for that tour report, which can be read online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/frost.htm>) but none provoked the fury that Agee did, which lasted the rest of his life. He wasn't a whistleblower and despite being libelled as a traitor (meaning one who betrays one's country to an enemy), he was nothing like a traitor. If he was, that means the CIA sees the American people, indeed the world's peoples, as their enemy, because that's to whom Agee "betrayed" the CIA. He had become a political enemy to his former covert world, one who could do very real damage to it (which he did, as much as possible for as long as possible) and it, in turn, became his lifelong enemy.

The Price To Be Paid

He was never charged with anything because he hadn't done anything illegal. In 1982 Congress passed the Intelligence Identities Protection Act, specifically to halt Agee's revelations. He didn't name any more names after that. His 1987 book "On The Run" detailed the unrelenting campaign waged against him by the US government during and after his writing of "Inside The Company". I reviewed that book in *Foreign Control Watchdog* 62, September 1989 (things moved slower in those pre-Internet days. The book was not available in NZ and I had to import a copy from Australia). Here's an extract:

"By deliberately choosing to live in the West (not in Cuba, where he could have been set for life), he exposed himself to the full retribution of the open and covert arms of the US government and its satellites. Agee was hounded out of Britain (because he exposed joint US/UK intelligence destabilisation of Michael Manley's government in Jamaica). He was subsequently expelled from Holland and France, and had a real hassle getting permission to live in (the former) West Germany. More than once he was arrested or held at airports. As a result of trumped up accusations at the time of the Iranian hostage situation (when US Embassy staff were held hostage from 1979-81, and CIA records found in the building made public) he was stripped of his US passport (which was never returned to him). He then travelled on first a Grenadian one and now a Nicaraguan one (the first one ceased when President Reagan sent US forces into Grenada, in the West Indies, in 1983 to overthrow its Government; the second one when the Sandinista government was electorally defeated in 1990, after enduring years of Reagan's and Bush Senior's contra war waged by the CIA and its local death squads). He has been subject to constant physical and electronic surveillance. He has had spies planted on him, and found their tools of trade (the famous cover photo of the bugged typewriter in "Inside The Company"). "On The Run" includes a photograph of Agee confronting one of these spies when she was found at her next deep cover assignment. She fled the scene on the spot. He has been called a KGB agent, a Cuban spy, a traitor and a murderer" (all of which were dredged up again in 2008 in mainstream media coverage of his death).

"Under the US Freedom of Information Act, Agee was able to discover the CIA had accumulated 18,000 pages of information on him. Agee was repeatedly blamed for the death of Richard Welch, the CIA Station Chief in Athens who was assassinated in 1975. 'George Bush's father [George Bush Senior] came in as CIA Director in the month after the assassination and he intensified the campaign, spreading the lie that I was the cause of the assassination. His wife, Barbara, published her memoirs and she repeated the same lie, and this time I sued and won, in the sense that she was required to send me a letter in which she apologised and recognised what she wrote about me was false. They've tried to make this story stick for years. I never know what government hand or neo-con hand is behind the allegations, and I don't pay too much attention, but I know I haven't been forgotten'" (*Guardian Unlimited*, 9/1/08; "Renegade CIA agent Agee dies", Fred Attewill and agencies).

To return to my 1989 *Watchdog* review: "On The Run' is the aptly titled human record of his life in the CIA, whilst writing 'Inside The Company', and as an author, activist and fugitive in the years since. It is a life that has exacted a personal toll – the CIA encouraged his ex-wife to use their two sons as bait to lure him home. The constant pressure has broken up more than one subsequent relationship. He is now married to a ballerina/teacher – he found her totally different world an antidote to the paranoid, secretive one of spy and counterspy" (and marrying a German citizen had the added advantage of entitling him to a German passport).

"Life would have been much easier for Agee if he had been what he has been accused of – a defector and traitor. He could have had a Moscow dacha (this was written before the collapse of the Soviet Union just a couple of years later) or a Havana villa. But he chose to stay and fight, and take the heat. The world owes him a debt of thanks. Nor is he a wishy-washy reformer, who wants to clean up the CIA of a few bad apples. There have been several other agents who have gone public since Agee, written books, toured NZ in one case (Ralph McGehee, in the mid 1980s). They live in the US. But Agee is treated as an implacable enemy, because he has come full circle. He actively espouses revolutionary socialism, with Cuba as the model...He can be accused of naivety and paranoia (with great justification, in the latter case). But he has never swerved from his hard fought principles - that the secret world of US intelligence must be exposed and that the imperialism it serves must be fought worldwide. Read as a straight autobiography, 'On The Run' is riveting – as a chronicle of growing political awareness from someone in a position to hit his former masters very hard, it is invaluable".

In the 1990s Agee set up an online travel company to bring visitors to Cuba. Most of his clients were Europeans or Canadians but many were Americans who risked hefty legal penalties for defying the US embargo (which, among things, prohibits US citizens from visiting this enemy pariah state just off its coast) that has been in place for nearly as long as the Castro brothers have been in power. "Agee was a great supporter of what he regarded as Cuba's progressive policies providing universal healthcare and education, and he regarded the current US President as the 'antithesis' of those achievements. Writing in the *Guardian* in 2007, he said: 'All Cuba's achievements have been in

defiance of US efforts to isolate Cuba. Every dirty method has been used, including infiltration, sabotage, terrorism, assassination, economic and biological warfare and incessant lies in the media of many countries" (*Guardian Unlimited*, 9/1/08; "Renegade CIA agent Agee dies", Fred Attewill and agencies). So it was fitting that Agee died, following surgery for a perforated stomach ulcer, in the country where he most felt at home. It is doubtless a matter of surprise and regret to his many powerful enemies that he died of natural causes.

Agee On "The War On Terror"

Agee remained an extremely astute analyst of US imperialism right up until the end of his life. Less than a fortnight after the September 11, 2001 terrorist atrocities in the US, he gave a fascinating speech in Stockholm. "There has been some reporting, but not very much, about the fact that Osama bin Laden is a product of the United States. He is a creature of the CIA, having gone to work for it in Afghanistan. It was the largest operation ever carried out by the CIA, and its purpose was to bleed the (former) Soviet Union. Bin Laden was one of thousands who volunteered to fight with the mujahedin against the Soviets. As I recall, there were seven different groups. All seven were basically fundamentalist Islamic forces, who felt that the Soviet invasion defiled an Islamic country. Bin Laden was among those who did not stop fighting after the Soviets were expelled. In fact, he started laying plans for the future while the (1979-89) war against the Soviet Union was still going on. He was able to develop a worldwide network which today is operating in 60 countries or more. Very little of this background on bin Laden as a creation of the United States has been brought to public attention during the past two weeks. Most of what we have seen and heard is related to the 'solution', which is war. How much have we read or heard about those voices calling for alternative solutions to the problem of international terrorism? How much reporting have we seen on analyses of what has driven these people to such desperation that they carried out those attacks on September 11th?

"... Since the attacks on September 11th, I do not believe there has been any serious effort by the US mainstream press to review the history of US involvement in and support of terrorism. The news is monopolised by those who want to go to war. For that reason, I do not think it will be very easy to avoid this 'war on terrorism'. The US media are so powerful, and they fill our minds every day with what they think we should know and how we should interpret it. They are working hand-in-hand with the Government, and they share the same values. This is what makes it possible for them to earn a lot of money by selling advertising. After all, these are privately-owned institutions whose capital is supposed to yield a return for stockholders. They have to keep this constantly in mind, like any other corporation, and so they go along with the Government.

"...But in the decade since the end of the Cold War until September 11th, the US security establishment - the political class, the CIA, the people who fought the Cold War - had no real enemy to focus on. True, they had (the late) Saddam Hussein for a while, and they might have had a minor enemy here, another one there. But there was no real worldwide threat similar to that of the Cold War. Well, now it seems that they have one again. What this means is that the United States is going to be in this for quite some time. I have feeling that it is going to go on for ten or 15 years, because they are not going to wipe out international terrorism or something like bin Laden's group overnight. During this period, they are going to be doing the same things they did in the Cold War. We can already hear it in such expressions as: 'Whoever is not with us is against us'. They are going to be trying to use every bit of power they have to bring countries in line behind the United States.

"It also means important changes within the United States, because the war on terrorism will serve as the justification for restraints on civil liberties. They are building a huge crisis in the United States. They are building the psychological climate for broadbased acceptance of an ongoing war, for which there will be no quick resolution. There will be no great battles, either. During this period, there will be very little room for alternative views and alternative solutions in US news media. What are the alternatives? Well, one is obviously to address the question of why these people are doing these things: What are the roots of international terrorism? How does US foreign policy create this type of reaction? How does US support of everything that Israel does, including the oppression of the Palestinian people, influence fundamentalist Islamic groups?

"...Unfortunately, I suspect that there will be greater self-censorship by US media in order to line up behind the Government, however its policy of war may turn out. There is already talk of a personal identification system of some kind for the entire country, together with large-scale surveillance of the population -- especially immigrants, and Muslim immigrants in particular. There will be some opposition to this but, historically, the courts have usually gone along with the Government, even though they are theoretically supposed to be the guarantors of civil liberties...So, it will be possible to restrict, and even infringe upon, civil liberties and human rights in the US.

"It is early days to draw any conclusions about how all this is going to develop, since it is still in the planning stage. But in my opinion, if they carry out this military solution - with an attack or a series of attacks, or the establishment of military bases in Islamic countries - they will be doing exactly what bin Laden wants them to do. It would turn more and more people to fundamentalism and to his organisation... Certainly, the CIA and the

other components of the US intelligence apparatus will be using all available technical means to locate and attack these groups, wherever they may be. They should certainly know where all the training bases are located, since they were established by the CIA, itself. But that will not be nearly enough" (Nordic News Network, 10/1/08; "Philip Agee: Let Us Now Praise An [In]Famous Man", Al Burke. The Agee speech quoted was delivered in Stockholm, 24/9/01 and can be read in full at Appendix E at <http://www.nnn.se/abf/abf.htm>). Agee was spot on with his analysis and predictions, delivered right at the very start of the endless "War On Terror" being waged by the US and its faithful satellites, such as New Zealand.

The 1980s' NZ Speaking Tour That Never Was

Readers might be forgiven for thinking that this is all very interesting but what's it got to do with us? Rest assured that there is an NZ connection. To return, one final time, to my 1989 *Watchdog* review of "On The Run": "For three years (1984-87) Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA) worked to organise an Australasian speaking tour by Philip Agee. We put in a lot of work, raised several thousand dollars (one member gave us \$1,000, which was serious money in the decade where I bought my present house for \$25,000), and generated the kind of media controversy that attends anything to do with Agee. It all ended with a late night call from him in Madrid (no e-mail or faxes in those days), cancelling the tour to concentrate on a North American promotional tour for this book. It was his first trip home to the US in nearly 20 years, and it was fraught with peril for him. It was only after he cancelled that the servile Australian government announced that it wouldn't have given him a visa anyway. Ironically, this book is not, and apparently will not be, available in NZ. I had to import my copy from Australia. If it had been available before I got involved in organising the abortive tour, it would have explained a lot more, indeed I would have been forewarned. Agee is a man under enormous pressure, who undertakes more international commitments than he can possibly fulfil".

In case you're wondering why Agee's proposed NZ speaking tour was a project of CAFCA rather than the Anti-Bases Campaign (ABC), the answer is simply because ABC wasn't born until 1987 (the year that the Waihopai spybase was announced) and up until that point – and for several more years actually – CAFCA specialised in military and intelligence matters, before turning its attention to economic issues, leaving the others to ABC. In recent years, in the wake of the "War on Terror" and the Iraq War, CAFCA has once again turned its attention to the military and intelligence manifestations of imperialism.

CAFCA invited him to tour NZ at that "tipping point" in NZ's history, at the height of the "ANZUS Row", when there were documented examples of the CIA working to destabilise the anti-nuclear Lange government (such as the notorious Maori Loans Affair, for instance), precisely because Agee would have been able to expose the modus operandi of his old employer at work in this country. It was never to be (Agee was incredibly apologetic in his cancellation phone call – not even lapsed Catholics lose the guilt) and all I've got to show for it is the fat pile of letters that he and I exchanged during those three years - the stamps recording his various temporary European homes as he was kept on the run - plus the publicity photos he sent us for the tour that never was. We had no further contact with him in the past couple of decades and I never did meet him, although Jeremy Agar, my CAFCA committee colleague and *Peace Researcher* reviews editor, did get to hear him speak at a Hamburg conference in the 80s. Agee prioritised his US return and, indeed, he was subsequently able to visit his homeland (where his two sons still live) several more times, without incident, and he was even able to revisit Britain, the country which cravenly expelled him in the 1970s.

Working on that tour was an exercise in fascination – for example, in the course of a trans-continental Australian rail holiday, I stitched together a network of usually bitterly opposed Left parties and groups who were prepared to work together on the Agee project – and frustration, which saw it postponed once by him, then finally cancelled. I don't deny that I was monumentally pissed off when he pulled the plug on what had been three years work by me (his call came right on the eve of my birthday; the next day, out of the blue, my late father rang to announce that, as his present, he would, unsolicited, pay off my mortgage. That birthday, 21 years ago, is definitely right up there in my memory for its emotional rollercoaster ride). But you learn from such setbacks and life goes on, just as they always say it does. There was even a silver lining. CAFCA devoted one whole meeting to writing and posting refund cheques to donors, a significant proportion of whom told us to keep their money (so we actually made a profit on the tour that never was!). Looking back now, I marvel at how everything was organised then by good old letter, including complex international tours involving two countries and a speaker on the other side of the world who had no fixed abode.

An Invaluable Legacy

Philip Agee left an invaluable legacy. Not only did he write those several books exposing the CIA and thousands of its agents, he was also a founder of the wonderful US magazine *Covert Action Information Bulletin* (which later renamed itself *Covert Action Quarterly*). CAFCA and ABC used to share the cost of the subscription and my office

holds nearly a complete set of these, filling three file boxes, dating back to the second issue, in 1978. Agee himself featured in a lot of the early issues (e.g. number 8, in 1980 had a photo of him on the cover and was headed "The CIA Vs Philip Agee"). Sadly, and without explanation, *Covert Action* stopped publishing with number 78 in 2005. Its Website is still there at <http://www.covertactionquarterly.org/> but it hasn't been updated since 2005.

Philip Agee is owed an enormous vote of thanks from all the peoples of the world, including New Zealand. Where is his like among the kidnapers, torturers and murderers of today's CIA? In Agee's day the crimes of the CIA were confined to the Third World and hidden from its own people. Now, the culture of imperial impunity means that these crimes are brazenly committed in full view of everyone. So, the need to oppose and expose this criminal enterprise is greater than ever. Right up until his death, Philip Agee did more than his share in striking blows against the Empire. The struggle continues!



OBITUARIES - IN MEMORY OF REG DUDER

Peace Researcher 36 – August 2008

- **Murray Horton**

Reg Duder, who died in Christchurch in January 2008, aged 79, had been a supporter and member of the Anti-Bases Campaign for the final few years of his life. Indeed he valued his ABC membership so much that he made a point of paying his annual sub to me the last time I saw him alive, just weeks before his death, even though he was obviously dying. Reg never came to any of the Waihopai protests or other ABC activities but he supported them from afar and made sure that he backed his support with money by becoming an ABC member (quite a turn around from the young Reg who'd spent eight years in the Air Force).

Reg's main, and very active, involvement was with the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA). He belonged to that from 1992 until his death and was on the committee for most of that time. He was a serving committee member when he died, indeed he hosted the final meeting for 2007, days before Christmas, just weeks before he died – despite the fact that his legs were by then so swollen from terminal kidney failure that he could no longer wear footwear or pants. Reg was extremely proud of his membership of the CAFCA committee and, in the 1990s before his health packed up, he was an extremely active CAFCA activist, as well as in several other groups with which CAFCA was involved in various campaigns. In turn, that followed on from a decade of previous social justice activism against the all out class warfare waged against the poor and beneficiaries in this country in the 1980s and 90s. Reg knew very clearly whose side he was on.

I wrote a lengthy obituary of Reg in *Foreign Control Watchdog* 117, April 2008, which can be read online <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/17/07.htm> . Reg was more than a colleague, he was a true friend and a good mate. His legacy lives on, quite literally, in the person of his daughter, Colleen Hughes. As long as I knew him, he lived in her flat and she was his caregiver in his final years of increasingly dreadful health problems. Colleen has replaced Reg on the CAFCA committee (the first time that two generations of one family have served on it) and she has taken over Reg's ABC membership. Goodbye old friend, you've earned a rest, sleep easy. We won't forget you and, speaking personally, I'll treasure your memory.

