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**Israel** is very familiar with the use of drones, having been involved with the development of the early Pioneer system in the 1970s, and some cooperation with later US drone developments. Drone use is credited with reducing the numbers of successful rocket attacks on Israeli military and civilian targets and with minimising civilian casualties in Gaza. In a Fox News interview (29/12/12) with a “Major G”, the Chief Instructing Officer of Israel’s drone (UAV) school, an Israel-based journalist, Paul Alister, outlines the methodology of such drone assisted attacks on Hamas fighters in crowded population centres. Major G said:

*“Once a drone identifies a target, its operator is then responsible for setting in motion a sometimes dizzyingly fast chain of events that may result in a missile strike taking place. Using commercial apertures and video cameras we have the ability to work with both daytime and night time infrared images. My Heron1 Drone does only ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance), but I have ability to designate the target to another aircraft. This capability is very important because I am able to stay above and investigate the target for a long time, clear it of uninvolved civilians, and only when there is a clear path of fire do I call in for the F-16 or Apache helicopter”.*

However Human Rights Watch and other Western news agencies widely reported on the unintended killing of nine family members of the Dalou family in Gaza, and on the death of two al Asqa TV journalists in a missile strike on a media centre in Gaza, during the eight day war between Israel and Hamas in November 2012. Although both the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) and Human Rights Watch criticised Hamas for using civilians as cover and/or shields for the sites of missile attacks on Israel, the fact that Gaza City is one of the most densely populated areas in the world makes civilian casualties much more likely. Operation “Pillar of Defence” by the IDF in Gaza in November 2012 was said to have resulted in 43 civilian casualties, including 12 children. The quality of the intelligence and the speed of retaliation make such collateral damage inevitable. Professor Moshe Habertal of Jerusalem’s Hebrew University warns that “the pin-point accuracy alone requires that soldiers take more time in correctly identifying legitimate targets” (JTA, 4/3/13, “As World’s Largest Exporter Of Drones, Israel Looks To Transform Battlefield”, Ben Sales, <http://www.jta.org/news/article/2013/03/04/3120936/israeli-drones-play-ever-larger-role-in-idf>). Italy also used Reaper drones in the Libyan campaign in 2011 to oust Muammar Gadaffi. Up to 50 countries are now buying or developing drone technology for various purposes. It has become the new aerial warfare technology with the advantages of lower cost and the standoff capability of an unseen observer. There have been many collateral civilian casualties and extra-judicial killings.

### **Reactions In Pakistan And Yemen**

There has been widespread anger and outrage in Pakistan over US drone strikes, including from the Pakistani government when 24 of its soldiers were mistakenly killed by a drone strike in 2010, and by the killing of civilians at village gatherings. A protest convoy led by Imran Khan, the former Pakistani cricket captain turned politician, including 35 members of the US peace protest group Codepink and Tony Blair’s sister-in-law, Lauren Booth, attempted to travel to South Waziristan in early October 2012 where many of the military-directed drone missile attacks against Taliban forces were taking place. They were turned back by Pakistani soldiers. Data collected by the UK’s Bureau of Investigative Journalism credits drones with killing 2,600 to 3,404 people in Pakistan’s border areas with an estimate of anywhere between 474 to 889 of them being civilians. Data is difficult to collect in such disputed territories (see *Guardian* drone attack spreadsheet files <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2012/aug/02/us-drone-strikes-data>), but another study by the Stanford and New York University Law Schools claim that “drone strikes in Pakistan have killed far more people than the US has acknowledged, have traumatised innocent residents and have largely been ineffective” (CNN News, 26/9/12). General Stanley McChrystal, ex-NATO commander in Afghanistan and pioneer of the drone missions in Afghanistan, also cautioned about the use of drones in counterinsurgency in a recent interview (*The Atlantic* magazine, 13/1/13, “General McChrystal On Drones: ‘They Are Hated On A Visceral Level’” <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2013/01/general-mcchrysal-on-drones-they-are-hated-on-a-visceral-level/266914/>). *“What scares me about drone strikes is how they are perceived around the world. The resentment created by America’s use of unmanned strikes... is much greater than the average American appreciates. They are hated on a visceral level, even by people who have never seen one or even the effects of one. It exacerbates a picture of American arrogance that says, ‘Well, we can fly where we want, we can shoot where we want, because we can’”.*

Yet in Yemen, according to *Time* (17/9/12), there is said to be little complaint about US use of drones to target al Qaeda terrorists. An informant, in the citizens’ militia in the provincial town of Zinjibar, agreed that the banishment of al Qaeda fighters from their town was paramount: “and if the American drones help kill them we won’t mind”.

However this has come at a cost as the inhabitants are caught between two hostile forces and Zinjibar has literally become a ghost town of ruins. US and Yemeni intelligence now said to cooperate together under the new President Abdel Rabbo Mansour Hadi, a former Soviet-trained military commander, in his campaign to eliminate jihadists from his home province of Abyan where Zinjibar is located. Zinjibar, a large town with 20,000 inhabitants, was largely destroyed in a campaign beginning in May 2011 where a large Yemeni military force of tank brigades, Republican Guards and regular army troops was backed by US and CIA drone surveillance, intelligence-sharing and missile strikes (*Time*, *ibid*). In bloody street by street battles, up to 1,000 Yemeni troops and up to 600 jihadists, with many from the core AQAP (al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula) leadership, were casualties. Missile strikes from Predator and Reaper drones coupled with use of a small team of US Special Operations troops played a significant role in the recovery of territory formerly controlled by the AQAP fighters under Taliban-style rule in Abyan province. Al Qaeda fighters have now retreated to the more remote Hadramout province, the bin Laden family's ancestral home. The ramping up of drone strikes in Yemen from four in 2009, to ten in 2011 and now to 29 in 2012 has been a major strategic choice made by the Obama Administration and US military planners in the "War on Terror". Yet Yemen remains poor, with unemployment up to 40%, and divided between warring factions, with little aid made available for reconstruction or social assistance programmes.

**Somalia** has been a minor focus for drone strikes with only 20 strikes documented since June 2011 (see *Guardian* drone strike data records <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2012/aug/02/us-drone-strikes-data>). Strikes have killed 23 to 27 suspects but possibly also with up to 15 civilians killed, including 11 in one strike in Lower Jubba. In October 2012 a drone strike on al Shabab fighters was reported to have killed another 29 people (Press TV, 14/9/12). Local authorities and witnesses claim these are CIA-directed attacks, ones that are not acknowledged by the Obama Administration, and which have led to massive civilian deaths.

### **UN Inquiry Into Drone Warfare**

In January 2013, because of increasing concern at civilian deaths and injuries from drone strikes and a possible challenge to international law to regulate unmanned aerial vehicles, the UN Security Council was asked to establish an Inquiry. A special Panel was authorised to investigate the impact of drone warfare on civilian populations by the request of three UN member countries - Pakistan, China and Russia. The Special Rapporteur, Ben Jemson QC, said they would be examining 25 incidents in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Yemen, the Palestinian territories and Somalia (BBC News 24/1/13). *"The inquiry would assess the extent of civilian casualties, the identity of militants targeted, and the legality of strikes where there is no UN recognition of a conflict"*, he said. Without the safeguard of a legal framework for UAVs there was a high potential for extra-judicial killing, and possible war crimes where a second strike coming soon after would shred the rescuers of the victims of the first strike (so-called "double tap" strikes). The inquiry would report to the UN General Assembly in the latter half of 2013.

### **Types Of Drones And UAS (Unmanned Aerial Systems)**

Drones (UAVs) are part of a remote controlled network that directs one or more unmanned aerial vehicles to overfly designated areas. They are controlled remotely by radio, satellite or data link by a team sitting in a remote air conditioned room or bunker, sometimes many thousands of miles away. For example the 39th Squadron (NATO forces Afghanistan) is using Reaper drones launched from Kandahar, but controlled from Creech Air Force Base in Nevada via satellite. Drones can be used for intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance (IRS) and for targeting. With the removal of immediate feedback of risk from the battlefield, the war from the air becomes increasingly like a sophisticated video game, with strong incentives to react by launching missiles to score "kill points".

**MQ-9 Reaper or Predator B** drone, a successor to the earlier Predator MQ-1 drone made by General Atomics, can stay aloft for 18 hours and have a range of up to 6,000kms. Their operational height is between 17,600 and 35,000 feet, well beyond stray ground fire, although they are vulnerable to SAMs (surface to air missiles). Reapers are a second generation system supplementing the earlier Predator drones that remain in operation. They have the capacity to carry four Hellfire missiles, and two 500kg laser-guided bombs and Paveway bunker-busting bombs and have thermal and radar capability with high resolution TV images for real time operations. Their armed capacity makes missile attacks much more likely in combat situations and easier to initiate as they involve no loss of military personnel. As of April 2011 they had completed 20,000 operational hours over Afghanistan. The US Air Force had ordered 329 as of December 2010. They are also in operation with the National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA), Homeland Security, US Customs and Border Security (Mariner version), in the Seychelles for anti-piracy missions, and with the Italian and Royal Air Forces (Britain).

Other drone systems manufactured in the United States, the largest drone manufacturing country, include: **Lockheed Martin RQ 170 Sentinel** drone ("The beast of Kandahar") that has operated over Iran's airspace and over Afghanistan since 2009. One was captured over Kashmar in western Iran, 225kms from Afghanistan, in 2011.

This type of drone was also rumoured to be involved in the surveillance that led to the 2011 Osama bin Laden raid in Pakistan.

**RQ-4B Global Hawk** (Northrop Grumman) is a long range UAV with 24 hour loiter time over targets and wide coverage (over 40,000 sq kms), similar in mission to the Lockheed U-2 surveillance aircraft. It carries advanced SAR (synthetic aperture radar) and electro-optical infra-red (EO/IR) sensors that allow night/day, all weather capability. However it is very expensive to operate and as of January 2012 procurement was cut back. It is presently operated by the US Air Force and Navy.

**MQC-Triton** (Northrop Grumman) - a variant of the Northrop Grumman Global Hawk developed for the Broad Area Maritime Surveillance programme (BAMS) of the US Navy, it has a range of 6,000 nautical miles and carries a similar payload to the Global Hawk but with greater aerodynamic capabilities, such as de-icing. Due to enter service around 2015 and to be deployed in Hawaii, Guam, Diego Garcia, Florida and California, it is intended as a partial replacement for the aging P-3 Orion fleet.

**MQ-1C Gray Eagle** or Sky Warrior (General Atomics) - a medium altitude long endurance (MALE) drone being developed for the US Army and an upgrade of the MQ-1 Predator. It is powered by a heavy fuel diesel engine burning jet fuel, has a ceiling of 29,000 feet, endurance of 30 hours and range of 400kms and can carry up to four Hellfire missiles or eight Stingers or four Viper Strike bombs.

**AAI RQ-7** (Textron Systems) a brigade level drone for close support of land forces.

**RQ-21 Integrator** and the **Scan Eagle** (Boeing) ground launched small drones for close support and surveillance. Originally developed for tracking schools of tuna; they are now used in battlefield operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and at sea, by the US Air Force, Marine Corps and Navy. Captured or pirated version is used by Iran. In service with the Australian, Polish, Canadian, Netherlands, and Colombian air forces and the Singaporean Navy. Developed from earlier RQ-2 Pioneer drones.

**RQ-11 Raven** – a hand launched drone powered by an electric motor and manufactured by AeroVironment with a range of approximately 10 kms and widely in use by allied forces in Afghanistan and in Iraq. Up to 19,000 are said to be deployed with armed forces making it the most widely used UAV system in the world. It is deployed by Australia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Italy, Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon, Romania, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Uganda, Yemen and previously by British forces in Iraq. Up to 5,000 are in operation with US ground forces. It was to have been supplied to Pakistan in 2011. A variant has been made with solar panels on the wings to extend flight endurance.

**Phantom Ray and Phantom Eye** developed by Boeing Insitu (a division of Boeing Corp), the latter being a high altitude drone powered by liquid hydrogen.

Northrop's **MQ-8b Fire Scout** developed as a VTOL (vertical take-off and landing) machine for reconnaissance purposes

New battleground individual drone weapon systems such as **Switchblade** – back pack capable precision electric powered or glider strike weapon that is expendable, as well as containing miniaturised ISR equipment for battlefield surveillance. Unmanned helicopter systems are also being jointly developed by Bell Helicopters and Northrop for operational use in Afghanistan to ferry equipment.

Drones are also being developed with solar-electric engines with the potential to remain aloft for weeks at a time. The US Navy, not to be left out of drone technology, also has called for development of the UCLASS drone system. The specifications for these unmanned aircraft include "stealth, long range and carrier launched surveillance and strike capabilities by 2020" (*Flight International*, 7-13 August 2012, p30). These are being developed to meet Pentagon fears of increasingly anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) challenges in the Western Pacific and Middle East. Current US strategic concerns about the military and nuclear capabilities of China, North Korea and Iran spring to mind.

Drone manufacturers are gearing up to meet the Navy's requirements. Boeing will further develop its X-45 Phantom Ray, General Atomics has a Sea Avenger version of its well tested Predator C Avenger drone, and Lockheed Martin proposes to develop a Sea Ghost concept based on its RQ-170 Sentinel. Northrop Grumman has a design based on its x-47B unmanned combat air system demonstrator aircraft. The US is now said to have over 7,500 drones in operation (as of 2012).

US Forces as of 2007 operated 268 Predator drones 79 Reaper drones Out of 400 projected	In Pakistan from 2004-7 there were nine strikes per year By 2010 this rose to 118 strikes 2,347 people killed, including 175 children (Source: Reprieve, a UK Human Rights Association)
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## British, Israeli & Chinese Drones

**Tarranis** - a British "stealth" drone, first developed as a demonstrator project in July 2010 by BAE Systems, and set to have its first operational sortie sometime in early 2013 (*Flight International*, 20 June-2 July 2012, p15). **MANTIS** drone, also developed by BAE Systems, is an armed medium altitude long endurance drone that can fly with an internally pre-programmed flight plan (not remotely controlled). This first flew at the Woomera test range in Australia in October 2009. **Watchkeeper** drone was developed for the UK Government in July 2005.

**Israel** has developed drone families called Hermes and Heron. These are used by Israeli forces over Palestine and neighbouring countries and are being sold to other countries. Israel has two major companies (IAI and Elbit) manufacturing drones with sales to 49 different countries including NATO allies in Afghanistan and, surprisingly, also to Russia and Nigeria. Commentators see drones as providing the majority of air cover and surveillance in the future to minimise manned combat missions. The **Chinese** are also said to have developed a high speed drone in 2006 known as **Dark Sword** with composite stealth materials and a ramjet engine (*Popular Science*, January 2013, pp46-50). They are said to be establishing up to 11 coastal drone bases as of 2011.

## Integration Of War-Fighting And Drone Technology

The US Defense Department has reviewed its offensive aerial weapons systems in view of the need to cut costs (up to \$US487 billion in cuts over next ten years announced by Obama on January 5, 2012; *USA Today*), and the possibility of China, North Korea and Iran developing stealth detection and passive radar systems that will severely test US Air Force ability to penetrate their airspace. Iran has already proved capable of downing US drones. New aerial systems are promoted as having standoff and stealth capabilities with hostile nations developing A2/AD (anti-access and area denial) weapons and detection potential, and with simmering conflicts in the Pacific and in the Middle East. President Obama has said the proposed cuts in the military, primarily affecting the Army and Marine Corps manpower, will not be at the expense of the critical region of the Asia Pacific.

Drones may also carry out electronic disruptive missions on enemy communications (jamming), using electromagnetic pulse (EMP) cannons to target electronics, and may target enemy radar. We are also seeing the rise of the autonomous drone, where drones can operate for longer periods between refuelling, and follow pre-programmed paths, and the conversion of surveillance drones into strike weapons. There is a conflict between these two roles as unmanned aircraft can get too heavy to carry both sophisticated detection and reconnaissance gear while remaining sufficiently agile to avoid interception, as well as being fitted for strike missile payloads. It is likely that there will continue to be a range of unmanned craft remotely operated for different missions.

## Implications For Security, Control And Surveillance

While drone (UAV) technology may have some legitimate social purposes such as for traffic control, property surveillance, remote sensing, fire detection, and search and rescue operations where it is difficult to mobilise manned craft, drone technology for law enforcement has important civil and human rights implications. Surveillance is increasingly prevalent in urban centres through closed circuit television (CCTV) technology, and through the ability of law enforcement agencies able to track people from cellphone data, credit card and other electronic transactions and combine these with criminal profiling tools. For example US Homeland Security has now developed a mobile app SARA (suspicious activity reporting application) that uses geo-location, combines it with a stored image and can allow users to input details such as hair and eye colour and vehicle information. This can be inputted either by law enforcement personnel, or contributed anonymously (*Wired* magazine, 2/3/12). The potential for misuse and abuse of personal civil liberty is high.

Adding increasingly sophisticated drone technology to the mix begins to turn society into a surveyed docile population of pools of potential suspects where any indication of civil disobedience or legitimate civil protest could be monitored and quashed. Sir John Smith, former Deputy Commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police, claimed that the State was becoming more distrustful of its citizens where guilt was assumed on the basis of remote surveillance and technology based on algorithms until innocence could be proven. It would turn Britain into an

Orwellian society without adequate safeguards, he felt. "This technology would inevitably provoke distrust and distance the citizen from the State," he said ("Surveillance Unlimited", Keith Laidler, p 211, 2008). Drone technology has also made the move into both law enforcement and private security. A recent security fair (similar to a military hardware arms fair) demonstrated the use of small quadcopter drones for various uses. Although the stuff of science fiction novels, particularly those by Philip K Dick, the potential of surveillance technology to have unanticipated social and economic consequences when used on civilian populations, should not be underestimated.

Here in New Zealand Valerie Morse, Wellington anarchist and regular Waihopai protest participant, ("Against Freedom", Rebel Press, 2007) cogently argues that surveillance and anti-terrorism measures after September 2001 have curtailed citizens' freedoms and cost taxpayers unknown millions. In addition, the private sector, championed by PM Key and his Cabinet cronies, is increasingly used for providing security. Security firms such as Chubb and Armourguard have had a field day in providing security services to business and Government agencies. Chubb, a division of transnational United Technologies Group (UTG) also provides covert and electronic surveillance, and has links to Pratt & Whitney Aerospace and Sikorsky Helicopters through its parent company. Both Pratt & Whitney and Sikorsky are suppliers to the military and to the "War on Terror". The security apparatus of the civil State - the Police, the Security Intelligence Service (SIS) and Customs and border control staff, have sophisticated equipment and programmes to keep track of so-called dissidents and persons of interest, but appear to have inadequate controls on the use of such technology. The "Urewera terrorism" trial, brought about by the illegal use of covert surveillance, was but the first shot in an undeclared war on personal freedoms (*18 people were originally arrested and charged after the 2007 series of Police raids in the Ureweras and several cities. One died whilst awaiting trial; charges were dropped against 13 – including Valerie Morse – when the evidence was ruled to have been illegally obtained. The remaining four defendants stood trial in 2012 and were convicted on some charges. Two were imprisoned; the other two sentenced to home detention. Ed.*).

## The Future War

With the rise of increasingly autonomous drone technology, the mission of these sophisticated war-fighting machines can be extended to integrate with other types of technology such as face recognition, cellphone triangulation, and other electronic intelligence (ELINT) data. Suspects can be, and have been, eliminated without benefit of habeas corpus and the judicial process or even without knowing their identity. The CIA's so-called signature strikes are used to disrupt and intimidate any possible reaction from opponents. For example the killing of Osama bin Laden's personal representative Qaed Sunyan al-Harethi in Yemen in 2002 was facilitated by US Special Forces' technicians, using a cellphone pinging technique to remotely programme his cellphone to switch on.

With the location fixed, they could then call up a Cruise missile to attack his Land Cruiser ("Killer Elite", Michael Smith). Smart phones could also be used as remote recorders to record conversations and take video of what is around them. Radio cell towers themselves are being used in Britain to watch people and traffic around them in real time, similar to radar. X ray imaging to see through walls is also a capability being sought by security forces and mobile forward looking infrared (FLIR) was used routinely by US troops in Iraq to see hidden individuals through concrete walls ("Surveillance Unlimited", Keith Laidler, p104 and p114, 2008). Optical Character Recognition on CCTV can also be used to track number plates of vehicles. The use of small hand held drones to see around corners or over hills extends the electronic battlefield and surveillance beyond line of sight.

## Human Rights And Drones

A recent concern highlighted in American media is the initiative by the US Justice Department and Obama Administration for the targeting of suspect American citizens who are said to be connected with al Qaeda or jihadist groups, and their summary elimination without trial. The potential for "mistakes" in identification and targeting for destruction by aerial missiles or guided munitions is high. Republican Senator Rand Paul organised a 12 hour filibuster (prolonged debate), to highlight the issue of the domestic use of drones, during the March 2013 Senate hearings into the appointment of John Brennan as CIA Director (succeeding Daniel Panetta). Brennan, who was Obama's counter-terrorism advisor in the White House, is a promoter of extended drone technology for surveillance and destroy missions.

The White House argued that the 2001 Congressional **Authorisation for use of Military Force** (primarily against Taliban and al Qaeda after 9/11), as well as international law on the nation's right of self defence, provided sound legal basis for targeting individuals affiliated with al Qaeda or associated forces, even outside of Afghanistan. This includes US citizens as documented in the extra-judicial killing of al Alikawi and his son in Yemen. Questions were raised in the Senate about possible authorisation of strikes from the sky inside United States territory, without due process.

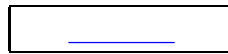
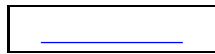
Speeches by Department of Justice spokespeople indicated that “*such lethal actions are lawful if*

- *The Government determines through thorough and careful review that the individual poses a imminent threat of violent attack against the United States*
- *Capture is not feasible*
- *And the operation is consistent with law of war principles of necessity, distinction, proportionality and humanity”.*

(Congressional Research Service Report, obtained through Project on Government Secrecy by Federation of American Scientists, accessed 12/3/13).

According to unnamed confidential sources, the White House and CIA maintain kill lists of al Qaeda and “affiliated group” suspects. Meetings take place at the secretive National Counter-Terrorism Center (NCTC) where target lists are reviewed and Executive actions authorised, including so-called signature killings where the names are not known but people are suspected. Lists and final recommendations from the NCTC went through the counter-terrorism advisor John Brennan to the President. Brennan, as the newly confirmed CIA Director, is now said to have recommended that the CIA exit drone warfare in favour of the military operating these controversial kill programmes. President Obama, as Commander in Chief, is said to have authorised several high profile strikes. (*Washington Post*, 23/10/12, “Plan for hunting terrorists signals US intends to keep adding names to kill lists”, Greg Miller, [http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-10-23/world/35500278\\_1\\_drone-campaign-obama-administration-matrix](http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-10-23/world/35500278_1_drone-campaign-obama-administration-matrix)).

Continued civilian deaths (so-called collateral damage) and a heightened fear of death from the sky makes for mistrust, xenophobia and continuing fearful, unstable and undemocratic political situations in many areas of the world where US military or covert forces operate. The “Terminator” series of movies portrayed this vision of the future. A “Terminator” or War of the Machines future against perceived enemies looms. **Skynet** as the global military policeman may not be very far away. (“**Skynet** is a fictional, self-aware [artificial intelligence](#) system which features centrally in the “[Terminator](#)” franchise and serves as the franchise’s main [antagonist](#). Scarcely depicted visually in any of the ‘Terminator’ media, Skynet’s operations are almost exclusively performed by war-machines, cyborgs [usually a [Terminator](#)], and other computer systems, with its ultimate goal the extinction of the human race” [Wikipedia]).



- Warren Thomson

This column presents here the usual summary of the arcane, the inane, and the outright insane from the world of the spooks. But along with the wide array of spooky bits, there appears in this collection of material a disturbing, perhaps even a chilling, theme. In every one of the five UKUSA\* acolytes, new legislation is being pressed into law, legislation which, across the board, extends intelligence agencies' powers to spy on their own citizens, and/or increases governments' control over the invasion of privacy by weakening already feeble oversight processes. *\*The five members of the UKUSA Agreement – code name Five Eyes – are the US, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Ed.*

New Zealanders should be extremely concerned about the Key government's hasty rewriting of Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) legislation to enable the snoopers to spy on Kiwi citizens. But the relentless expansion of the covert domain is a menacing factor in the other leading Western spy nations as well. *Spooky Bits* in *Peace Researcher* 44 (November 2012, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/44/pr44-004.htm>) referred to Canada's backward steps in allowing less public access to its spy operations. It also outlined planned legislation in Australia that would drastically undermine privacy in communications. The stories below outline further, and similarly insidious, attacks on domestic democracy.

## **New US Legislation Controls The Clouds**

At the end of 2012 the US Congress updated legislation that allows US government agencies open access to any electronic information stored for non-American citizens by US-based companies. All personal information stored by Internet users on major "cloud" computing services can be spied upon without any form of warrant, and without the information owners knowing they are being spied on. The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, known as FISA, was brought in during the last days of the Bush Administration in 2008, but the recent approval has raised grave concerns about its implications. It is now apparent that all documents uploaded onto cloud systems based in the US or falling under Washington's jurisdiction can be accessed and analysed by US spooks.

The *Independent* (31/1/13) was told by Caspar Bowden, who served as Chief Privacy Adviser to Microsoft Europe for nine years until 2011: "What this [law] means is that the US has been able to mine any foreign data in US clouds since 2008, and nobody noticed" According to the *Independent* "... bodies such as the National Security Agency (NSA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) can gain access to any information that potentially concerns US foreign policy for purely political reasons with no need for any suspicion that national security is at stake, meaning that religious groups, campaigning organisations and journalists could be targeted".

Gordon Nardell QC, a British barrister who specialises in data protection, said he was shocked by the powers outlined in the amendments to FISA. He said: "What's different about this is that it's a power in the US authorities to insist on real-time collection of information by any data processor within US jurisdiction. The US authorities basically grab everything that is going in and out" (ibid.). On 20 December, 2012, CNN reported that the US Senate passed this extension of the "controversial overseas interception programme" by a substantial margin. Critics told CNN the law has enormous potential for abuse, giving intelligence agencies wide latitude in carrying out surveillance, under oversight by a special FISA court whose proceedings are not public. Privacy advocates say if the communications of a foreigner overseas are being wiretapped, which does not require a warrant, an American communicating with that person could still have their communications with that foreigner monitored. The world's biggest spy agency, the National Security Agency, presented their usual spin: "One of the biggest misconceptions about NSA is that we are unlawfully listening in on, or reading e-mails of, US citizens. This is simply not the case. NSA is unwavering in its respect for U.S. laws and Americans' civil liberties" (CNN). This almost exactly echoes the bullshit that John Key was feeding the NZ public before the fact that more than 80 Kiwis had illegally been spied on by the GCSB.

## **US Secretly Obtains AP Phone Records**

In April and May of 2012 Obama's government secretly obtained the records from more than 20 separate telephone lines assigned to the Associated Press and its journalists. Federal officials said they were after a person who provided details of a story on a CIA operation to stop an airliner bomb plot in May 2012 in Yemen. It is not clear how the disclosure can have endangered American lives, and difficult to see how such extensive snooping on the

activities of an international news agency can have any justification, especially as CIA Director John Brennan has been quoted as saying: "there was never a threat to the American public as we had said so publicly, because we had inside control of the plot and the device was never a threat to the American public". AP's top executive called the action a massive and unprecedented intrusion into how news organisations do their work "US Government Targets Journalists", 14/5/13, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/world/americas/8669410/US-Government-targets-journalists>).

### **British Government:** Closed Courts, Secret Evidence

Cameron and the Tories have also been busy undermining civil liberties and handing the British intelligence agencies unprecedented powers. In *Spooky Bits in Peace Researcher* 44 (November 2012, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/44/pr44-004.htm>) we reported that the UK government was setting up secret courts to deal with legal matters involving "national security" because they were necessary to protect the intelligence-sharing relationship with the USA and other governments. It is much more likely that the main impetus for the new underground court system is to conceal crimes committed by the spooks; one example being the murky dealing of MI6 (British foreign spy agency) and other agencies in the rendition and torture of "terrorists".

On top of this there has been a widespread and consistent expansion of spy activities, particularly in extensions to the power and budgets of the Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ). The *Sunday Times* [reported in the *Independent*, 1/4/12) said British Ministers were preparing a major expansion of the Government's powers to monitor the email exchanges and Website visits of every person in the UK. Legislation was (at that time) expected whereby Internet companies would have to install hardware enabling GCHQ - the Government's electronic "listening" agency - to examine "on demand" any phone call made, text message and email sent, and website accessed in "real time".

Under any new laws it is expected that the GCHQ would be enabled to trace, and presumably investigate, anybody that "suspect" individuals or groups communicate with, and the spies would record how often and for how long they are in communication, although they would not be able to access the content of such communications without a warrant. We should remember, however, in the "war on terrorism" that guilt by association is enough; and casual contact with "suspects" will put citizens under suspicion and surveillance. Content of communications is not a requirement.

Gordon Campbell's report in *Scoop* (16/12/12) revealed that Britain was going through with the "introduction of an Orwellian titled 'Justice and Security Bill' that will allow the Cameron government to create a new generation of secret court hearings that [block the public disclosure of sensitive intelligence material](#)". Campbell stresses that both Cameron's Rightwing lot and the Labour lot emphasise that legislation is based on the need to protect the information of (big) sister agencies: "So, keeping the tap flowing of secret information from foreign intelligence agencies is to be regarded as more important than the right of your own nationals to fair and open treatment before the courts. Despite the fact that time and again, the secret information in question has been shown to be flawed, flat out wrong and/or obtained by dubious or even illegal means, such as by torture or unlawful surveillance. Again, it is hard to imagine that a government headed by David Shearer would be any more likely than one headed by Helen Clark (or by John Key) to challenge the powers of intelligence agencies in such matters".

### **And, Of Course, The GCHQ Listens To Your Phone Calls**

In an article detailing the commercial war between Blackberry and Apple, the *Guardian* (22/3/13) also illuminated how the GCHQ ensures it can pry into any sector of the telecommunications industry it wants to. The article stated that Blackberry's BB10 model had not yet been approved by the UK government to the same level as its older BB7 software for the carrying of restricted materials. The BB7 had been approved by the UK's Communications Electronic Security Group (CESG) – part of the spy centre GCHQ – to use for the communication of secret materials. The *Guardian* quotes the CESG: "Discussions with BlackBerry are ongoing about the use of the BlackBerry 10 platform in government. We have not yet performed an evaluation of the security of the platform, but we expect to be issuing platform guidance in the summer". It is a very small step to assume that the CESG's "evaluation" of the system also includes ensuring that the agency has the capability available for ongoing penetration of that system.

### **Aussies In The Game**

PR 44 also reported on Australian legislation which will give Government agencies the power to force communications companies and Internet providers to retain records which are accessible by those agencies. Included in the requirements is the storage of every Australian Internet user's last two years of Internet usage.



## UK Vulnerable To Cyber-Attack

The GCHQ and associated agencies have been given a £380 million boost in budget to counter cyber-attacks. Britain's armed forces are at risk of being "fatally compromised" by a sustained cyber-attack because the [military](#) is dependent on technology that has no proven back-up, according to a Commons Defence Select Committee (*Guardian*, 9/1/13). The Committee's report acknowledged much had been done since 2010 and praised the work of the [Ministry of Defence's new top secret Global Operations Security Control Centre](#), run by Air Commodore Tim Bishop. The Centre has a mix of military, civilian and private contractors, including staff seconded from Fujitsu, BT (British Telecom) and the defence firms EADS (European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company) and Babcock. (This introduction of the big companies into the inner ring of spy operations is a dangerous carry-over of the American penchant for putting private enterprise at the heart of new spy technology. Ed.). But the Select Committee MPs at Westminster were extremely critical and said there were worrying gaps in strategy and thinking and it was unclear to them who would be in charge if the UK came under sustained cyber-attack. They also said the Ministry of Defence (MoD) was now totally reliant on cyber-systems (*Guardian*, *ibid.*).

The UK government has been making a £650 million additional investment in cyber security between 2011 and 2015. It is reported that 59% of the available increase will be consumed by security and intelligence departments, 14% by the Ministry of Defence. In the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) the Coalition made cyber-security a tier one priority, setting aside the £650m to boost the UK's defences, support online safety campaigns, and provide extra investment at GCHQ. All Government departments were told to put cyber-defence at the top of their agendas.

## UK Lacks Personnel For Cyber-Security

A National Audit Office (NAO) report says the UK's cyber-security capabilities will be undermined because the country fails to turn out enough graduates with the right skills. Despite Government efforts to rectify the skills gap since 2010, experts interviewed by the NAO lined up to tell it that science and technology subjects remained relatively unpopular at school level which resulted in a weak take-up in universities. Those graduates who did exist would often end up in the private sector thanks to better career prospects and pay, the NAO found. In short, the Internet economy and the threats posed to it have been growing faster than the pool of skills needed to impose management and security on it (*Computer World UK*, 12/2/13). The GCHQ has frequently lamented that it cannot get the staff it needs to carry out its mission (perhaps this is a good thing? Ed.). During 2012, GCHQ started to respond by [funding grants to eight universities](#) to establish Academic Centres of Excellence in Cyber-Security Research. At the same time, the UK spy hub also sank £3.8 million into setting up the first academic programme devoted to cyber-security research.

## Charlie Supports The Spooks

Following a recent article in the *Sunday Times* (16/12/12), we would like to confirm that HRH The Prince of Wales took on the role of Royal Patron of the Intelligence Agencies in 2011. This followed a recommendation from all three chiefs of the Secret Intelligence Service, Security Service (MI6 and MI5) and GCHQ in recognition of his long standing and close support for their work in this country and overseas. In July 2012, His Royal Highness inaugurated a memorial at the [National Memorial Arboretum](#) in tribute to all the people that have contributed to the work of Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) and its forerunners. GCHQ has always enjoyed the full support of the Royal Family and has been privileged to host many Royal visits at its Cheltenham Headquarters ("Prince of Wales' Patronage of the Intelligence Services", 18/12/12; from GCHQ official Website).

## Aren't They Doing Well!

And in a self-promoting piece, the British spooks at MI5 (domestic spy agency) announced that their boss "who oversaw a safe London Olympics (assisted by 17,000 military personnel – Ed.) and helped transform the British Security Service's counter-terrorism operations" will step down (which he did, in April 2013). We are informed that Sir Jonathan Evans presided over *an expansion of anti-terrorist operations* (emphasis added) and "there were no major attacks on his five year watch" (*Press*, 27/3/13). Should we really be more comfortable with the inexorable expansion of State security apparatus?

However, it should also be recognised that MI5's Cold War practices still occasionally manage to score a win in the more traditional contests. A submariner on the nuclear sub HMS *Vigilant* has admitted supplying details of naval operations to people he thought were Russian agents. In fact Petty Officer Edward Devenney, who was a communications engineer, was a victim of a successful sting operation carried out by MI5. Devenney had been passed over for promotion and wanted to get revenge on the Navy, so he had photographed top secret encrypted

information and attempted to pass it on to the Russian Embassy. He was categorised as a heavy drinker who suffered bouts of depression (on a nuclear-armed and powered ship? Ed.). Devenney was jailed for eight years (*Press*, 14/12/12).

### **Scottish Independence Sunk By Spy Costs?**

In a cunning appeal to proverbial Scottish parsimony, Tories have been announcing that should the Scots vote for independence in the September 2014 referendum, an independent [Scotland](#) would need to spend billions of pounds setting up its own intelligence agencies and equipping its network of overseas embassies. David Lidington, a Foreign Office Minister, says that an independent Scotland would face "enormous" costs to build sophisticated new spying and security facilities, and train its agents, before it could persuade [MI6](#) and the CIA to begin cooperating on joint intelligence.

Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland's Deputy First Minister, told the Foreign Affairs Committee that officials were completing a "substantial piece of work" on a new independent intelligence service. She said she was unable to offer any details until that work was complete, but given that the overall UK budget on [MI5](#), MI6 and the spying centre GCHQ was about £2 billion, Scottish spending would be around £200m a year, based on its share of the population. Sturgeon anticipated that an independent Scotland would want to guard against cyber-terrorism, international terrorism, international organised crime and global instability producing rogue states. Other policies would probably include protecting Scotland's oil rigs, collaboration on North Atlantic defence with Scandinavian states, and full membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), but without accepting nuclear weapons on Scottish soil (*Guardian*, 28/1/13). Scotland would want to share intelligence with the rest of the UK, and the US and other allies. Lidington said Scotland would face very tough tests to prove its security systems were tight and capable enough to satisfy its partners. One wonders what "tests" New Zealand has gone through to satisfy the same partners.

### **CIA At It Again**

They can't resist it. At the end of March 2013, US Defense sources revealed the CIA has been meddling in Syria, helping to get "large amounts of weaponry" from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Jordan, to "moderate" (read US-friendly) opposition groups. In spite of decades of destructive and/or failed interventions, the temptation to meddle in another world hotspot has meant that, although Washington officials claim their policy is only giving "non-lethal" aid, the spooks are intent on facilitating the supply of arms in the hope of imposing their influence in the region (*Press*, 27/3/13). And, in the most recent spin coming out of the Western intelligence agencies, the Syrian government's purported use of chemical weapons is being touted as a reason for direct Pentagon intrusion into Syria's civil war. The Damascus government is a brutal one. It would likely use any means at hand to get back full control of the country. But, with the stink of the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) fiasco and the manufactured justifications for the illegal 2003 invasion of Iraq still in the world's nostrils, it is hoped that this story, right or wrong, is not used for another Pentagon adventure in the Middle East. As the issue (45) of *PR* goes to print, Obama is under pressure to get involved in Syria because of nebulous reports of gas warfare by the Damascus administration. It may take some time to find out who is issuing these allegations and what truth really lies behind the reports.

*In May 2013 Carla del Ponte, a member of the United Nations' Independent Commission of Inquiry on Syria, said that while the Commission had not yet seen any evidence of the use of chemical weapons by Government forces, it had seen evidence of the use of deadly sarin nerve gas by rebel forces. Oh dear, she's definitely deviated from the script. And she was such a safe pair of hands too, having served the Americans and their European allies faithfully as a prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Expect to see her dropped from the team quick smart. Ed.*

### **Hollywood Used To Promote CIA Torture**

Hollywood is again doing its bit to whitewash CIA brutality and aggression. The movie *Zero Dark Thirty*, which sensationalises the hunt for and assassination of Osama bin Laden in May 2011, pushes the idea that torture was justified in the tracking of the terrorist leader. Even the Senate Intelligence Committee's Chairwoman expressed outrage over scenes that imply "enhanced interrogations" of CIA detainees produced a breakthrough in the hunt for Osama bin Laden. A Senate committee undertook to examine extensive records charting contacts between CIA officials and the film's director Kathryn Bigelow and screenwriter Mark Boal. "They will also probe whether CIA personnel are responsible for the portrayal of harsh interrogation practices, and in particular the suggestion that they were effective" (Reuters; reported on Stuff Website, 13/1/13).

In 2012 the CIA and Pentagon, in response to a freedom of information request from Judicial Watch, released hundreds of pages of internal documents discussing the agencies' arrangements for dealing with Bigelow and Boal.

The documents, many heavily redacted, show that top CIA and Pentagon officials, including Michael Morell, the CIA's Deputy Director at the time, and Michael Vickers, now the Pentagon's intelligence chief, talked to the filmmakers (Reuters, *ibid.*). *Jeremy Agar's review of "Zero Dark Thirty" appears elsewhere in this issue. Ed.*

### **New CIA Director's Role In Torture**

[John Brennan](#), at his Senate confirmation hearing as CIA Director, denied accusations that he played a central role in the Agency's torture of suspected terrorists, and tried to duck responsibility by claiming he was misled over the value of information obtained through water-boarding. Senators questioned Brennan for several hours about the CIA's abduction and abuse of alleged terrorists at secret "black sites". The interrogation of Obama's nomination for top spook was based on a Senate report which had concluded that the Agency misrepresented and lied about the value of "enhanced interrogation techniques". Brennan was closely questioned about what he knew of the CIA's abduction and torture of suspected terrorists when he was the Agency's Executive Deputy Director after 9/11.

Some Senators claimed a CIA source said Brennan helped "set the parameters" in devising enhanced interrogation techniques, known as EITs, and getting Justice Department authority for them. This was denied, but Brennan acknowledged he knew about the programme and had done nothing to stop it. In 2007 the new CIA Director had told CBS that so-called 'enhanced interrogation techniques' now generally regarded as torture, "saved lives" by gathering valuable intelligence. He pledged that under his direction the CIA will not again use such techniques. The now-appointed CIA head was not only questioned about his role in water-boarding, but also over his part in drone operations, because Brennan has been a principal architect of the policy of wiping out Pakistani and Afghani targets in the hope of assassinating some "terrorist" leaders as well as the local villagers. Brennan is reported as saying that the public does not appreciate the "agony" the Government goes through to avoid civilian deaths.

Brennan also gave a repeated defence of the use of drones in the face of scepticism from some Senators, particularly over the legal authority for the President to order the killing of American citizens. Obama repeatedly refused to release the 50-page legal opinion giving him the power to sign off on the summary executions by drone, and only permitted members of the Senate Intelligence committee to read it hours before the hearing after some threatened to hold up Brennan's confirmation. Brennan was pressed into a commitment to keep Congress informed on intelligence operations after lengthy battles with the White House over access to classified information, including the legal basis for the assassination of US citizens by drone (see the *Guardian*, 7/2/13). *Doug Craig's detailed article on American drone warfare is elsewhere in this issue. Ed.*

### **What's An Oxymoron?**

"Military Intelligence" used to be the classic example of oxymoron – self-contradictory terms. But surely the same can be said for "Intelligence Agencies" and we have the examples to prove it. Hundreds of former and some current Australian spies posted their occupational information on social media in recent years. More than 200 spook-related personnel put employment details on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, or other easily accessible Internet sites. Some posted information about linguistic training, technology usage and even comment on issues which offered insights into what they were actually doing in their work.

Some security experts regarded these lapses as being extremely useful for foreign intelligence (?) agencies. Trying to get personal information on the pretext of social contact friendships is a basic spy strategy these days. Apparently it is not too difficult. In a Christchurch *Press* report (27/12/12), a former Defence Signals Directorate (DSD, Australia's electronic spy agency) officer said that the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS; external spy agency) does this and foreign intelligence groups are doing exactly the same thing. The identification of people working in areas of sensitive information also means that attempts can be made to hack their systems, or in some circumstances, blackmail might be used to get information. But in case Kiwis assume that it is only the intellectually challenged chums across the Tasman that make these sorts of blunders, we should note that social media searches brought up a number of cases of Belgian Surete de l'Etat officers listed in ways that betrayed their employment (Surete de l'Etat is the Belgian office responsible for counter-intelligence). And there have been suggestions that local spooks have not been entirely responsible in terms of social media postings.

### **Mystery Spook's Identity Confirmed** (Andrea Vance, Stuff, 29/1/13).

The identity of a United States spy who mysteriously landed in Wellington in 2012 can be revealed as National Security Agency Director General Keith Alexander. The visit by the senior spook was so top secret that Prime Minister John Key repeatedly refused to name him. The four-star general sparked intrigue when his US Army jet landed at the capital's airport late in November. Mr Key, the Minister in Charge of Intelligence Services, initially denied knowledge of the plane, and, despite pledging to find out more, later refused to reveal the identity of the

visitor.

Sources say General Alexander visits New Zealand up to four times a year, and Mr Key would have approved the visits. The shadowy NSA is the US equivalent of the Government Communications Security Bureau. It monitors and analyses foreign communications and protects US government cyber-systems. General Alexander, a former Deputy Chief of Staff with the US Army, is also Director of the Pentagon's Cyber Command, which is to be expanded to tackle the growing threat from hackers. Three years ago, news of another secret visit by General Alexander broke when a reporter spotted him entering a Wellington building accompanied by a security detail.

New Zealand belongs to the intelligence alliance Five Eyes with the US, Britain, Australia and Canada. At the time, Mr Key said the visiting plane was not carrying officials to a Five Eyes meeting. "If someone parks a US plane at Wellington Airport, in my opinion, that doesn't count as a secret," he told reporters. When pressed about the visitor for two days, he agreed to check the paperwork. Once he learned the identity of the jet passenger, he decided it was not in New Zealand's security interests to reveal it.

A spokeswoman for Mr Key said yesterday: "As the Prime Minister said last year, he doesn't track every official that comes to New Zealand and he did not believe it was in the public interest to talk about who was on the plane". A spokesman for the US embassy declined to confirm General Alexander's visit. The activities of intelligence agencies came under scrutiny in 2012 when it emerged that the GCSB had been illegally spying on Internet mogul Kim Dotcom. It sparked an internal review of the foreign spy agency.

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# Norway Hosts Fresh Push For A Nuclear Weapon-Free World

Peace Researcher 45 – June 2013

- Robert Green and Kate Dewes

In snowy Oslo in the first week of March 2013, we witnessed the most exciting breakthrough since 1996 in the struggle for a nuclear weapon-free world. It was inspired by a vigorous new Australia-initiated citizen movement, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), with 300 partner organisations in 70 countries ([www.icanw.org](http://www.icanw.org)). ICAN invited Rob to speak about his book *Security Without Nuclear Deterrence*\* – on his experience as a former operator of British nuclear weapons turned anti-nuclear campaigner – on an authors' panel at a Civil Society Forum, in the run-up to an unprecedented two-day government conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, hosted by the Norwegian government. \*Reviewed by Doug Craig in Peace Researcher 41, July 2011, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/41/pr41-009.htm> Ed.

From the moment we arrived in the Oslo University Students' Society building, the Forum venue, we sensed fresh energy and anticipation in the already bracing air. At least a third of the 500 delegates from 70 countries were young and new to the nuclear disarmament struggle, most of them sporting scarlet ICAN t-shirts. The first plenary session opened with a lyrical warm-up by a beautiful young black South African poet and singer, Naima McLean; and we were repeatedly surprised and delighted by the youth, vigour, competence and global spread in ethnicity and gender of compères and speakers.

The authors' panel was facilitated by young mother Stine Rødmyr, Chair of the Norwegian equivalent of Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, *Nei til Atomvapen* (No Nuclear Weapons). Also on the panel was American historian Ward Wilson, a refreshingly feisty iconoclast speaking about his new book "5 Myths About Nuclear Weapons". As well, young Norwegian author Anne Thelle discussed her experience of growing up in Japan and writing recently about the Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear atrocities. During more than an hour of lively discussion with a big and knowledgeable audience, Rob explained why he had concluded that the dogma of nuclear deterrence is not just a myth, but a deliberate hoax concocted by the US military-industrial complex now dominating and distorting American politics and foreign policy for its vested interests. He also pointed out that the nuclear weapon states are in denial about the economic, agricultural and health effects of a failure of nuclear deterrence – which is why this conference was so important.

## Most Unusual Buzz

At a hugely successful evening gala event, the American film star Martin Sheen – the US President in the *West Wing* TV series – recounted his experience of being in India during the making of the movie "Gandhi", which awakened his faith. He delighted his 900-strong audience when he quipped: "If Gandhi and Martin Luther King were still alive, they would have joined ICAN!" Sheen had met Dan and Phil Berrigan, the famous American Catholic priests and peace activists, who pushed him to work publicly for peace. This took him to a protest in the Nevada desert, where he watched a line of nuns dance their way onto the US nuclear test site and get arrested. He said: "Their courage helped me to live my Christian faith"; and he went on to be arrested scores of times himself. The audience were enthralled when Sheen hugged Karipbek Kuyukov, an armless Kazakhstan artist and second generation victim of Soviet nuclear testing at Semipalatinsk, who was introduced to him. An extraordinary exhibition of Kuyukov's paintings, painted with his feet, was on display outside the conference hall of the government conference.

As delegations from some 130 states assembled in the huge hotel conference room, there was a most unusual buzz for a nuclear disarmament conference. It reminded us of the opening of the 1995 Oral Proceedings at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, when the Court heard submissions on whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons was permissible under international humanitarian law – the only time so far that the nuclear weapon states had been obliged to try to justify the legality of their nuclear policies. When Norway's Foreign Minister, Espen Barth Eide, welcomed delegates, he was building on Norway's courageous leadership in the successful campaigns to negotiate global treaties banning and eliminating other inhumane weapons: anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions. Of the nuclear weapon states, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council – known as the P5 – were conspicuous by their absence; but India and Pakistan sent delegations.

**"Prevention Is The Only Way Forward"**

What we found so thrilling was the leading role played by the International Committee of the Red Cross. In his opening address the ICRC President, Peter Maurer, said it was astounding that states had never before come together to address the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, including their long-term health and climatic effects. As he spoke of this “unique and historic opportunity”, we noticed a smiling young pregnant woman delegate nearby in the audience gently stroke her belly. Maurer boldly set the pace by reporting that the ICRC had recently concluded from a specially commissioned study that no national or international capability existed to help survivors of even a single nuclear weapon detonation. This was why, he declared: “prevention – including development of a legally binding treaty to prohibit and eliminate such weapons – is the only way forward”.

Hard-hitting presentations followed from a range of top international experts. Admitting a “perfect identity of view with the ICRC”, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, warned that the international community was not prepared for the evacuation crisis alone from a nuclear detonation. Liv Tørres, Secretary-General of Norwegian People’s Aid (analogous to Oxfam), sounded like an anti-nuclear activist when she said how proud she was that her Government was hosting the event. She added: “We have hesitated too long. The nuclear weapon states’ denial is not good enough. The time has come for a new beginning and action. A new, impressive post-Cold War generation is taking part, which should give us confidence. We are many, determined, and convinced about a solution”.

At a crowded press conference, the Norwegian Foreign Minister was asked why Norway had called the conference now. He retorted: “Why has it not happened before?” When challenged that Norway belonged to a nuclear alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), he pointed out that all 25 non-nuclear NATO member states were present – implying that only the three nuclear members, the US, UK and France, had boycotted it. In subsequent sessions, scientists and medical experts spelt out the realities and health effects of a nuclear weapon detonation. These were dramatised by the Right Rev Laurence Yutaka Minabe, Anglican Bishop of Yokohama, born of Hiroshima survivors. Speaking softly from the floor, he told how his father recovered from severe burns only to die of radiation-induced blood cancer 30 years later. Then he highlighted the ongoing agony being endured by the survivors of the 2011 Fukushima nuclear plant disaster, who experienced only a fraction of the radiation and burn effects of even one nuclear detonation.

Dr Ira Helfand, an American physician and adviser to ICAN, focused on recent research findings by climate scientists Alan Robock and Owen Toon. They had applied the latest climate computer models to the impact of a small regional nuclear war between India and Pakistan involving detonation of only 100 Hiroshima-size weapons. They were shocked to discover that, apart from the mutual carnage and destruction across South Asia, enough smoke from firestorms – let alone radioactive fallout – would be generated to cripple global agriculture. Plunging temperatures in the Northern Hemisphere would cause hundreds of millions of people to starve to death, even in countries far from the conflict. For more details, see [www.nuclearfamine.org](http://www.nuclearfamine.org). The nuclear weapon states simply refuse to discuss this.

### **ChCh Quakes Overwhelmed Emergency Services, Let Alone Nuclear War**

The second day focused first on “humanitarian preparedness and response”. Following descriptions of current plans and capabilities, the overwhelming consensus was to agree with the ICRC’s findings: adequate measures were non-existent and impossible – thus prevention and abolition offered the only practicable way forward. The rest of the conference was devoted to responses from government delegations. Even India’s was supportive. New Zealand’s forthright Disarmament Ambassador, Dell Higgie, startled us when she said: “New Zealand’s experience of the Christchurch earthquakes showed that, despite considerable preparation, the 22 February 2011 quake overwhelmed the emergency services; there was confusion, chaos among Police and the Fire Service. A nuclear detonation would be a disaster no country can plan for”.

We were also pleasantly surprised to discover that the UN Development Programme had helped various poorer states, including four South Pacific island states (Cook Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu and Tuvalu) to send delegations. Appropriately, the conference was being held during Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Week. Patrick Akaiti Arioka, from the Cook Islands Deputy Prime Minister’s office, spoke on behalf of all 22 small island states of the Pacific. He pointed out that their region was living with the consequences of 181 French nuclear tests, including a perilously fragile former test site in a cracked coral reef at Mururoa; and he paid tribute to New Zealand for sacrifices it had made to sustain its nuclear-free policy.

### **NZ Calls For Elimination Of Nuclear Weapons**

In the final session, Mexico stole the show when Ambassador Juan José Gómez Camacho announced that his Government was offering to host a follow-up conference to maintain the momentum. Delegates erupted in delighted

applause, many of them in tears. NZ Ambassador Higginson spoke next. Alluding to peevish complaints from the nuclear weapon states, she did not mince her words: “There have been some expressions of bewilderment about why it is necessary to have this conference now, and suggestions – including in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva just this morning – that it might risk undermining the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. New Zealand has no intention of undermining the NPT”.

She asked why nuclear disarmament should be promoted only in one forum. “We see no contradiction in promoting nuclear disarmament inside the NPT, and outside it here in Oslo. Indeed, we see our efforts here as very possibly helping us to implement the requirement – as the International Court of Justice told us in 1996 – to conduct, in good faith, negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects. This meeting here in Oslo – in looking beyond the arithmetic of military security to fundamental notions of the survivability of our environment, our economies, and our populations – has served to remind us all that any use of nuclear weapons comes at a cost none of us should be prepared to pay”. To further applause, she welcomed Mexico’s courageous intention to host a follow-up meeting. “New Zealand will wholeheartedly join in all work, in the NPT context as well as in any process following on from this meeting, and from Mexico’s, that brings us closer to our goal: the elimination of nuclear weapons”.

Ireland endorsed her statement, as did Switzerland. The Swiss Ambassador added: “This is an important milestone. Over two-thirds of the UN membership here agrees that it is vitally important to continue this discussion. This conference has shown how powerful the humanitarian aspect is to mobilise support.” Iran added a telling point: “The boycotting of this conference by the P5 questions their intention and good faith; they may regret it”. We agreed, and for an additional reason. Unlike our previous experience of conferences where the nuclear weapon states were present, delegations were not intimidated; furthermore, non-government observers like us were welcomed, even being invited to share the official lunch with government delegations.

In his closing remarks, Norway’s Foreign Minister was euphoric: “Together... we have reframed the discourse. We are taking it out of traditional fora, creating a supplementary initiative. Now we are twice as strong and effective... we have introduced new vigour, and sense of urgency...” As delegates made their farewells and filed out of the hotel, they were serenaded across the street – not by the usual angry demo of frustrated activists, but by a dancing, colourful throng of young, placard-waving Norwegians thanking them, and encouraging them to stay strong in the fresh phase of the struggle ahead. We wiped joyful tears away as we joined them, having dared to dream that we would see this in our lifetimes.

We realised we had just been privileged to witness the tipping point, when enough political will had been generated to face down the nuclear weapon states and throw them onto the defensive. By declining to try to defend the indefensible, the P5 had surrendered control of the endgame agenda. We have no illusions about how much harder this will be than banning landmines and cluster bombs. However, our faith in humanity’s ability to stand up for peace and justice has been rekindled. Now, we need the NZ government to honour the legacy of all those who have helped bring us to this point, and actively support Mexico at the follow-up conference, which we understand will be held by the end of 2013.

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- Jeremy Agar

## **Mad On Radium by Rebecca Priestley, Auckland University Press, 2012**

“The public are mad on radium” - the remark which provided Rebecca Priestley with her title - was the verdict of a Government scientist in 1914, when people were rushing to the Rotorua baths for a bracing dose of radiation therapy. Priestley says that sales of radon water peaked in 1916 at 8,500 glasses. At first, the dangers of radiation were not understood (pioneering scientist Marie Curie, who first extracted radium in 1902, being the best known victim). One reason for the enthusiasm was the 1895 discovery of X-rays, a major medical advance, so the early optimism is understandable. Priestley, a historian of science, outlines the development of policy that followed, tracing the changing attitudes over the next two generations, culminating in the 1987 nuclear-free legislation. It's an intriguing journey.

As we all learned at school, Ernest Rutherford split the atom, but he figures here only in the background, having had no direct link to NZ science after he left for the UK. An assistant of Rutherford, Hans Geiger, invented a device, named after him, which detects the presence of uranium. One afternoon in 1955 two old geezers were prospecting at the side of the road in the Buller Gorge when their Geiger counter got over-excited. Uranium! And in large deposits! We were entering the nuclear age. Riches awaited. The Westport Mayor observed “a wave of optimism unknown in the district for more than 50 years”. In Christchurch the *Press* agreed. There was a “new liveliness in the main street of Westport during the brilliant weather while the ‘uranium boom’ was at its peak”. The country was going mad one more time.

It wasn't to last. Although prospecting went on for 20 years, it turned out that there was not enough uranium to be economic. Other sites on the West Coast also came up empty. Priestley has unearthed a third aspect of atomic fever, a 1946 ad for Atomic Red lipstick. Put it on, girls, and you'll be “devastating... all-conquering”. To be fair, this mood was global, a reaction which mixed relief that the Second World War was over and a sort of innocent apprehension about the act which ended it, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (now, in a lingering half-life, you'll sometimes see “atomic” commercial enterprises, the mood having mellowed into a sort of nostalgia).

This immediate post-war period was crucial, setting the tone for what has followed. Priestley reminds us that while the women of NZ were applying their Atomic Red, the United Nations was establishing an Atomic Energy Commission. Only one country, the USA, had the bomb, the rationale for which had been the defeat of imperial Japan. It was in everyone's interest to put the genie back in the bottle and screw the lid on tight. One country proposed that the United Nations should have the power to inspect for compliance and that the United States should surrender all its nuclear bombs and technology to the UN. In the light of everything that's gone on since, it might astonish readers that the Baruch Plan came from America itself.

### **What Went Wrong?**

We all know the answer to that. It was the Cold War. Priestley restricts herself here to pointing out that NZ suggested control over bombs be vested not in the Security Council, as proposed, but by the General Assembly of all member states. The fact that this was rejected suggests that the Baruch Plan might never have been serious. Why restrict power over a global concern to the few big players? Internal NZ political postures make for interesting reading, neither the Labour nor National parties being certain or consistent. Foreign policy had always tied itself to the UK but now, post-war, with American dominance, a previously default setting in support of British interests was no longer automatic. The UK wanted continued NZ compliance, and the National PM from 1949 to 1957, key years, was NZ-born Sid Holland, self-described as “a Britisher through and through”. Yet when the UK asked if it could test bombs on Kermadec Island, Holland said no. Priestley thinks, almost certainly correctly, that he was motivated by apprehension over public opinion.

The refusal was apparently unacceptable for British PM Anthony Eden, who let it be known that if no alternative place could be found for his bombs “he might be compelled to ask NZ to reconsider”. This formulation, coming across as contemptuous of NZ's autonomy, is Priestley's paraphrase. It would be instructive to know the exact language used. The tests went instead north to Christmas Island (now part of Kiribati), where the NZ Navy showed



support by surveying the area for the UK. Such compromise and (what they'd call) pragmatism from mainstream politicians has marked most of what followed. Holland bought into deterrence theory, the assumption that bombs kept the peace, and Nationalists generally hoped that defence and foreign policy issues wouldn't intrude on life.

Labour had the odd MP who spoke up against nukes, and in the 1957 election (not 1958, as Priestley writes) the Party campaigned on opposing all future testing. Keith Holyoake, Holland's successor as National PM (1960-72), liked to keep quiet. Priestley says that he was "privately opposed" to nukes, but does not say how she knows Holyoake's private thoughts. In her analysis of Holland she cites Wellington political scientist Barry Gustafson, who has written a biography of Holyoake in which he makes a similar assessment, so that's probably her source. But in an account which intends (unsuccessfully) to avoid political judgements, should readers be asked to accept this, sight unseen? Shouldn't we know her sources and be able to assess her reasoning? Again, in another context, we're told that, while publicly going all the way with the USA, Holyoake privately warned the Yanks of adverse NZ public opinion if they tested in the Pacific. Evidence? Whatever was conveyed, the chance that a few deluded peaceniks in NZ - as they were doubtless described - would have had the tiniest influence on the State Department is risible. Any Holyoake comment risked nothing.

### **Laziness Of Opinion Leaders**

A silent sub-text of the book is the laziness of NZ's opinion leaders, who have rarely bothered to challenge the conventional wisdom. Holyoake's carefully crafted image of bonhomie is a good example. We could continue to accept it at face value, and pass on to a new generation a consensus that his version of how he bravely told the Yanks where his principled Government stood is sufficient proof in itself that nothing more need be known. But it's recently come to our wider public knowledge that Holyoake consented to run for leader of the National Party only after having been bribed with the gift of a farm (*Press*, 26/2/13, "Corruption Exists By the Shovel Load", Chris Trotter, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/the-press/opinion/columnists/chris-trotter/8350614/Corruption-exists-by-the-shovel-load>). Perhaps, some time over the last half century, in our tight little country, where everyone is said to know everyone, our historians could have looked at who paid for it and what they've received in return.

In contrast, in the context of the Cold War, deeply frozen in the late '40s, it is heartening to read that NZ's first Hiroshima Day march took place in 1947 in Christchurch. That's evidence of real moral courage, independent thinking and selfless patriotism, qualities not always to the fore in Parliament. Walter Nash, Labour PM from 1957 to 1960, reneged on his Party's promise to oppose British nuclear testing, agreeing to fulfil National's commitment. Priestley suggests that Nash, who had emigrated from the UK, was overcome by a loyalty to his roots. This would have been an influence, but not a determining one. More fundamentally, as his equivocating over the 1951 waterfront lockout had shown, Nash was a conservative Cold War warrior. In 1959, to further its credentials with the colonial masters, the Nash government concluded a secret agreement for the UK to fund the Buller search for uranium.

Nash's predecessor and mentor, Peter Fraser, Labour PM from 1940 to 1949, had set the pattern. As global public opinion was mobilising against the war mongers, Fraser was content to denounce the 1950 Stockholm Peace Appeal as "just another Soviet weapon", and in characteristic National condescension, Holland thought the peace movement was "sincere" but duped by "Communist propaganda". Sid just knew that a "great deal of scientific information" had established that there was no risk to public health from nukes. If Nash was gutless, his Minister of Scientific and Industrial Research was comical. Carried exuberantly forward on a tsunami of nuclearism, Phil Holloway told NZ that nuclear science was opening up "miraculous possibilities". These included the ability to convert 1,000 tons of sawdust a year into poultry food.

Holloway had been captured by then-orthodox opinion, bureaucracy and academia being overwhelmingly in favour of nuclear energy. Two examples from Priestley: a physics professor at Victoria University let it be known that nuclear science was "the crowning achievement" of modern knowledge; and a physics lecturer at Auckland expected that there would be ten nuclear power stations by 1975 to 1980. Throughout, the Electricity Department was nagging away for nuke plants, always over-emphasising future demand and ignoring alternative sources of energy. The preferred sites were north of Auckland, and a peninsula on the eastern coast of Kaipara Harbour would have hosted NZ's first nuclear power plant.

As an informed consensus was forming over the risks of radiation from French nuclear tests in the Pacific, the National Radiation Laboratory was saying that they were no danger to public health. Three questions: [1] How do you argue with scientists, specialists in their field? [2] Was science motivating the scientists? [3] Is the response of the National Radiation Laboratory part of the reason why an irrational refusal to accept the scientific method is such a strong strain among NZ intellectuals? My answers: [1] Its' opinion should be the best available opinion. [2] It was unreliable because the scientists were letting their naturally conservative personalities subdue their scientific rigour.

[3] Probably.

## Remarkable Shift In Wind

In retrospect the shift in the wind over the next decade was remarkable. Beyond its professional backers, opinion was hardening against nukes as more evidence became available; the health and environment movements grew in influence; the need for renewable energy became more insistent, and governing elites were increasingly distrusted. The Three Mile Island and Chernobyl accidents helped, as of course did the government of France's terrorism. But as important as these events and social trends might have been, Priestley argues that they were not decisive. She makes a good case for seeing higher than earlier estimates of costs and lower estimates of future electricity demand as the key reasons for a cooling attitude, more so within National than Labour. While Labour was still pushing for nuclear power, National was advocating the Cook Strait cable that we now have.

Compared to the present outfit, the Holyoake Nationalists were indeed moderate, prepared to trim their sails to prevailing winds, even supporting some symbolic anti-war measures. This course was reversed by Muldoon (1975-1984), who thought that peace advocates were "woolly-minded", while he was "realistic". The puerile insults were back and normal disservice had resumed. Until David Lange was boxed in by the luck of circumstances and found it expedient to come out against all nukes, both main parties had shied away from a direct challenge to foreign power. In a shrewd observation, Priestley notes that on one day in 1976 Wellington's *Dominion* carried front page stories on the inevitability of nuclear power and on an upcoming visit by a nuclear-powered US warship. On page three it carried the less important news that Parliament had voted down a proposal to declare NZ nuclear-free and to prohibit nuclear weapons and reactors. Never mind that the politicians were rejecting a petition signed by 330,000. The editor might have relegated the story as the vote was not in doubt.

One man's career could serve as a sort of representative of officialdom's twisting inconsistencies. Ernest Marsden joined Rutherford's team in Manchester in 1909 as a 20-year old student and remained close to the centre of nuclear policy in NZ, the UK and the US for the rest of his working life. Priestley notes how he veered from automatic support for nuclearism, based on an initial excitement about research, to a partial opposition when he knew too much science. It seems also that for Marsden it was OK to be upset about the Pacific, but not OK to ruffle the Mother Country. Ways to help out British nukes kept coming back. That none of the projects was enacted was more through fluky timing than deliberate decision.

The Ministry of Civil Defence was set up in 1959, primarily as a response to nuclearism. In the event of war, the Ministry thought, the most likely targets were Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. This is unlikely. For an attacker, assumed to be Russia, NZ would be significant only as it was connected to a British or American war strategy. This should have been obvious to the deep thinkers even back then, but it took *Canta*, the student newspaper at Canterbury University, to point out that the plausible local target would be the airport because of its role in helping out the US Air Force.

Officialdom, then, was wrong about everything, about nuclear power and nuclear war, overstating the need for the former, understating the risks of the latter, and understanding the politics of neither. When the subject is nuclear energy, are we talking science or economics, or are we talking war policy or foreign policy? In their confusion, the elites haven't been alone. The debate in NZ has been almost exclusively about health and the environment, so that political aspects of nuclearism have usually been ignored or misconstrued.

## Author Misleading On Foreign Policy

When it comes to foreign policy, Priestley is herself misleading, accepting at face value as objective facts the prejudices of her secondary sources. She's anxious to get to her point, which is domestic science policy, but, in her haste, she seems again to be relying on a single (Cold War American) historian. We read, for instance, that "the arms race continued ... The 1957 Sputnik raised the spectre of intercontinental nuclear weapons, or nuclear weapons launched from space". This was because "[t]he Soviet President [sic] wanted the West to be fearful of the Communist superpower... Khrushchev openly, repeatedly and bloodcurdlingly, threatened the West with nuclear annihilation".

He didn't actually. It's more that Khrushchev expressed himself in extravagant metaphors and banged his shoes on the table in the United Nations. Behind the tantrums, there existed a moderate reformer who had better things to spend his money on than missiles. But anyway the whole "debate" was based on a shaky premise. Better dead than red, the US advocates of a first-strike against the former USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) used to say. The less fervent would reply that it was better red than dead. If matters had been as Priestley reports, then that would have been humanity's choice. It would have been WW2 all over again, when the logic was we get Hitler or

Hitler gets us. Fight or flight. For the Holyoakes of the world this dilemma was welcome as it enabled him to say, as he did in 1962, that the big surge in US nuclear weaponry at the time was an unfortunate necessity. The Russians made them do it, Kiwi Keith sighed. We don't, alas, live in a perfect world. Priestley endorses this, and if the choice were between getting wiped out by the commies or making a few more bombs to deter them, who wouldn't?

But although he wrote this as recently as 2005, John Lewis Gaddis, Priestley's source for this once common interpretation, was mired back in the Cold War. More reliable scholarship has shown that President Kennedy was lying. His side had a big lead in weaponry, and the Russkies did not at the time have the capacity to threaten the US mainland (the Cuban Missile Crisis needs to be seen in this context. A panicking Khrushchev was both trying to deter a US invasion of Cuba and to compensate for Russia's inability to do so). Moscow's weapons of mass destruction did not exist.

Or take this sentence about a British plant being built in 1954, when the Soviets had been even further behind in the "race": "The primary - and secret - purpose of the Calder Hall nuclear reactor, and many of the reactors that followed, was to produce weapons-grade plutonium. The generation of electricity, a secondary purpose of the reactors, was a way to help fund the weapons programme". That's all she says on the matter, leaving unanswered such essential questions as to why the Brits would lie. Why would they build a plant with a secret purpose, which was not really to generate electricity at all? Why not come clean about the weapons? Why were the weapons needed? Why couldn't the British electorate know how much of their taxes were going on nukes?

Or another NZ example. In 1956, Priestley reports, the US offered us a reactor at half price. But although she refers to this gesture several times, she doesn't ask why the Yanks would be so generous. Do they often offer customers leading edge technology at half price? Do they ever? So why just then? Having decided against the nuclear power option, Holyoake turned down the deal, causing the Secretary of External Affairs to express his view that it "may be difficult for the United States authorities to understand ... causing some embarrassment in our relations with the Americans". The toadies at Foreign Affairs have always tugged the forelock, but even for them this is surely excessive cringe. That's because their motivation was entirely military. They would have been hoping that one day NZ might become an American aircraft carrier.

### **It's Dangerous Not To Know Your History**

In the bad old days a nuclear sub docked at Auckland and Wellington and the press fell in love with her beauty and power. Priestley doesn't mention a precise parallel from our recent past. When President Clinton visited NZ in 1999, the media fawned at and ogled Bill and his entourage, especially his sleek bodyguards. It was a national embarrassment. This might be the most telling of all the atomic follies. Faced with foreign power, NZ's elites prostrated themselves in almost identical language as they had in 1960. The consensus of conventional opinion about "Mad On Radium" has been that Priestley's findings are surprising. These mainstream reviewers give the impression that they regard 1987's law as the emblem of an established national impetus, and that the purity of its aspiration accurately reflected a national tradition. Reviewers apparently didn't expect to find that clean, green NZ had not always been into peace. This serves to confirm that it's dangerous not to know your history.

Because the opposite is closer to the real record. Grassroots opinion being first derided or patronised or ignored and, much later, becoming the conventional wisdom, has been the pattern rather than the exception. Over the past half century, the period of most New Zealanders' living memories, the other big issues that combined foreign and domestic politics were the Vietnam War and the Springbok tour. In both cases public opinion trumped a primitive official morality. And with perhaps the biggest domestic example of the pattern, popular protest halted the destruction of Lake Manapouri, again saving the energy planners from themselves. A difference with politics around the Cold War is that the Soviet Union quietly collapsed before a similar revisionism had developed. Other issues have occupied commentators, so that there's been little interest in examining old prejudices. In its covering of the development of science policy, the book merits the praise it's garnered. It's excellent on the what. It's the why part that's problematic. This is not to say that Priestley is a Cold Warrior. On the contrary, she assumes the merits of being nuclear-free. But unless critics expose the false assumptions that had always misled defence and energy planners, the verdict of public opinion will remain unsafe.

## **Zero Dark Thirty A Film By Kathryn Bigelow**

The director, Kathryn Bigelow, and writer, Mark Boal, teamed up for the well received "The Hurt Locker", a tense drama about a US bomb disposal unit in Iraq. That film proved to be uncontroversial, as it came across as a suspense story with no political motive that could fairly claim the usual disclaimer, that it was only "based" on actual

events. That was probably their intent with “Zero Dark Thirty” as well, but this time round comments have been mixed. Some reviewers have approached the story as another “Hurt Locker”, and generally marked it high for the way it tells it. But others aren’t so happy.

## **Film Says Torture Works**

There are two main discussions that the film has generated: what is it saying about the US use of torture; and to what extent does it portray actual events, rather than being only based on them? The victim is the one that matters. Ammar is very close to what we, the general public, remember of the news stories at the time, but we’re assured that he is in fact fictional. Much has been made in the US of the denials of leading politicians that torture was used and it’s probable that most of them, up to the highest level, are not told the whole story anyway. But whatever anyone knew or didn’t know, any such denials can be discounted. When they assert that it was not torture that led the Americans to bin Laden, it might or might not be true. They’re going to say that anyway. The same goes for any military personnel.

A comparable logic holds for the Republicans who accused the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of leaking to the film makers. They’re playing party politics. It’s not in dispute that Boal interviewed spies and planners. He says it was to understand his subject, part of normal research. Anyone writing a script like this would have sought out first-hand information. Let’s take this one stage further. On such a charged topic, at such a high level of power, no statements about the film emanating from usual suspects with a pre-existing stake, for or against the US or al-Qaeda, should be taken as disinterested. For all of them, politicians, artists, whoever, it’s a case of “they would say that, wouldn’t they”. We have to look only at the film itself.

The least plausible of these accusations is the one that the CIA would have divulged anything beyond vague generalities to Boal. That’s not how things work in the US. Nothing about “Zero Dark Thirty” suggests that its makers were consciously in cahoots with the authorities or that they set out to screen propaganda. There are serious moral issues with the film, but the problems are not as crude as that. In yet another necessary denial (the last one, I promise) Bigelow has said that torture is “reprehensible”. In fact: “I’m a pacifist. The goal was to capture the essence of the underlying reality”. In her case it’s an important claim. Is her film consistent with her statement?

Bigelow might wish to be sincere, but there’s plenty of reason to doubt her judgement. Despite her comments - and similar remarks from too many film reviewers - the film *is* showing that torture works. It’s true that the central character, the man who reveals bin Laden’s courier, holds out against the pain and that he reveals the key information apparently of his own accord. In fact this is how the CIA’s torture is supposed to work: “During his ordeal, Ammar does not initially give up reliable information. After he has been subdued and fooled into thinking that he has already been cooperative while delirious, however, he gives up vital intelligence about the courier over a comfortable meal....

“In fact, this sequence in the film depicts precisely how the CIA’s coercive interrogation regime was constructed to break prisoners, according to Jose Rodriguez Jr, a former leader of the CIA Clandestine Service, who has described and defended the interrogation regime in a memoir, ‘Hard Measures: How Aggressive CIA Actions After 9/11 Saved American Lives’. For if a CIA detainee initially refused to cooperate, interrogators applied ‘enhanced’ techniques in an escalating sequence until the prisoner reached what Rodriguez calls ‘the compliant stage’. Once the detainee ‘became compliant and agreed to cooperate’, the harsh methods stopped, Rodriguez wrote, and the prisoner might be fed and coddled in reward for confessions he had not previously made” (“Disturbing & Misleading”, a review of “Zero Dark Thirty” by Steve Coll, *New York Review Of Books*, February 7 - 20, 2013).

## **Mixing Truth & Speculation**

Bigelow probably intended ambiguity about the role of torture, but on this evidence that’s not what she achieved. So, again, is the movie true? Is it a documentary? Bigelow has never claimed that. The trouble is that the raid on bin Laden is a recent and actual event, so the expectation of movie goers would surely be that the rest of the story was also. But it’s not. Other characters and events are related through “composite” characters. This device is standard for story tellers, but most stories are either purely “composite” or else they claim documentary accuracy. “The Hurt Locker” was not controversial because it was entirely “composite”. Audiences could watch an action movie and were left free to consider wider issues if they so chose.

The makers of “Zero Dark Thirty” seem to have intended a similar neutrality here, but the film mixes the actual and the supposed in opaque ways; secondly, crucially, it misrepresents policy. In the minds of many the very word Hollywood connotes excess, but there’s no vulgar triumphalism on display. “Zero Dark Thirty” is a serious film. In fact it’s about as restrained as it could be, given its subject matter. The torture scenes are of course unpleasant, but

there's regularly stuff on TV which is at least as graphic. The lead actor, Jessica Chastain, is low-key throughout, and when she's present at torture sessions she registers discomfort. Bigelow has said that her project was under way before bin Laden had been found, and although the raid on the house in Pakistan is the climax of the movie, the squad who mounted the raid don't know if they've got their man. We never get to see him, his corpse being identified back at the base by the Chastain character with a small nod. In February 2013 one of the real life team came out with a very different Rambo-like claim of his individual starring role as the man who shot OBL, but his account has been debunked by his former mates.

### **Bureaucratisation Of War Close To Nazi Behaviour**

Ironically perhaps, the film would have been more truthful and more of an indictment had there been less violence. At one stage the male character who does the torturing puts the prisoner in a dog collar, replicating the well known scenes from the Iraq War. The Iraq business though was ill-disciplined brutality by individual soldiers, a humiliation that was never an approved CIA method. Even so, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has denounced the CIA's methods. In his review Steve Coll pointed to a more serious fault: the film does not depict the very lack of random dog collar excess that marked CIA policy:

"The record shows how regulated, lawyerly, and bureaucratised - how banal - torture apparently became at some CIA black sites. A partially declassified report prepared by the CIA's former Inspector General, John Helgerson, indicates that physicians from the CIA's Office of Medical Services attended interrogation sessions and took prisoners' vital signs to assure they were healthy enough for the abuse to continue. Agency officers typed out numbingly detailed cables and memos about the enhanced interrogation sessions...."

"Enhanced interrogation techniques" are better known as "torture". When officialdom resorts to polysyllabic Latinate words it's always a sign that they're trying to manipulate and soothe public attention. This bureaucratisation of war is getting closer to Nazi behaviour. Sometimes cold blood nastiness is worse than hot blood nastiness. The bottom line: Does torture get results? Did torture lead to the demise of bin Laden? These aren't the right questions. Torture is wrong. We shouldn't have to be talking about it.

*In case you're wondering about the title: it is military speak designating an unspecified time after midnight but before sunrise. More usually rendered as o-dark-thirty. The US raid that killed bin Laden took place at that time of night. Ed.*

## **Argo A Film By Ben Affleck**

As Oscar season warmed up early in 2013, "Zero Dark Thirty" was said to be in the running for Best Film and Best Actress. Then the talk waned, and as it turned out, "Zero Dark Thirty" wasn't even nominated. It's said that Hollywood is highly attuned to the politics of power and influence, and Bigelow's film was being shunned because of its ambiguous attitude towards American war fighting practices. Oscar winning films might pose as critical or artistic breakthroughs, but in reality the judges endorse nothing but the safe confirmation of conventional attitudes, and a film that suggested that America was torturing suspected terrorists was politically incorrect. The antidote was a good old-fashioned celebration of American courage and virtue triumphing over the bad guys. That's a large part of the reason that "Argo" took the Oscar as Best Movie.

"Argo" depicts the Iranian hostage crisis of 1979, when militants overran the US Embassy in Tehran and held all inside captive. The Shah of Iran, an American client, had been forced out, and religious zealots seized power, vowing revenge on America for having imposed on them 25 years of corruption and tyranny. They had a point, the US and the UK having backed a 1950s' coup by Mohammed Pahlavi (the Shah) at a time when the existing democracy threatened the West's continued domination of Iran in the interests of its strategic position and its role as the reliable supplier of cheap oil. "Zero Dark Thirty" claimed to be only based on real events; "Argo's" claim was that it told what actually happened. The film shows how, in the confusion of the storming of the Embassy, six US diplomats escaped. When Tehran was mad with rage and xenophobia, they were hidden, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) devised a plan to get them safely back home. We know the outcome. They made it.

A clear exposition as to why the mob was in a lynching mood would complicate the story and spoil the fun. You go the movies to have a good time. Better not to paint the villains as themselves victims. What's not to love about the resulting story? Innocents abroad, threatened by a nation of millions of fanatics, where no-one could be trusted, where they could be betrayed at an instant, hatch a plan to get home. Here was a classic morality tale of suspense, with a clean conflict between good and evil, and a happy ending. America had its satisfying victory over Islamic fanatics. That's how we like our movies.

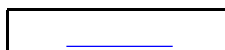
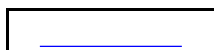
Fair enough, too, if that had been how it played out. A bit of artistic licence to draw a clear line between the antagonists is only to be expected, and would have served to justify the hype over Ben Affleck's portrayal as the heroic CIA operative who flew into Iran at the start of the movie and flew back out at the end with all the escapees. He's very much the star here, helped by his doubling as the film's director. But a film purporting to tell a true story has an obligation to get its facts straight, and "Argo" doesn't.

### **Kiwis Weren't Actually Cowards & Canadians Were Actually Heroes**

What actually happened was that the six took refuge in the Canadian Embassy, where their identity had to be kept secret not just from locals outside but from Iranian employees working in the Embassy. In the film it says that the Kiwis and the Brits sent them away. In reality the New Zealand Embassy worked with the Canadians throughout the long ordeal. The NZ Ambassador, Chris Beeby, rented a house near the Canadian Embassy in case the six might need it; he visited them; and obtained papers for their departure. An NZ official drove the escapees to the airport. Asked about this, Affleck explained that he was trying to emphasise the courage of the Canadians, and needed to contrast them with the rest of humanity. He picked on NZ as the coward because they, along with the British, were one of the three foreign nationalities who were mentioned as being involved. That it reverses the truth isn't important to a myth maker. In Affleck's movie the star was America, with a bit part necessarily going the Canadians.

Jimmy Carter, whose Presidency was ruined by the affair having dragged on into the year he faced re-election (1980), says that the Affleck character was in Iran for all of one day. Carter confirmed that: "The main hero, in my opinion, was Ken Taylor, who was the Canadian Ambassador, who orchestrated the entire process". Taylor, who is indeed a national hero in Canada, says he was not invited to "Argo's" premiere at the Toronto Film Festival in 2012. Toronto is in Canada, so this was an extraordinary rudeness. Certainly Canadians are furious about the depiction. Taylor remarked wryly that: "After I saw the movie, I decided that I did bring one particular skill to this movie; that was opening and closing a door. We could go on, but the amusing side is the script writer in Hollywood had no idea what he's talking about".

The film's two most dramatic sequences are thus necessarily false (don't read the rest of this review if you want to treat the film as escapist suspense and don't want to know the plot). Affleck thinks that they needed to test the group's disguise as a team of Canadian film makers, so he leads them into a bazaar where at any moment a crazed Muslim might denounce them and they'd be ripped apart by the mob. In a less overcharged reality, Taylor has pointed out that such a sortie would have been an inconceivable risk taken for no purpose. In the inevitable, clichéd finale, as the six go through departure routines at the airport, the local officials have worked out the ruse. Will the plane take off before the cops rush across the tarmac? It's all great American fun. In that boring Canadian world, however, they got out without incident.



## Bryan Law

- Murray Horton, Michael Moore, Ciaron O'Reilly, & Jim Dowling

Anti-Bases Campaign was deeply shocked to learn of Bryan Law's April 2013 untimely death, in Rockhampton, Queensland, aged only 58. Bryan was a significant person to ABC for two reasons. Firstly, he was one of the Australian Christian peace activists to enter and occupy the top secret US war-fighting spy base at Pine Gap, near Alice Springs, in December 2005 (see my article in *Peace Researcher* 33, November 2006, "Aussie Activists Occupy Top Secret Pine Gap US Spy Base: First To Ever Face Draconian Charges" <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr33-137b.html>) They were fined - the State wanted them imprisoned - but were then acquitted on all charges on appeal to the Supreme Court (see my follow up article in *PR* 36, August 2008, "Pine Gap 'Invaders' Acquitted: Huge Defeat For Covert State" <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr36-167.html>).

Secondly, Bryan didn't confine his anti-bases activism to Australia. In March 2010 he was one of the Australian contingent who came to Wellington to actively participate in the support for the Waihopai Domebusters during their eight day criminal trial (and they were acquitted too). This is from my article in *PR* 40, July 2010 "Vindicated! Waihopai Domebusters Acquitted Of All Charges", subheading "Media Wilfully Ignored Trial", <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr40-198.htm>: "The trial was fascinating, a landmark case. What a pity that the media didn't report it. They turned up in large numbers on Day One and came back on Day Eight, for the closing addresses and the jury's verdict. Hence they heard none of the defence evidence, as Day One was taken up by the prosecution case, basically a repeat of the September 2008 depositions hearing in the Blenheim District Court... So the bewildered outrage that followed the stunningly fast acquittal really was based on ignorance – the media weren't there for the bulk of the trial, which was the defence case. If it had been a gory murder case, they would have been there in numbers for every lurid second. There was one honourable exception and he was one of us – Bryan Law, from Australia, was given media accreditation to report the case for the Scoop Website and thus Scoop was the only outlet to report the whole trial (not before Bryan was threatened with being charged with contempt of court for commenting on the case on a blog site; Scoop came to the rescue and accredited him as one of their reporters. The media bench was so conspicuously empty most of the time that Judge Harrop invited people, including kids, from the overflowing public gallery to sit at it).

"Bryan Law is a veteran Australian peace and anti-bases activist who has featured in *Peace Researcher* before.... Bryan was a stand out speaker at the public meeting that ABC organised in Wellington during the trial. He was only one of several Aussie activists to make a special trip to Wellington to show practical solidarity... It was the first time that ABC had been able to meet these guys, although we'd had dealings with them for years, and it was great to have them this side of the Tasman for an actionpacked week, both inside the court and on the streets of Wellington..."

### Michael Moore's (*CairnsBlog*) Tribute

Bryan Law, who had recently moved from Cairns to Rockhampton awaiting trial for damage to a military helicopter, passed away after a long illness. He was born in 1954. He was a determined activist to the very end. In the Cairns political landscape, the name Bryan Law is synonymous with speaking out and stirring the pot. Almost every Cairns resident is familiar with his actions and activism. The *Cairns Post* infamously called him a serial pest, from a cub journo who had run out of adjectives. Serial he may be, but I prefer to label Bryan a veteran activist. His partner, Margaret Pestorius, conveyed the news to *CairnsBlog*. "Bryan passed away in Rocky. They found him at home", Margaret said. "He has been very sick for several years but wanted very much to stand trial for his Ploughshares action - even though the trial really was a trial. Don't forget to stand up courageously for what is right like Bryan did," Margaret Pestorius said.

In November 2008 the veteran campaigner, political activist, and *CairnsBlog* columnist, underwent emergency open-heart surgery. At that time, he had three coronary arterial bypass grafts, in a process that took over four hours. "I'm still here," he told *CairnsBlog* at the time. "They've given me a 90% chance of surviving ten years, so that's good I suppose". Bryan Law was a mighty man and a beautiful passionate soul with an amazing zest for social justice. After he attacked an Australian Army Tiger attack helicopter with a blow from a garden mattock he told the judge of the elation.

**"I'm Glad I Did It, Your Honour"**

"I'm glad I did it, Your Honour," he told Magistrate Cameron Press. "I'm glad that for however brief a moment that infernal helicopter death machine couldn't fly. Couldn't be used as a weapon. In a time of depraved warfare in Afghanistan and of military slavery to the US empire, I'm glad I made this witness to the prophecy of Isaiah and the promise of our saviour Jesus Christ. We must disarm". Bryan was been arrested countless times, at least on 50 occasions. He lost count. He got under the skin of politicians who have taken him to court. Love or loathe Bryan Law, he is one who draws a strong following from all sides. One thing is for sure - he is no armchair critic. He stands up, speaks out and acts with passion, vigour and compelling non-violent action. He knew that after more than 30 years of activism, he was nearing the end of his battles, as his health deteriorated.

Under the banner of his organisation, [Cairns Peace by Peace](#), he was there with his unique brand of civil disobedience and direct action.

Bryan Law was there when the sealed road was being pushed through north of the Daintree River; when the Federal government wouldn't disclose the purpose of the [top secret Pine Gap spy base](#); when Skyrail wanted to tear down the rainforest above Smithfield; when the [USA bought warships](#) into Cairns harbour; when the Queensland Labor government destroyed the historic Cairns Yacht Club building; when Cairns [Community Radio blocked out locals](#). He [defaced hundreds of Cairns MP Desley Boyle's election signage](#), when she refused to stand up for locals about demolishing the Yacht Club building; when Cairns Council wanted to destroy City Place. He participated in numerous protests and actions against US/Australia defence exercises, breaking into restricted zones and stopping events. He caused a [security scare when he swam in Trinity Inlet](#) as the USS *Blue Ridge* was docking in Cairns. He took on the [Cairns Post](#) and won in court. "It (*Cairns Post*) prints the most disgusting attacks on Aboriginal and Indigenous people, attacks which have no foundation in reality and which stir up the worst prejudices in our society and we're here today to say stop it," Bryan Law said in 2002. "Call me bitter and twisted, but the Yacht Club issue convinced me that the Labor Party has once again forgotten that its' job is to represent the community and engage with its values and desires," Bryan said in 2009.

Law was media-savvy, articulate and political astute, he always defended himself in court, standing up for his principles. 'War without end, not in our name' a slogan on his t-shirt he would stand by to the end. "I will miss him for a multitude of reasons but most of all because of his beliefs, his integrity and his tenacity to right where he saw wrong", former Mulgrave Councillor Ross Parisi said today. "Ridicule and derision by his political adversaries did not penetrate his shield of honour; it made him stronger and more determined to strive for what he believed in. It made him resilient".

Ross Parisi said Law's ability to articulate and persuade were some of his most endearing virtues. He detested the abuse of power, particularly by those in authority. He saw through the shallowness of impostors and pretenders. "Surrounded by all that, inside was a gentle man and a sensitive man, a caring man that loved his family, like only he could" Ross Parisi said. Cairns teacher and Greens political supporter, Steve Brech, said Bryan Law was his inspiration. "After years of trying to 'fight the system', there I was presented with a real life Gandhi figure, full of peace, justice, democracy and a confidence I'd never encountered before", Steve Breach said. "Bryan will stay with me forever".

Janine Aitken who stood for Council in 2008 and supported many of Law's non-violent civil disobedience campaigns, remembers his passion for change. "While he may not have ever achieved the change he wanted, Bryan changed everyone he met", Janine Aitken says. "He challenged the way we looked at the world and was a great man with a brilliant sense of humour, guaranteed to make you laugh out loud. I will miss him. The thing with Bryan, there are plenty who knew him, but few that would stand up and claim him as a friend or even defend his right to say his piece when it differed from their own" Aitken told *CairnsBlog*. "He was often banned from public discussions and in the last few years I've found myself arguing with others on why he shouldn't be blocked, an argument I would invariably lose. But I am proud that I had the chance to call him a friend and I always did, despite our often opposing views".

Former Cairns Councillor Diane Forsyth, who together orchestrated protests against the demolition of the Cairns Yacht Club in 2010, was saddened by the news of his passing. "RIP Bryan Law my thoughts are with you Margaret, and Joseph", Dianne Forsyth said. Political commentator and blogger Leigh Dall'Osto says Bryan was a rare individual. "He was one of those rare people who had passion and purpose and wasn't afraid to express either. He brought perspective, laughter and honesty to every conversation. We are all richer for having known him". Leigh Dall'Osto said. "He was the very definition of humanity and justice and fought along with his partner Margaret. He will be sorely missed by many".

**"Government Needs Continual Scrutiny And Correction"**



In February 2011, Bryan Law wrote on *CairnsBlog* of his frustration over many years trying to make a change. "I've spent 30 years proving to myself that an ordinary citizen is able to deploy the power of non-violence effectively to move towards peace and social justice. I've learned that getting a 'Yes' from Government isn't enough. Government needs continual scrutiny and correction. I follow Jesus, Gandhi, Dorothy Day and Dr King. I've been given limited opportunities to organise collectively with others, and amplify that non-violence power to compel better behaviour from governments. The power that democratised Parliament still exists but is diffuse and uncoordinated", Bryan Law wrote.

"On the whole I'd say that 'our' biggest weakness is a lack of experience in cooperation and mutual aid in our political life. Gossip, jealousy, fear, and 'better than' feelings disable us and make us smaller than we need to be". He said in February 2011 that he would not return to Cairns, in order to undertake his most brazen act against Australia's involvement in the Afghanistan War, cemented his name [in the history books for attacking](#) a Defence helicopter. He carried out the protest [in July 2011](#) that saw charges of \$200,000 of damage levelled against him by the Federal Police and Department of Defence. "The final public event I'll attend in Cairns will be the Anzac Eve vigil at the Esplanade Cenotaph on Easter Sunday", Bryan said. "After this, I'm going to Rockhampton to prepare for and carry out a ploughshares action against a US warplane during Exercise Talisman Sabre".

Law justified his actions saying that it was repugnant that the Australian government was spending \$A6 billion in the Budget for acquiring new defence weapons. "That's for tanks, fighter/bombers, air warfare destroyers, drones, cruise missiles, satellites, networked electronic C3 systems - and \$A5 billion to maintain existing weapons systems", Bryan said. "Expect the same each year for at least for the next 20 years. There is already \$A57 billion committed by the Rudd Labor government over the next 20 years to the large weapons acquisitions, and the current Defence Capability Plan calls for \$A159 billion worth of acquisition commitment by 2018. There's a call in a recent issue of the *Australian* for 12 nuclear powered attack submarines, at \$2 billion each, so we can 'defend ourselves against China' - our bestest buddies and trading partners". In 2005, Bryan Law, along with three other peace activists, broke into the highly sensitive US defence communications facility in the Northern Territory desert at Pine Gap. They were eventually acquitted of all charges under the Special Defence Undertakings Act 1952. [Al Jazeera TV interviewed](#) Bryan Law after the action, when, at the time, he had 30 arrests and four jail terms to his credit.

In October 2012, he went swimming in the ocean, for the first time in 15 months. "I went for a swim in the sea yesterday at beautiful Yeppoon", Bryan said afterwards. "Last time I swam was just around the corner at Rosslyn Bay, just before the Rocky Tiger Ploughshares action. It's taken four surgeries and a lot of treatment to recover from complications of diabetes. Yesterdays' swim, while preparing for [Talisman Sabre 2013](#) was a real hoot. After the Talisman Sabre exercise, I expect to spend the rest of my life either in prison, or carrying out further acts of disarmament. I feel like I've reached a place of calm clarity - OK there's a bit of fear too, and I'll be sad to be separated from my family. Persistence is king".

Bryan lived by his own mantra. He said if you want peace, work for justice. A year ago, I asked Bryan if it was all worth it. "If more citizens of good conscience in Cairns took up nonviolence and civil disobedience as a tool for political and social formation in Cairns we might achieve a better class of politician, and a better class of democracy than the standard we presently have", Bryan said. "Meanwhile my family will do what it can. So I'll end where I began. Is it worth it? Yup!" Bryan is survived by his partner Margaret Pestorius and their son Joseph.

### **Ciaron O'Reilly's Tribute**

It is great sadness and shock to hear that Australian anti-war activist Bryan Law has passed away in Rockhampton. Bryan was 58 and had relocated from his home in Cairns to prepare for both Talisman Sabre 2013 US/Australian military exercises and his & Graeme Dunstan's August 2013 "Rocky Ploughshares" trial in Rockhampton following the disarmament of a Tiger Attack helicopter during the Talisman Sabre 2011 military exercises. Video of the Rocky Ploughshares action for which Bryan and Graeme Dunstan were charged can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/czqu8af>.

I first heard Bryan before I saw him. I was 17 years old and had been badly beaten up by Queensland police at a banned street march in Brisbane and placed in a cell in the Brisbane watchhouse. All demonstrations were banned for several years 1977-82 by an authoritarian Joh Bjelke Petersen-led Queensland State government in response to the anti-uranium mining movement. The ban was enforced by a corrupt off-the-leash Queensland Police force that has now been long exposed.

I was unable to afford the huge bail placed on me and nine other folks decided to refuse bail from Saturday afternoon to Monday morning before we appeared before a magistrate. We could not see each other in the other

cells but we could yell out to each other. At one point on the Saturday evening I remember this deep drroll voice starting to complain about cigarette burns on the carpet in his cell and how his cell television was playing up. Of course carpet and television didn't exist ... but Bryan was so convincing, he had me sold!

There were thousands who refused to "go along to get along" with the Queensland Bjelke Petersen government and Police force during that 1977-82 crackdown. Of the thousands arrested, bashed, raided, framed, harassed, blacklisted during that period, some of us remained "beat up but upbeat" turning towards, exploring and sustaining nonviolent resistance against war and war preparations. As we turned towards the US traditions of the Catholic Worker and Berrigans\*, Bryan turned to a deep exploration of Gandhi. *\*The US Berrigan brothers, Daniel and the late Philip, were famous non-violent direct action peace movement activists, who endured innumerable arrests and spells of imprisonment over the course of many decades. Ed.*

Our paths crossed over the next 30+ years and it was always a delight to hear Bryan reflect, speak and act. Bryan's laid back Australian demeanour contrasted with my Irish outrage. He was Australia at its best when confronted by injustice - direct, unfazed, courageous. We were back in the new Brisbane watchhouse together in 1988 for nonviolent resistance to nuclear warship visits - USS *New Jersey* & HMS *Ark Royal*. In response to Australian military involvement in the wars on Iraq & Afghanistan Bryan, Adele Goldie, Jim Dowling and Donna Mulhearn made for the hi tech Australian heart of the beast breaking into Pine Gap (see Bryan speaking outside Pine Gap [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=flSiZwT\\_X4Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=flSiZwT_X4Y)). We are a lot poorer as an active anti-war remnant in this dark time without Bryan. This poem "Some" by Fr Dan Berrigan SJ speaks to Bryan's long fidelity to the nonviolent struggle for peace and justice <http://tinyurl.com/cndhvtq>

*Ciaran O'Reilly is an Australian veteran non-violent direct action peace movement activist, who has been arrested and imprisoned numerous times in Australia, the US and Europe. For several months in 1994 he was a member of the ABC Committee in Christchurch and was arrested during an action at the US military base at Christchurch Airport. He made an NZ speaking tour in 2001 and last featured in Peace Researcher 33, November 2006, "Anti-War Protestors Acquitted Of Disarming US Plane In Ireland: Former ABC Activist Among Them", by Murray Horton, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr33-137a.html>. Ciaran was one of the Australian contingent who attended the Waihopai Domebusters' criminal trial in Wellington in March 2010. Ed.*

### **Jim Dowling's Tribute**

On Friday 12 April we buried Bryan Law in a Cairns cemetery. Bryan died suddenly in Rockhampton while preparing for his Ploughshares trial. Almost two years ago Bryan had ridden his large tricycle (built to carry his large body) on to the tarmac of Rocky airport, and put a garden mattock into the side of an Australian attack helicopter. This was the culmination of a lifetime of resisting war and militarism. Bryan was 58 years of age. He suffered from a bad heart and serious diabetes. Bryan knew he did not have a long life ahead of him and he wanted to do the best he could before it ended. Sadly he did not get as far as the final trial for his Ploughshares action (he was preparing for an August 2013 trial). He died alone in his rented Rockhampton home.

I have known Bryan for over 30 years, almost always in the context of resistance. We were both arrested during the Joh (Bjelke-Petersen) era, though I did not know him then. We were arrested together for campaigning for free speech in the Brisbane Mall. We were arrested, just the two of us this time, for trying to swim onto a partially submerged nuclear submarine (I am still puzzled how police managed to get Bryan into their boat!). But I did not really get to know Bryan until 2005 when he got excited by my suggestion that we break into Pine Gap and expose its' war crimes. He added such enthusiasm and (mostly) great ideas to the action, that it was forever changed and enlarged (see 20 min Al Jazeera TV doco: "[The Pine Gap Four - People & Power](#)"; [Al Jazeera English](#)). In fact everything Bryan took part in was enlarged.

Still, Bryan was not an easy person to work with. He liked things done the "right way". But despite many past conflicts, all who attended Bryan's vigil and funeral expressed an awe of Bryan's unwavering determination and commitment. Most, if not all of us, left his funeral and wake with a determination to do more. I was honoured to be one of the people who carried Bryan's coffin out of Cairns Cathedral. As we processed, his wife Margaret chose to play, (no doubt with Bryan's own sense of humour in mind) the "Battle Hymn of the Republic". Though there was much sadness during my two days in Cairns, for me this was not one of those moments. I felt Bryan had done good things and his spirit was marching on..... I felt good.

*Jim Dowling was one of the Australian Christian peace activists to enter and occupy the top secret US war-fighting spy base at Pine Gap, near Alice Springs, in December 2005 (see my article in Peace Researcher 33, November 2006, "Aussie Activists Occupy Top Secret Pine Gap US Spy Base: First To Ever Face Draconian Charges" <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr33-137b.html>) They were fined - the State wanted them imprisoned - but were*

then acquitted on all charges on appeal to the Supreme Court (see my follow up article in PR 36, August 2008, "Pine Gap 'Invaders' Acquitted: Huge Defeat For Covert State" <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr36-167.html>). He was also one of the Australian contingent who attended the Waihopai Domebusters' criminal trial in Wellington in March 2010. Ed.

## In Memory of Lynn Burke

- Murray Horton

This is an extract from my obituary of Lynn, which is in *Foreign Control Watchdog* 132, May 2013, <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/32/11.html>. MH.

Lynn Burke, who died in Auckland in November 2012, aged 59 (after a long battle with cancer), was a Campaign Against Foreign Control In New Zealand (CAFCINZ) activist, Committee member and Chairperson way back in the 1970s, i.e. in our very first few years. She had been and gone before we became the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA) in the mid 80s. It saddens me to have to record the death of somebody a couple of years younger than myself; what saddens me even more is that I can find so very little about her life, and therefore can't do it justice by way of a proper obituary. I hadn't seen Lynn for decades (she lived overseas and elsewhere in NZ for many years; I don't know if she ever returned to Christchurch after leaving it in the 80s). So her life is basically a blank canvas to this would be obituary writer. Lynn didn't leave a paper trail.

### SIS File

Fortunately we didn't need to record our history in those days because the NZ Security Intelligence Service (SIS) was happy to use taxpayers' money to do it for us (you can read the full story of the SIS file on CAFCINZ/CAFCA in my article "SIS Spied On CAFCA For Quarter Of A Century" in *Watchdog* 120, May 2009, <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/20/06.htm>). Because CAFCA was one of the very first organisations (as opposed to individuals) to apply for our SIS file, we got to the SIS before they'd got their act together, and they duly released the file to us complete with whole screeds of names, not to mention a voluminous quantity of gossip and salacious tittle tattle about various third parties, which is the reason why we will not make it publicly available, either in hard copy or electronically. By the time I received my own SIS Personal File, everybody else's name had been expunged (this was also the experience of numerous other people). So CAFCA's SIS file is a treasure trove. And sure enough, there are a few mentions of Lynn in it. So this is the first time I've ever written an obituary with the SIS file on CAFCINZ/CAFCA as my sole written source.

That whole file is biased, politically hostile and inaccurate in many details (not to mention heavily censored), but it is worth citing, because it is literally the only record that CAFCA has of Lynn's years of leading involvement with us (she is mentioned in SIS reports covering 1977 & 78), and it provides a fascinating historical record of a period when CAFCINZ was a much less respectable group than staid old CAFCA is now. Lynn Burke (who is also referred to in SIS reports as Lynne Burke, Barbara Lynn/e Burke and B. L. Burke) first appears in a May 1977 report.

### Peace Activist

By October 1977, she had become a leading activist. A report headed "Anti-American Protest" recorded: "CAFCINZ, with Barbara Lynn Burke as the main organiser, is planning to mount a protest demonstration at Lyttelton on the 8th or 9th of October 1977 on the occasion of a visit to the port of a USN (US Navy) destroyer". As a result she was spied on more closely by the SIS. Her address was one of those listed in a report devoted to the addresses and phone numbers of several CAFCINZ Committee members and activists.

The SIS produced detailed reports on the Christchurch protests against the NZ visit of the US nuclear submarine *Pintado* in January 1978. A list of those who attended a planning meeting at the People's Union building is headed by "Burke, Barbara Lynn" ("Horton, Murray Donald" was also there). "A rally opposing the visit...organised by CAFCINZ and CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) was held in Cathedral Square, Christchurch, at 7.30 p.m. on Friday 20 January 1978. The rally had been advertised in the news columns of the *Christchurch Star* (copy forwarded) and was attended by 60 to 70 people, mostly 'student types'. Among those present were: Burke, Barbara Lynn... The speakers at the rally were B.L. Burke and M. Tay\*. They both spoke on the moral issues involved in the *Pintado* visit and the consequences of a nuclear accident involving such a vessel. Both made the point that the mere presence of nuclear warships in New Zealand made this country a potential target while such warships were in New Zealand waters and both stressed the fact that the nationality of the ship(s) was of secondary importance, giving the impression that visits by nuclear warships belonging to other countries besides the United States would be opposed also..." (so much, therefore, for "anti-American protest"). "The gathering broke up at about 8.00 p.m., whereupon a number of participants were seen to retire to the nearby United Services Hotel". The report was accompanied by a copy of the leaflet advertising the rally: "This was received through a covert box number...". On

the Saturday afternoon there was a march from Burnside Park to the US military base at Christchurch Airport (which is still there). "82 persons participated in this march. Among them were: Burke, Barbara Lynn; Horton, Murray Donald....". The last time Lynn was mentioned in the file was in a very detailed SIS report about CAFCINZ's 1978 Annual General Meeting, at which time she was our Chairperson. \*Mia Tay was a leading figure in Christchurch CND and is still a local peace activist and Anti-Bases Campaign member

ABC didn't start until 1987 when the plan to build the Waihopai spy base was first announced. Earlier in the 80s there was Citizens for the Demilitarisation of Harewood (the US base at Christchurch Airport); *Peace Researcher* started publishing in 1983. But years before ABC, CDH and *PR*, there was a very active anti-bases campaign in Christchurch, which grew out of the huge anti-Vietnam War movement of the 1960s and 70s. And that early anti-bases campaign was an active part of the broader peace and anti-nuclear movement of the 70s. What these SIS reports illustrate is the leading role that CAFCINZ played in them; movements that led directly to New Zealand becoming nuclear free by law in 1987 (and remaining so today). And, furthermore, they show the leading role that Lynn Burke played in those movements in Christchurch. It is good that we remember and pay tribute to those organisations and individuals who were fighting this battle many decades ago.

## Jack Rogers

- Kate Dewes

Jack Rogers, a leading member of the Christian Pacifist Society\* and conscientious objector in World War II, died on 12 February 2013 in Christchurch aged 94. Born just before Armistice Day on 20 October 1918, he claimed to have been a pacifist from birth. In a fascinating interview with film-maker Kathleen Gallagher in 2005, he explained that he believed "all babies absorb pacifism with their mother's milk; but it is knocked out of them". Jack came from a "reasonably devout Methodist family" in Wanganui. On first hearing the Sermon on the Mount, he found it "revolutionary". He asked: "Why don't we all get up and cheer or do something ...?" 1. \* *Murray Horton's obituary of the Christian Pacifist Society and its journal, The Peacemaker, is in Peace Researcher 27, August 2003, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr27-78.htm#bkmrk1>.Ed.*

At the age of five a teacher humiliated him after he had unintentionally broken a school rule. From then on he questioned severe control and discipline, and sought better ways to counter school bullying. As a 12 year old at technical college he grew uneasy about compulsory cadet training. While objecting to it, no others amongst the 300 boys would support him in speaking out. However, when asked to make an oath of allegiance to New Zealand in class, he stayed quiet at the back of the room. He hated having to learn to shoot with a rifle and do bayonet practice into bags of wheat.

Jack drew strength from his involvement in the Methodist Bible Class. In 1936, aged 18, he joined the Christian Pacifist Society, which was associated with the UK-based International Fellowship of Reconciliation and War Resisters International. At the time, the Bible Class movement was extraordinarily strong: each year they paid for a couple of bright university students, usually Christian Pacifists, to travel throughout New Zealand helping organise summer and winter schools and annual conventions – usually in Auckland or Wellington. At one of these, a declaration was adopted against war stating that, because Christianity insists on pacifism, Christians should take no part in warfare, nor support medical services which were under military control. In 1940, soon after the outbreak of World War II, Jack showed his commitment by cycling from Wanganui to Wellington to attend a conference. His father was the Mayor of Wanganui, and a member of the Labour Party's National Executive which had approved military conscription. When Jack was called up three months before any other young man, his father phoned Walter Nash, then the Minister of Finance. Nash's response was: "It must be a political stunt to discredit the Labour government".

Jack was 21 when he was conscripted, studying hard to become an electrician; and he was only six weeks off completing the syllabus. Registering as conscientious objectors, he, and later his younger brother Arthur, went before the Appeal Board. This consisted of a magistrate, a crown prosecutor, a representative of the workers and a representative of the employers. The Crown Prosecutor asked him just one question: "What would you do if the Japs came and landed on the beaches at Castlecliff (at Wanganui) and raped your mother?" He replied: "I really don't know – but I do know that I wouldn't kill this soldier because I wouldn't have a rifle. I'd do my utmost to interpose myself to protect my mother". He declined a medical examination despite severe asthma attacks as a child, and a re-appeal because he "didn't accept their right to examine my conscience".

### Five Years In Prisons & Detention Camps

This sealed Jack's fate. He was sent to Wanganui Prison for a month, where his father was the visiting magistrate. On release, he was taken to Trentham and held in guardhouses until the conscientious objectors' detention camps

were ready. He was sent to the “bad boys’ camp for recalcitrants” at Hautu, near Turangi, for nearly five years, and wasn’t released until February 1946, six months after the war ended. He became the runner for a clandestine courier service carrying mail and food, set up by the prisoners between Hautu and the nearby Rangipo Prison, because they were not allowed outside information. “I had to get out through three lots of barbed wire under floodlights; then jog for five to six miles through the scrub to where we had hidden a golden syrup tin under pine needles. It was like (1965-71 US TV comedy series set in a WWII prisoner of war camp) *Hogan’s Heroes!*” 2.

New Zealand was the only Allied country where conscientious objectors, 823 of them, were imprisoned for the duration of the war. Some, like Reverend Ormond Burton, were imprisoned for 2½ years for speaking publicly against the war by quoting the Bible, despite having been decorated for his military service during the First World War. Connie Summers, from Christchurch, was the only New Zealand woman to be imprisoned, for three months for “sedition” (*Murray Horton’s obituary of Connie Summers is in Peace Researcher 38, July 2009, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr38-176b.htm>. Ed.*). A few “COs” or “conshies” were disgusted that Bob Semple, the Labour Minister of Armed Forces – who was jailed for his anti-war views in 1914-1918 – drew the first marble of the conscription ballot. 3. As in the First World War, some of the more jingoistic citizens accused “conshies” of cowardice; handing out symbolic white feathers to those they considered traitors. 4. Jack later discovered that his mother had been subjected to abusive telephone calls late at night because of his principled stand.

### “The Best Man I Have Known”

While in prison, he “formed a close emotional relationship with a certain dental nurse” called Jean, who had treated the COs. After they were married in 1947, they lived in Halswell, Christchurch for over 50 years, where they brought up four sons while building their own house and Jack worked as an electrician. Active in the Christian Pacifist Society (disbanded in 2002) and various local peace groups; they remained stalwarts of the local Methodist church. At Jack’s funeral, there were glowing tributes from family and friends about Jack and Jean’s many interests, which included tramping, gardening, building and community activities. His sons remembered his strong Christian views against any form of violence and alcohol. Russell Marshall, a former Halswell Methodist minister, Labour MP for Wanganui, Foreign Minister and High Commissioner for London, described Jack as probably “the best man I have ever known”.

An excerpt was shown from Kathleen Gallagher’s documentary film “Tau te Mauri – Breath of Peace”, which began with Jack talking about his time in Hautu prison camp. While speaking, he held his hands together as if in prayer. In 2007, to commemorate the 20th anniversary of New Zealand’s nuclear free legislation, a copy of this film was sent to every high school. This was funded by compensation from the French government after the 1985 terrorist bombing of the Greenpeace flagship *Rainbow Warrior* – an irony not lost on Jack. Moana Cole, now a barrister and mother of three young children, paid tribute to Jack and his “conshie” mates when she said they inspired her at the age of 21 to take non-violent action in the US against a B52 bomber readying to attack Iraq in 1991. During her year in a US prison, she drew strength from them as her “spiritual brothers”.

As part of the 2002 declaration of Christchurch as a Peace City, Mayor Garry Moore presented surviving members of the Christian Pacifist Society with a richly deserved *pounamu* Peace Award. Jack wore this with pride. One of the curators at the Canterbury Museum brought some of Jack’s precious possessions from his time in Hautu for display at his funeral service: his mug, fine wood carvings, and a letter smuggled out of prison in the spine of a book. They are so prized that the curator wore gloves to handle them! Many of Jack’s and other COs’ papers, newsletters and photos are also safely in the University of Canterbury’s MacMillan Brown Peace Archive collection for future researchers and peace leaders. Here is Jack’s sage advice to young people, and indeed to us all: “Read widely and, if you question things, don’t feel it’s wrong to do that. Be prepared to be called a sceptic, but explore your ideas, share them, test them out on other people and refine them. That’s the only way you grow.”

For further information about Jack, see <http://www.nzine.co.nz/features/jackrogers.html>, [http://www.methodist.org.nz/touchstone/lead\\_articles/2004/august\\_2004/christian\\_pacifism\\_in\\_nz](http://www.methodist.org.nz/touchstone/lead_articles/2004/august_2004/christian_pacifism_in_nz), and David Grant’s books “Out In The Cold: Pacifists And Conscientious Objectors In New Zealand During WWII”, and “A Question Of Faith: A History Of The New Zealand Christian Pacifist Society. Also see *Jeremy Agar’s reviews of the documentaries “Tau te Mauri – Breath of Peace”, by Kathleen Gallagher, and “Sedition: The Suppression Of Dissent In World War II New Zealand”, by Russell Campbell, in Peace Researcher 32, March 2006, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr32-120b.html>. Ed.*

1. Much of this obituary is drawn from an interview with Jack Rogers, by Kathleen Gallagher, in Christchurch in 2005. It was done for the Oral Archive Project as part of the Peace City Christchurch project.
2. Garry Arthur, “Conshies’ Get-Together: War-time comrades with a difference recall their battles”, *Press*, 14/10/86.

3. Ibid. See also, "Energy of goodwill", by Margaret Willard, *Evening Post*, 25/4/01.

4. Ibid



# Organiser's Report

Peace Researcher 45 – June 2013

- Murray Horton

*This covers my Anti-Bases Campaign activities in 2012 (with some overflow into 2013). It is extracted from my full Report, which is online in Foreign Control Watchdog 132, May 2013, <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/32/09.html>. This does not include coverage of the January 2012 Waihopai spy base protest, because I reported on that in Peace Researcher 43, May 2012, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/43/pr43-002.htm>. See elsewhere in this issue for my report on the January 2013 Waihopai protest.*

## **Peace Researcher**

I mentioned in my 2011 Report that I was back on track as PR Co-Editor, with Warren Thomson, after having basically ground to a halt in 2010 after years as sole Editor. That's, hopefully, all behind me now, which is great, because PR is a damn good little newsletter. Actually it's not so little any more – the two 2012 issues were 56 and 60 pages, respectively, the latter being the biggest ever (and this issue is fair size, too). I enjoy writing for PR (when I can make the time to do so) because it enables me to write about topics that I don't otherwise get to write about (such as the Kim Dotcom/Government Communications Security Bureau tragi-comedy) This is the sort of stuff that I cut my teeth on when I first started as a political activist. Actually, between the two publications that I edit, we were able to cover two quite separate aspects of the Dotcom saga. In *Foreign Control Watchdog* 129, August 2012 James Ayers wrote "Kim Dotcom And The Good Character Test: Money Versus Power", <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/30/06.html>, which is an analysis of the Overseas Investment Office's file on Dotcom, which the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA) obtained under the Official Information Act. And in *Peace Researcher* 44, November 2012, I wrote "A Dotcomedy Of Errors. GCSB Illegally Spies On New Zealanders: We Told You So" <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/44/pr44-001a.htm>.

I felt that this PR article deserved wider circulation because of its newsworthiness, so I sent it to the media. It got an immediate response from a senior journalist at the *New Zealand Herald* but not about what I was expecting. Buried in it is a reference to a 1997 PR cover photo of veteran GCSB heavyweight Hugh Wolfensohn, who was still around in 2012 as a lead player in the Dotcom/GCSB saga (which finished his career and saw him taking the rap in 2013 as the fall guy for the GCSB's innumerable transgressions). The *Herald* man explained that the country's biggest daily paper could not find or take a photo of this shy spy and could it have ours? Unfortunately, it's not a good photo, with his face in shadow and turned away from the camera (it was taken outside the Blenheim District Court during the hearing of charges against the 20 people arrested at the 1997 Waihopai spy base protest). But we couldn't oblige, at that time. Bob Leonard kept all ABC's photos (and furthermore, it was taken by Bob on film and is not available electronically). But when the ABC Committee went into his unoccupied and badly damaged house in February 2013, two years after he and Barbara had to permanently flee it, a collection of 1990s' ABC photos was among the material we retrieved. I couldn't find the actual photo but I did find the negative, plus several other photos of Wolfensohn taken at the same time (since then the camera shy GCSB boys have learnt to stay away from such court hearings. They were nowhere to be seen at the 2010 Domebusters' trial in Wellington). Having ascertained that you can still get photos printed from old negatives (something that I hadn't done since the advent of digital photography), I was able to oblige the *Herald* several months after the journalist asked me about it and one of Bob's photos, duly credited to him, illustrated an article about Wolfensohn in March 2013.

You can view this rare photo of one of the country's top spies on the cover of PR 13, August 1997 <http://www.historicalpeaceresearcher.blogspot.co.nz/2010/06/peace-researcher-vol2-issue13-august.html>. The fact that you can do so is a tribute to the work of ABC Committee member Lynda Boyd who uploaded all the historic PRs some years ago. The efficacy of this was borne out not only by that *Herald* inquiry but also by a stranger from the other side of the world contacting us about a tiny report that had appeared in a 1994 PR.

## **A Very Useful Specialist Publication**

Warren Thomson is a prolific writer and, in marked contrast to me, he writes short, snappy articles. His cover story in PR 43, May 2012, "Manoeuvred Back Into ANZUS: Subversion Of NZ's Independence" <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/43/pr43-001.htm>, attracted wider attention. Dennis Small, himself a former PR Editor, writes long and fascinating articles for it (Dennis is the only NZ writer that I know of to doggedly publicise and analyse one of the great unpunished crimes of the 20th Century, namely the massacre of maybe a million Indonesian "Communists", aided and abetted by the US. Unlike what is happening with surviving Khmer Rouge leaders in Cambodia, there are no mass murder trials for the surviving Indonesian perpetrators). In 2013 Dennis has

told us that he wants to step back to being an occasional writer.

Maire Leadbeater and her brother Keith Locke were *PR*'s other writers in 2012. Maire wrote a history of 1970s, 80s and 90s' protests against the US military transport base at Christchurch International Airport ("The Campaign To Demilitarise Harewood", *PR* 44, November 2012, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/44/pr44-003.htm>). That reminded us that ABC grew out of the earlier CDH (Citizens for the Demilitarisation of Harewood), which had its own newsletter *Off Base*. Keith wrote us a fascinating article "Trying To Make NZ Intelligence Agencies More Accountable" My Efforts In Parliament" (*PR* 43, May 2012, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/43/pr43-003.htm>). And Evin Wood, who has been ABC's key contact in Blenheim for decades, wrote an obituary for the indomitable Rosa Oliver (*PR* 44, November 2012, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/44/pr44-008.htm>).

The whole thing looks a million bucks, due to the meticulous work of our Layout Editor, my wife Becky, who has done it for more than a decade and who will go to exhaustive lengths to get it just right, sometimes working right through the night. And since belatedly discovering that the software on this CAFCA computer includes the ability to convert her Publisher layout into a PDF, it has made getting *PR* printed a breeze. In the past there have been embarrassing glitches (involving text moving – in one famous case the bloody front cover masthead – between lay out and printing and not being discovered by yours truly until too late. That problem was caused by incompatibility between what was used to lay it out and print it). Cass Daley (who is the mother of Committee members Jenny Hope-Boyd and Lynda Boyd) is the Web Content Manager for the ABC site and does a very good job of getting *PR* online. It is very useful having it in cyberspace. When it was reported, in early 2013, that Rob Gilchrist is suing his former Police employers for \$500,000 damages for "mental pain", I was immediately able to circulate three detailed articles from *PR* 38, July 2009, about his decade-long career as a Police spy and agent provocateur (ABC was among the many groups that he spied on).

The benefits of having *PR* online can be unforeseen. For example, in 2012 I was contacted by a Swedish stranger who had read an online 2010 article about the unsuccessful attempt to secure Owen Wilkes' Security Intelligence Service (SIS) Personal File. He wrote to say that he worked with Owen at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute in the late 70s and early 80s, and had come out here and lived a year with both Owen and his brother Jack on the West Coast in the early 80s, following Owen to Wellington when he had become a fulltime peace movement organiser and researcher. The correspondent, who now works as a Eurocrat, wanted to re-establish contact with Jack and his other NZ friends from 30 years ago.

Since the Catholic peace activists Adrian Leason, Peter Murnane and Sam Land so wonderfully deflated one of the Waihopai spy base domes in 2008 ABC has championed their cause. They were acquitted of criminal charges by a Wellington jury in 2010 but the humiliated covert State is out for vengeance and sued them personally for every last cent that it cost to replace that dome (right down to every coffee, pie and beer consumed by the workers) – more than \$1 million. In 2011 the full amount was awarded against them but the Domebusters appealed that in a two day hearing at the Court of Appeal in May 2013 (at the time of writing they are awaiting the reserved decision). I wonder if the GCSB will accept payment in pies and beer. ABC has been delighted to have had both Peter Murnane (2011) and Adi Leason (2012 & 13) as lead speakers at our Waihopai protests. These guys have become both valued colleagues and friends. We will continue to support them as much as we can.

### **Rescuing ABC History From Bob's Quake-Buggered House**

ABC's books and files and photos and videos, etc, etc were inside Bob Leonard's quake-damaged and abandoned Christchurch home. Basically, all of our history. Finally, in February 2013 (two years after the quake forced him and Barbara out), four members of the Committee – Warren Thomson, Robyn Dann, Lynda Boyd and me – were able to mount an expedition into their house. We were more successful than we had hoped in accessing and retrieving a lot of what we were looking for. The house has been badly damaged and is dangerous – for example, an old disused chimney collapsed, sending a pile of bricks straight through the kitchen floor and leaving the fridge teetering on the brink of also falling through.

Lynda and I spent several hours under the house, working by torchlight in the storage room in the basement, retrieving files and books, etc. It was only after I'd been down there some time that I thought to explore the basement further. My blood ran cold when I saw the underside of that pile of bricks i.e. the ones that smashed straight through the kitchen floor, snapping some of the floor beams in the process. It was very close to where I had been working. The house is still as it was on February 22nd, 2011, and the land is just a jungle after more than two years of uncontrolled growth. But there's no evidence of any intruders, despite there being plenty of looting and arson of abandoned houses throughout the city. It was very sad - I've never packed up the belongings of a living person under those circumstances - but it was also empowering to be able to provide a small degree of practical closure for Bob and Barbara. At the time of writing the fate of the house is undecided but, as I understand it, virtually



every house on that side of the street will be demolished, as that whole side of the hill has slumped. Everything we removed from Bob's is being temporarily stored at Robyn Dann's – ironically, in her bedroom, which she is not allowed to use, because its' exterior brick wall is too risky. Long term we will go through the material. Some has already been dumped as being too old (and that is the reason I left behind plenty of old files and books, etc in that basement storage room). The permanent home for what we decide to keep is unknown at present – I have no substantial room in my office and, indeed, I dumped a whole lot of old CAFCA and ABC stuff when the office and nearly all of our house had to be emptied in preparation for our quake repairs back in winter 2011. But, at least, we've retrieved some of the history of ABC and the wider peace movement.

The ABC Committee members have all been affected by the quakes to a greater or lesser degree. Robyn Dann, the Treasurer, owns a 1850s' Woolston cottage across the street from the Heathcote River. The place has a lot of old bricks in it and those parts of the house have taken a pummelling. She and her teenage daughter Aleks are allowed to live in it, pending a decision on repair or rebuild, but the bedrooms are too dangerous to sleep in, meaning that they've been living in the lounge and dining room for two years now, with no end in sight. That means Robyn can no longer host ABC meetings, which she had done for the decade prior to the quakes (our place is now the ABC meeting venue, until further notice). In my 2011 Report I detailed how Warren Thomson had lost his job at a central city English language school when it (and the rest of that sector) was wiped out by the February 2011 quake. Warren had months of unemployment, followed by months of highly erratic part-time work as his school struggled to survive with a drastically reduced number of foreign students. But in 2012 the school re-established itself out in the suburbs and he got back close to fulltime work again. And his hillside house was repaired (he and Noi lived in it for several weeks while it was fixed, just as Becky and I had done for two months while our place was fixed in 2011).

Jeremy Agar, *PR's* Reviews Editor, lives in Lyttelton, which was hit very hard by the quakes, and his own home has been damaged, including some structural damage (ironically, he'd had the place renovated just before the quakes started). In 2012 he had some emergency repairs done to prop up a retaining wall that plays a vital role in securing his house to the hillside. In my 2011 Report I detailed how he narrowly escaped being hit by his grandfather clock as it crashed to the floor in front of him during the February quake. The clock has been repaired and secured to his wall – but still doesn't go. However, it makes a most impressive backdrop when he hosts CAFCA Committee meetings (he is CAFCA Chairperson). On the other hand, Jenny Hope-Boyd had a non-quake emergency in 2012, when her rental home on the main street of Little River very nearly got inundated by a major midwinter flood – she had to wade through thigh-deep water to get inside.

### **Giving Credit Where Credit Is Due**

2012 was also a time to give credit where credit was due. In my 2011 Report I wrote: “Special thanks to the Boyd sisters, Lynda and Jenny, who brought us a boot full of water bottles (survival hint – have a bath in your house; it's a great storage repository for water). Thanks to our local butcher who stored all our freezer contents in his shop freezer, so we didn't lose any food. He also supplied a barrel of fresh water outside his shop every day for people to help themselves – that's the first time I've ever had to carry buckets of water home. I felt empathy with African women, except, of course, that I didn't have to do it every day, or walk for many kilometres or carry it on my head. Thanks to our local café who gave me, free of charge, three big slices of carrot cake when I called in on the afternoon of the killer quake (as they had no power or water they were going to have to chuck them out). We lived on that, plus canned food cooked on our gas stove, for several days”. In 2012 I was able to take that further and nominate all of the above for Christchurch City Council's Earthquake Awards. And I'm delighted that they were awarded both to my local butcher (who has the framed photo of him and Mayor Bob Parker displayed in his shop strung up on a meat hook, a setting in which lots of Christchurch people would like to see Bob); and the Boyd sisters, both of whom are on the ABC Committee, with Lynda also on the CAFCA Committee. But some wanker on the Council rang me to say that they refused to accept my café nomination because it was “frivolous. We don't care if you like carrot cake and cappuccino, Mr Horton”. What's more, he told me that if I didn't withdraw that nomination, the Council wouldn't accept the other two. How's that for blackmail? So I take this opportunity to publicly thank Jenny the manager and the staff of Oddfellows Café, Disraeli Street, Addington for their kindness on February 22nd, 2011. Stuff the Council!

### **In It For The Long Haul**

ABC has an annual strategy meeting (the 2012 one was held in the then Little River home of Committee member Jenny Hope-Boyd, which gave us a day in the country, a bloody nice lunch and a chance to pay a visit, my first ever, to Rod Donald's grave in a local churchyard. That was very appropriate because Rod was a very good friend to ABC, and a leading figure at all our Waihopai protests right up until his tragically early death in 2005). Various decisions came out of that – for example, we decided to try and raise our profile by putting out ABC press releases other than at the time of the Waihopai protests. In other words, to comment on things, rather than simply announce

an event, and hopefully build a media profile to the point where they contact us for comment rather than us chasing them. You can read our modest output at [http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/press\\_release\\_hp.htm](http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/press_release_hp.htm). Warren Thomson has been very good at writing them (they go out under my name) – plus writing letters to the editor. And, another strategy meeting micro-level decision was that, after years of using CAFCA's e-mail address, it was time we had our own (and it has caused confusion. I have stood next to a Green Co-Leader at a Waihopai protest who mistakenly thanked CAFCA for organising it). So, after the inevitable hassles - necessitating the first ever personal visit to my home office by our Internet Service Provider's Managing Director and his deputy - ABC got its own e-mail address [abc@chch.planet.org.nz](mailto:abc@chch.planet.org.nz). We also decided to pay more attention to updating our Website [www.converge.org.nz/abc](http://www.converge.org.nz/abc) (managed by Cass Daley). For the first time ever you can now find links to media coverage, and other material related to a Waihopai protest (the 2013 one), at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/waihopai2013/waihopai13.html>.

ABC is in it for the long haul. We are very patient. Warren Thomson, who was one of our leading figures in the 80s and 90s, taught English in Bangkok from 1997-2010 inclusive. He rejoined the Committee in 2011 and resumed co-editing *PR* (with me), which he'd last done with Bob Leonard in the 90s. Then, in 2012, his daughter Melanie came home from nearly 12 years teaching in London. In the 90s she had been an ABC Committee member and leading Waihopai activist (plus she used to do the *PR* lay out and she created the ABC Website). Warren came home with a Thai wife; Melanie with an English husband and six year old daughter. They live in Ashburton, because that's where Chris got a job (and Melanie is teaching there now). But it's great to have her back, she's rejoined ABC and the whole NZ/Thai/English Thomson clan came to the January 2013 Waihopai protest.

### **We Enjoy Our Work**

ABC is very much a single issue campaign, with a specialist publication, so it always has been, and probably always will be, a small group (at the time of writing, and pre the annual purge of non-payers, ABC has 125 members and nearly \$10,000 in the bank). But it punches way above its weight and always generates media coverage disproportionate to its size. The Committee -Warren, Robyn, Jenny, me and, from a distance, Lynda Boyd, who has lived in Auckland for years but is coming home in 2013 - is small but we are all very good friends, not just colleagues, which means that our activities are always fun.

Becky and I spent both Christmas and New Year's Eve with Warren and Noi and family. I attended my second ABC wedding in a year, when Becky and I were among the guests at Jenny Hope-Boyd's in February 2013 (the February 2012 one was that of our former long time Committee member, and current Christchurch City Councillor, Yani Johanson). Jenny and Richard were married in a beautiful hilltop setting, with a full length view of Lyttelton Harbour as the backdrop, on a day that was warm, sunny and (miraculously) windless. It was lovely to socialise with Jenny, Lynda, Cass and their family. Particularly as the previous weekend Lynda and I had been engaged in the sad, dirty, dark and dangerous task of retrieving ABC material from Bob Leonard's quake-damaged and abandoned house. Being friends makes a big difference when you're fighting some of the biggest, meanest, most secretive and murderous forces running the world. We enjoy our work.

