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Keith Locke 1944-2024

**ABC champion, peace & human rights warrior,
a red Green, an honourable politician,
colleague & friend**



In this issue: Rocket Lab; Aerospace Summit; SIS; Spooky Bits; Gaza & Ukraine; Economic War; "Nuked"; "The Jakarta Method"; "Nuclear War"; Keith Locke & May Bass Obituaries

In this issue ...

- 2 Rocket Lab: The Pentagon's Pet
by *Warren Thomson*
- 4 Why I'm Protesting Outside The
Aerospace Summit In Otautahi
by *Aurora Garner-Randolph*
- 5 New Zealand's Security Threat
Assessment by *Maire Leadbeater*
- 7 ***Spooky Bits*** by *Warren Thomson*
- 15 West's "Democracies" Pushing World To
Catastrophe by *Kay Weir*
- 22 Economic War by *Greg Waite*

Reviews by *Murray Horton and Greg Waite*

- 30 "Nuked. The Submarine Fiasco
That Sank Australia's Sovereignty"
by *Andrew Fowler*
- 33 "The Jakarta Method.
Washington's Anti-Communist
Crusade & The Mass Murder
Program That Shaped Our World"
by *Vincent Bevins*
- 39 "Nuclear War: A Scenario" by
Annie Jacobsen

Obituaries by *Murray Horton*

- 41 *Keith Locke*
- 47 *May Bass*
- 51 CAFCA/ABC Organiser Account, Financial
Report For Year Ended 31 March 2024
by *James Ayers*

Cover: *Keith Locke, Waihopai spy base
protest*

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ROCKET LAB

The Pentagon's Pet

- **Warren Thomson**

As the Aotearoa/NZ government continues to edge us further into the American military/intelligence goliath, sending ships and personnel into various conflict areas and trying to become a participant in AUKUS, Rocket Lab continues to be the most threatening component of this enlistment in any future World War Three.

Rocket Lab began as a NZ venture with an entrepreneur, Peter Beck, who initially decried military financing then immediately turned around and welcomed Pentagon funding with launches of rockets at Mahia Peninsula which were directly involved in American war-fighting strategies. Rocket Lab also has a close association with Lockheed Martin – the biggest arms producer in the world.

Recent Rocket Lab launches have involved many satellites that support laudable civilian purposes, particularly scientific, environmental, and search functions. But it is becoming harder and harder to separate out the military and civilian purposes, which allows Rocket Lab to confuse the public over its contribution to the Pentagon's drive to dominate space and hence current and future warfighting capability.

Totally Embedded In US Space War Initiatives

However, a closer look at Rocket Lab's satellite launches clearly reveals how the company is totally embedded in US space war initiatives and thus has entangled this country in Washington's warfighting plans. The company's own Website proudly broadcasts its operations facilitating "... a diverse range of customers and missions, including ... the National Reconnaissance Office (the US spy satellite agency) and Space Force missions supporting national security and defense" (read Pentagon military operations. RL Website, retrieved 17/7/24).

Furthermore, the most recently planned launches directly implicate Aotearoa/NZ in space warfare. "SSC's Space Safari's VICTUS HAZE mission will be an exercise of a realistic threat-response scenario and on-orbit space domain awareness (SDA) demonstration. Rocket Lab and a second performer, True Anomaly, will both demonstrate the ability to build rendezvous and proximity operation (RPO) capable space vehicles and command and control centers. The mission is targeted for launch in 2025".

And Beck clearly signals his enthusiasm for being in the front row of America's wars: "It's an honor to be selected by the Space Systems Command to partner in delivering the VICTUS HAZE mission and demonstrate the kind of advanced tactically responsive capabilities critical to evolving national security needs," said Rocket Lab founder and CEO, Peter Beck (media release, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 11/4/24, RL Website).

BlackSky; HawkEye; RIMPAC

Amongst other launches supporting the American warfighting system, the company plans "five dedicated Electron missions for BlackSky from 2024. BlackSky - a leading provider of real-time geospatial intelligence and global monitoring services - has signed another block buy deal for five Electron launches from 2024. All five new missions will launch from Rocket Lab Launch Complex 1 in Mahia, New Zealand" (Rocket Lab Website, retrieved 17/7/24). In 2021, *Yahoo Finance* reported that BlackSky has contracts with multiple Government agencies in the United States and around the world. (One) "presentation highlighted the US Ar-

my, US Air Force and several Ministry of Defense agencies around the world" (19/2/21).

Other RL plans involve 15 satellites in five clusters with three launches in 2023 and 2024 for the HawkEye360 group. One launch has been completed, from the launch complex in Virginia, USA. There are two more to come but there seem to be some delays. This company, according to its own Website, (15/4/23) is "the world's leading defense technology company for space-based radio frequency (RF) data and analytics," and "... provides increased situational awareness into an array of activities, including early-warning radars, military activities, maritime domain awareness, radio communications, and indicators of RF interference....".

A 2022 contract with the US Air Force Research Laboratory means HawkEye 360 is: "... participating (in) military exercises, such as the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) Exercises, to introduce new capabilities

to the warfighter (sic) and identify ways to improve and integrate into operational workflows" (press release, 11/1/22). Note that the NZ military is a regular participant in the Pentagon's RIMPAC exercises. So, the evidence is clear. Rocket Lab is a company which makes a lot of its money by launching satellites that are an integral part of American warfighting operations. And the importance of control of space in any conflict has become more and more obvious.

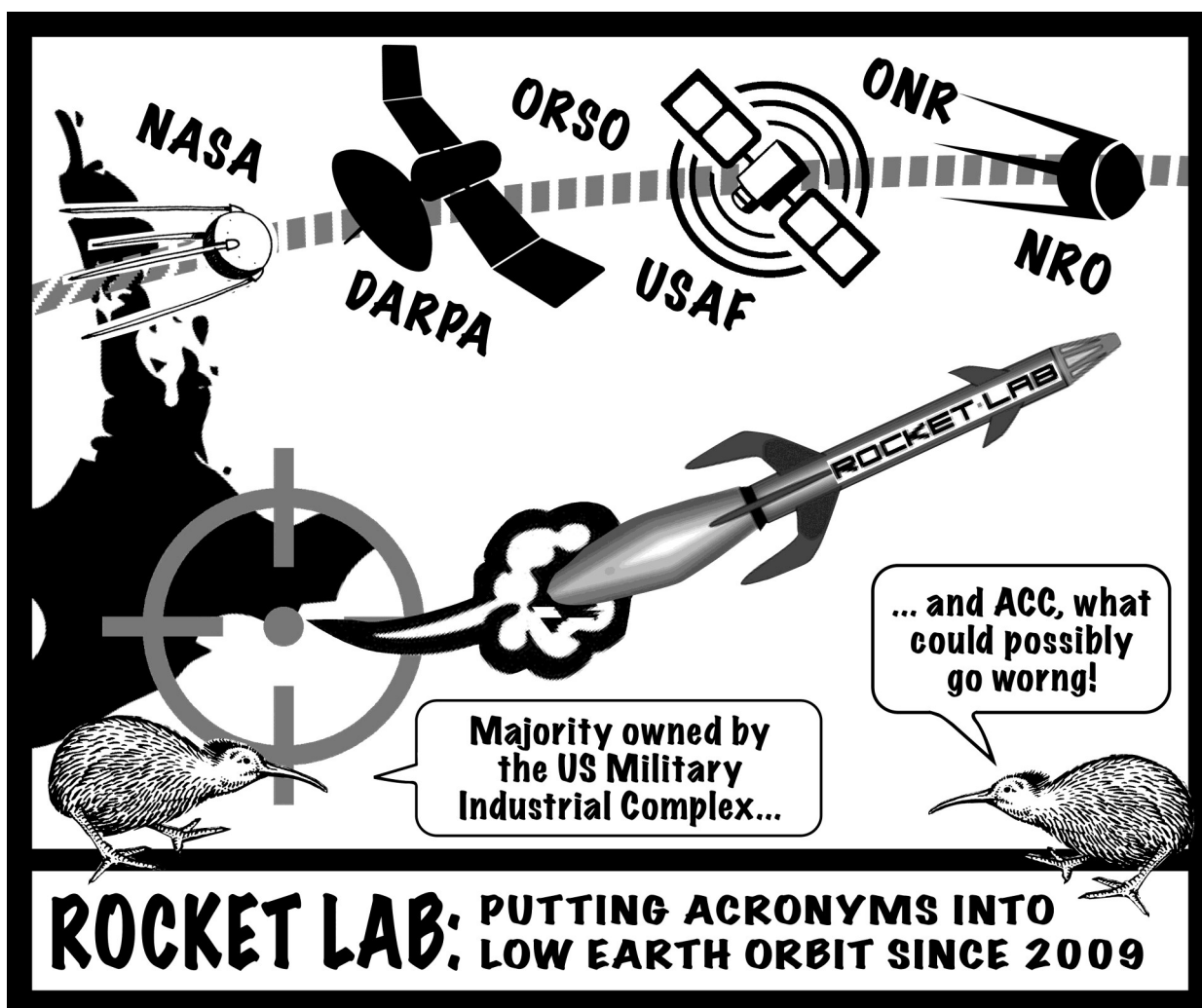
The Aotearoa/NZ government (and the previous Labour-led government) has promoted space initiatives but there has been no public consideration of the implications of being an important cog in the Pentagon's space war planning. There has been no public debate over whether Mahia Peninsula is a military target. After all, Rocket Lab is regarded as a leading company in the ability to quickly launch rockets to replace any satellites lost or destroyed. This is an absolutely critical role in a modern-day conflict.

And we are slowly but steadily being eased by our public servants and politicians into the role of back-up for the hitmen of future wars.

There is no place in this country for companies which profit richly from the killing fields. We must resist becoming, again, an ally in other people's wars. A small country can do much more as a respected international peacemaker than as a spare parts provider for the American military machine. Start by closing down the Rocket Lab site at Mahia, and prohibit any military related launches from Canterbury.

NZ Aerospace Industry Not Just Rocket Lab Any More

Canterbury is aiming to be NZ's "aerospace province". The Tāwhaki National Aerospace Centre has a newly built runway on Kaitorete Spit. Local company Dawn Aerospace has developed an unpiloted plane which can fly to the edge of space. This has attracted interest from the US military. There are plans for a rocket launch site there.



Graphic by Ian Dalziel

Why I'm Protesting Outside The Aerospace Summit In Ōtautahi

- Aurora Garner-Randolph



Press Photo 23.9.24

Published in the Press (online edition), 23/9/24. Aurora Garner-Randolph is spokesperson for Stop the Space Waste. This was published immediately before the annual NZ Aerospace Summit in Christchurch, which was the target of vociferous protest from people from Stop The Space Waste, Anti-Bases Campaign and other groups. Ed

When I tell someone that I'm going to protest against the New Zealand Aerospace Summit, they often react with confusion. People ask hesitantly: "What's wrong with aerospace? I thought that was just GPS satellites and space missions!" And I don't blame them. The aerospace industry does huge amounts of public relations work to paint itself as a benevolent, science-focused industry, and it's been pretty successful in its greenwashing efforts. The summit, hosted in Ōtautahi on September 23-24, is themed Aerospace for Good, its Website (<https://www.aerospace.org.nz/summit1>) flooded with buzzwords like "sustainability" and "diverse".

But beneath this glossy corporate veneer lies a violent truth about aerospace. Its ties to foreign militaries and weapons companies mean that the industry is steeped in blood. A closer look at the Aerospace Summit reveals links to weapons of destruction. The summit will be attended by representatives from Boeing and Lockheed Martin, the world's fourth and first biggest weapons manufacturers respectively. Boeing Sustainability lead Kimberly Camrass is speaking at the conference.

Meanwhile, thousands of Boeing guided missiles have been shipped to Israel and used to target aid workers and civilians this year. A Palestinian father, whose family was killed by a bomb with a Boeing serial number, described how "the bodies were reduced to shreds". The only recoverable piece of his baby daughter's body was her hand. Weapons executives who are profiting from the deaths of children are being welcomed into Christchurch.

Rocket Lab

A key sponsor of the Summit is Rocket Lab, a New Zealand/US aerospace company that conducts suborbital launches for various corporate interests. Its launches for the US military could be, according to the Public Advisory Committee on Disarmament and Arms Control, breaking New Zealand's nuclear free law.

In 2023 it launched four Haste (hypersonic accelerator suborbital test electron) tests for American weapons contractor Leidos, and it has plans to launch further Haste tests in the coming year. The purpose of these tests is to facilitate hypersonic weapons development for the US military. Rocket Lab and the aerospace industry present themselves as peace-loving and science focused, but are only too happy to assist the most powerful military in the world to build vast weapons systems.

Earlier in September (2024), Stop The Space Waste, the peace action group opposing this summit, met with Mark Rocket, President of Aerospace NZ, former Co-Director of Rocket Lab, and summit host. His willingness to speak with us was encouraging, but I would say he spent most of the meeting talking in circles, throwing out phrases like "global context" and "industry dialogue" to avoid addressing our concerns about US military expansion. My impression was that he seemed resigned to his role in the military weaponry supply chain, and adamant that Aerospace NZ taking a stance against military ties wouldn't actually change anything.

We were equally adamant that it was important for New Zealand to honour its anti-nuclear legacy by cutting ties with violent militaries. Round and round we went, until my activist colleague made a final point. "The elephant in the room is the killing. We don't talk about the killing. Nobody wants to talk about the killing". There was a long, long silence. Mark avoided our gaze.

As we protest outside the Aerospace Summit, that will be our message. We can't keep looking away as companies like Rocket Lab drag our country further into the control of murderous foreign militaries. We can't keep looking away while executives from weapons companies speak in our city while their pockets are lined by the slaughter of children overseas. And we can't keep turning away from the violence that New Zealand's aerospace industry facilitates.

NEW ZEALAND'S SECURITY THREAT ASSESSMENT

- Maire Leadbeater

In September 2024 the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) put out an ominous assessment report "New Zealand's Security Threat Assessment".¹ It was based on highly contestable assumptions and anonymised uncheckable case examples.

Rules-Based Order

The scene is set by reference to the "rules-based order", which must not be mistaken for international law. This Western mantra is of relatively recent origin and behind it is the fear that bad actors want to change the US dominated rule-book. The concept has origins in the "new world order" that followed the fall of the Soviet Union, and it also links to the free trade rules of the 1990s and early 2000s. Talking about the proposed (but never enacted) Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement in 2016 President Obama stated "America should write the rules. America should call the shots".

It is easy to spot the hypocrisy embedded in the term if you think about the West's selective use of international law. The International Criminal Court (ICC) is congratulated for prosecuting Russian President Putin for war crimes but when the ICC proposed arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his Defence Minister it was a different story.

US President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken denounced the May 2024 decision as "outrageous" and lacking "credibility". Nor did Western nations, including New Zealand, call out the recent horrific pager and communication device attacks by Israel which killed dozens of Lebanese people, including children, and maimed thousands of others. It would surely be called

terrorism if Russia were to use mass booby-trapped devices.

Foreign Influence

The NZSIS writes that "New Zealand's unique place and role in the Indo-Pacific can make us vulnerable to the activities of other states striving for influence and position throughout the region...". These "foreign states" according to the NZSIS are Russia and China and some other unnamed nations. Think of the adage about the fish not knowing they are in the water that surrounds them.

We are subjected constantly to US and Western influence in our media, so much so that the perspectives of people in the global South and even in our Pacific backyard barely get a foothold. New Zealand's independent foreign policy is becoming something of a myth as we are drawn into closer intelligence and defence ties to the US and Australia.

However, the NZSIS is definitely not thinking about the pressure on New Zealand to take part in Pillar 2 of AUKUS or host Rocket Lab's launches in Mahia for the US military. Ironically, a case study is included about mysterious "entities" seeking to establish space infrastructure in New Zealand. These projects were thwarted presumably based on NZSIS advice because if they had gone ahead, we would inadvertently "have allowed another country to install equipment in New Zealand with a plausible military or intelligence function".

I accept that if people living here - perhaps foreign students - are being subject to influence from their home governments that restricts their freedom of expression this should be condemned. The

report refers to "deceptive, coercive or corruptive means" in this context, but does not highlight the fact that bribery of an official and threats of violence are crimes which can and should be dealt with in the criminal justice system.

There is a serious problem with the NZSIS response to deceptive or coercive "influence". The report suggests that people should report such problems to it: "One of the most important steps anyone can take is to report threats when you see them. If you see something that doesn't feel right, I urge you to trust your instincts and let us know...". This is likely to lead to more "deceptive" behaviour as community members begin reporting suspicions which may or may not be well-founded. The SIS has a long and unlovely history of using infiltrators and exhorting disaffected group members to spy on their fellows.

Another problem is the NZSIS's selectivity. China and Russia are not the only nations to attempt to use their citizens or allies to promote their agenda. In January 2024 Aotearoa educators joined together to denounce the attempts by Israeli-affiliated organisations to attack teachers and researchers whose work criticises Israel.² These groups have successfully weaponised the term "antisemitic" to cover any criticism of Israeli government policy and campaigns such as the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Campaign (BDS). The NZSIS report talks about complex and deceptive Chinese 'front organisations' so why not Israeli ones?

Espionage

It is not a one-way street. When it comes to condemning espionage, New Zealand does not stand on firm ground while it hosts the Waihopai spy base. Thanks to Edward Snowden we are now well informed about our role in spying on our Pacific neighbours and others across the Asia-Pacific region. Earlier in 2024 we learnt about APPARITION, a US facility installed secretly here under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed with the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB).



NZ Herald, 09.12.2020

It is capable of analysing transmitted signals from very small satellites, such as those used by Internet cafes in places like Afghanistan. Brendan Horsley, the Inspector General of Intelligence and Security, did not actually name the system, but Nicky Hager was quickly able to match the details in his report to details in leaked classified US documents, released by Snowden in 2013. Horsley could not rule out the project's potential military applications. We will never know whether intelligence supplied by us was used to locate "kill targets" but there is every indication that that was its design function.

Terrorism

The Threat Assessment suggests that the "most likely terrorist attack scenario in New Zealand is a lone actor, acting with little to no intelligence forewarning". The so-called "lone wolf" acts from a highly subjective agenda, mixed with personal pathology. Looking for a political or religious motive may not help. As we have learned so tragically, an actor like Brenton Tarrant is hard to detect pre-crime. After the 2019 mosque attacks Government moved to amend the 1983 Arms Act, banning the sale of semi-automatic weapons and setting up a firearms register. Now this preventative measure is under threat starting with a "review".

Other measures to prevent domestic terrorism are, as for measures to reduce crime generally, about building community cohesion, tolerance and respect for difference. It might sound pie in the sky, but we know it when we see it. We could

think about times of disaster – floods or earthquakes when community solidarity brings strangers

together to form new bonds. Or we could think of examples in Te Ao Māori, Kingitanga has provided some moving examples recently of Māori and Pakeha coming together.

I make a case in my new book, "The Enemy Within: The Human Cost Of State Surveillance in Aotearoa/New Zealand" (Potton and Burton)³ that we do not need the NZSIS or the GCSB which, in my view, are responsible for more harm than good. Think of our New Zealand experience with terrorism. For example, the bomb in the Wellington Trades Hall which killed caretaker Ernie Abbott, the attack on Christchurch mosques in 2019 and the bombing of the *Rainbow Warrior*, which agency played the major role in bringing (or attempting to bring) the perpetrators to justice? In each case it was the New Zealand Police.

There are lots of legitimate criticisms of our Police and justice systems, but these institutions are far more accountable and transparent than the NZSIS. Their actions can be scrutinised and there are even times when their failures are openly acknowledged. I am thinking of the 2007 police raid on the Ngāi Tūhoe community in Te Urewera, and the subsequent Police Commissioner apology seven years later.

Many people had their very private lives intruded on by the NZSIS,

careers were derailed as "terrorists" and "subversives" were wrongly and completely unjustifiably identified by the NZSIS. Ahmed Zaoui lost his freedom for nearly six years on spurious charges and an NZSIS Security Risk Certificate. Only a determined and highly informed few were able to achieve any kind of apology or compensation for the wrong done – Nicky Hager, David Small and Aziz Choudry among them.

Why Look To SIS For Protection?

Many others never knew they were being spied on or that their employers had been told of their supposedly "subversive" connections. The origins of the NZSIS go back to the 1920s when specialist police were assigned to identify and monitor communists and a myriad of other Left and progressive organisations which were seen as communist fronts. Over the decades the surveillance net has scooped up Esperanto enthusiasts, rationalists, civil libertarians and, of course, peace and anti-base activists.

I don't believe "that was then, this is now" applies. The 2024 report talks about "communities with connections to regions in conflict or to places where their family and friends are subject to violent targeting or subversion". With far-Right forces on the rise here as around the world, it is likely that some expat communities do feel vulnerable. But should individuals turn to the unaccountable and secretive NZSIS for protection? I don't think so.

Endnotes

- 1: <https://www.nzsiv.govt.nz/assets/NZSIS-Documents/New-Zealands-Security-Threat-Environment-2024.pdf>
- 2: <https://overland.org.au/2024/01/statement-in-support-of-academic-freedom-on-israel-and-palestine-in-aotearoa-new-zealand/>
- 3: <https://www.pottonandburton.co.nz/product/the-enemy-within/>

AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

Govt Cans New Spy Agency

While telling the public that it was still considering the recommendation of the 2019 Christchurch Mosque Royal Commission report to set up a major new spook organisation for this country, the Government had already abandoned the idea (*RNZ*, 8/8/24). Documents released in August 2024 indicated the Prime Minister had decided against it to avoid "the complexities and costs" of creating a new spy infrastructure although Judith Collins' office stated in May that the proposal was still in process.

The Government has chosen to maintain the current national security structure led by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). It has justified its actions by citing "significant improvements" within DPMC since 2020. Some critics, including the Kāpuia Ministerial Advisory Group and groups representing victims of the Christchurch shootings, argue that the changes are insufficient to address systemic issues.

Peace Researcher (PR) strongly agrees with these critics. Although the spy agencies have apparently made significant changes since 2019, they have also continued to expand their powers and influence in Government. They have surely played a major role in persuading the Luxon/Peters/Seymour triumvirate to go with business as usual.

The Government decision rejected eight of the 44 recommendations from the Christchurch Royal Commission, including setting up an advisory board on counterterrorism. Collins claimed "we are in a fiscally constrained environment. However, this was not the driver for the decisions Ministers made..." and the intent was to make this country... "safer and more secure" (*RNZ*, *ibid.*).

The Royal Commission found that our spooks had ignored the far Right, were fixated on Muslim threats, and not doing a good job prior to the March 2019 attacks. It recommended establishment of a national intelligence and security agency (NISA) that would be more independent. According to *RNZ*, the Kāpuia ministerial advisory group told the Government on 28 May it wanted a NISA set up, and "strong monitoring, performance and oversight mechanisms in place for national security agencies" (*RNZ*, *ibid.*).

Presumably the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) and the Security Intelligence Service (SIS) themselves, defending their home ground, had a major role in the decision to ignore the recommendation for a new organisation. Critics say a new combined national security agency was needed to provide for greater community input and accountability, as well as better perform a monitoring role of national security efforts. The battle for proper oversight of the spooks, and the war to replace them with more publicly accountable and democratic organisations, goes on.

The DPMC

The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) is an agency that works directly for the Prime Minister, and is located within the Beehive. It made internal changes to the management of national security in December 2023, appointing Bridget White as Executive Director of National Security. White is a former director of strategy at the GCSB, and former Deputy Public Service Commissioner.

DPMC is reported to have restructured the National Security Group within itself, separating out "risk, governance, and crisis management" work. White now leads the refreshed group which, according to a Department spokesperson, focuses on national security policy, assessments and "core issue co-ordination", including that determined by the country's first national security strategy.

Spies' IG OKs NZ Spying

In recent years *PR* has frequently raised questions about this coun-

try's role and participation in Five Eyes covert activities overseas. After 9/11 we engaged in, or benefitted from, atrocities carried out by Western intelligence operatives. More recently *PR* has questioned the stationing of NZ personnel overseas who participate in the location, targeting, and extra-judicial execution of people designated "terrorists".

RNZ reported (9/10/24) that the Inspector-General (IG) of Intelligence and Security, Brendan Horsley, has rejected a request for an inquiry into whether the GCSB and/or the SIS may be aiding international crimes in Gaza. A submission by three New Zealand lawyers asked the IG for an inquiry into whether New Zealand spying is abusing human rights responsibilities by helping Israel's assault on Gaza.

But Horsley said he believed the ways the agencies assess human rights risks in their information sharing "provide reasonable safeguards" against abuse. He said he has previously looked at their processes, and would continue to track their activities. He added he did not want to commit his office's "modest resources" to review activity around fast-changing armed conflicts, confirming *PR*'s belief that oversight of the spooks is not sufficiently well resourced to do the job.

More concerning is the statement that no legal or propriety issues had been found: "... for any intelligence sharing that could relate to current international conflicts, including the situation in Israel, Gaza, Yemen, Lebanon, and the wider Middle East" (*RNZ*, *ibid.*). What "intelligence sharing" can his tiny organisation access? Horsley's office is under resourced.

Any documents relating to Five Eyes' big brothers will probably be refused to him, even if he finds out about them. Such information will have top security classifications. We remain completely in the dark about what various personnel, from various branches of NZ military and security organisations, are really doing when they are posted to Five Eyes bases in the Middle East and elsewhere.



Mike Moreu, 9.4.16

SIS Not Under Proper Control

Over all the years *PR* has been published, one of the most consistent themes has been the unacceptable range of the activities of the Security Intelligence Service and the lack of real oversight. Nothing changes. In March 2024 the Inspector General (IG) for the spooks warned that the SIS has too much leeway to decide who it places under "highly intrusive" surveillance (*RNZ*, 27/3/24).

At issue is the utilisation of "class warrants" which Anti-Bases Campaign (ABC) complained about in submissions to the Government during one of several legislative remodellings of the last decade. IG Brendan Horsley's report described what he said was a relatively new approach the spy agency has taken towards obtaining "class" warrants, allowing them to spy on anyone who fits within criteria that fail to be sufficiently specific. Legislative changes in 2017 (the Intelligence and Security Act) extended the agencies' powers and allowed the spooks to use more intrusive techniques against anyone fitting a "class" definition.

Horsley's report states that three warrants issued to the SIS in 2022 and 2023 for surveillance of suspected terrorists and violent ex-

tremists involved: "Using class warrants to avoid individual applications [which] might be convenient but, in my view, it is not a proper application of the warrant regime" (*RNZ*, *ibid.*). Before the law was changed in 2017, the SIS was required to seek individual warrants to place people under close surveillance. This meant putting a specific person under surveillance had to be signed off by someone outside the SIS.

Horsley throws a bone to the spooks in saying that they were "reasonably cautious" about what they did in these surveillance operations, but the first two warrants did not meet the Act's requirements for "necessity and proportionality". More importantly, he says that there is a serious issue about who gets to decide whether these warrants should be issued.

The Crown Law Office supported the SIS (which is a worry) although it concluded some definitions at issue were too broad. However, in a key statement the IG responded that: "In my view there should be a preference for individual warrants". As ever, *PR* does not expect this significant conclusion will bring any re-examination of the laws governing the SIS, or have any real impact on the activities of the organisation.

SIS Cautioned Re Investigating "Fringe Movements"

In August 2024 the IG expressed concern that the SIS, when investigating "extremism", in some cases had no records which showed why those under investigation had been targeted. Although Horsley said there seemed to be some care taken when assessing extremism and identifying individuals or groups of concern, he was not happy that there was no record of the careful consideration that should have taken place before any more action was taken (*RNZ*, 22/8/24).

His report stated that there should be no appearance of singling out groups and people for attention purely because they have expressed strong or unorthodox views, and recommended that the SIS be required to expressly consider the laws around freedom of expression before embarking on such work. Again, don't discontinue your aerobic processes!

SIS Threats Report

At the beginning of September 2024, the SIS released its public assessment of threats to this country. Unusually, one threat highlighted is the risk to national security from disgruntled Government employees or those in desperate need

of extra cash. Intentional or unintentional harm caused by people in positions of trust in public or private organisations is a big concern.

But the usual suspects are all there: foreign states conducting interference and espionage in and against New Zealand and New Zealanders including foreign interference and espionage, risks from the developing cold war in the Indo-Pacific, and the perennial potential for violent extremism or another lone-wolf terror attack. The countries accused of foreign interference or spying are reported as a “small number”.

No connection is suggested between NZ military relationships and the interference and spying, even though there is a complex situation because of “... global factors ... which are impacting on New Zealand's national security” (RNZ, 3/9/24). *PR* tends to express some cynicism about SIS threat assessments; after all, they justify the organisation's existence and its budget, and history tells us the SIS has not been particularly discriminating in deciding who might represent a danger.

We note that Director-General of Security Hampton did state that in terms of possible local-based violence the most concerning aspect was the white-based identity extremists. So, remembering the 2019 Christchurch mosques attack, it is discomfoting when the SIS

assert that “increasingly”, they “... see individuals whom we assess to support violence from a mixed, unstable, or unclear ideological outlook” (RNZ, *ibid.*). See *Maire Leadbeater's article “New Zealand's Security Threat Assessment”, elsewhere in this issue. Ed*

PSA Denounces Job Cuts That Weaken Security

The Public Service Association (PSA) believes the 7% cost-cutting demanded by the Government will mean this country has less capability to identify and counter threats to our security. Spokesperson Fleur Fitzsimons said the Government has dismissed experts at the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) who work on online harm, foreign interference and digital espionage. "This will undermine our ability as a country to respond to these threats" (RNZ, 3/9/24).

The PSA believes the recent SIS threat report makes it clear that there needs to be increased focus to ensure staff were aware of the practical actions they should take to stay safe from foreign interference and digital espionage. Fitzsimons said she understood the training in this area was "quite patchy" and that needs to change because this undermines our ability as a country to respond to these threats.

ior staff after current and former MPs from the cross-party Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC) group complained they were not told about hacks targeting members of the group. Which begs the question how much use a review by “senior staff” of the secretive organisation is.

GCSB Deputy Director-General Lisa Fong claimed the review went wider than that specific attack, and there was no indication the hack had been successful. "The NCSC did not identify any information to indicate the activity resulted in a successful cyber security compromise but did identify a number of phishing emails sent to Parliamentary email addresses," Fong said in a statement (RNZ, *ibid.*).

The review found that the National Cyber Security Centre's focus was on “nationally significant organisations' networks”, which seems to be its excuse for not informing MPs that their systems were under attack. It also recommended new guidance for staff to bring cyber-attacks to the attention of other agencies, and consider "some form of engagement with individuals who may have been targeted by foreign State-sponsored malicious cyber actors". In 2023 the NCSC merged with New Zealand's Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT NZ). The GCSB dominates the organisation and it is an open question how much information on cyber- attacks is managed for the spy agency's “national security” agenda rather than the interests of the Aotearoa/NZ public.

Details of Appropriations and Capital Injections
GCSB Annual Appropriations and Forecast Permanent Appropriations

	2023/24	2024/25	
	Final Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
Titles and Scopes of Appropriations by Appropriation Type			
Intelligence and Security Department Expenses and Capital Expenditure			
Communications Security and Intelligence (M60) (A9) This appropriation is limited to the operating and investing activities of the Government Communications Security Bureau.	402,163	321,000	341,255
Total Intelligence and Security Department Expenses and Capital Expenditure	402,163	321,000	341,255
Total Annual Appropriations and Forecast Permanent Appropriations	402,163	321,000	341,255

More Kiwi Soldiers For South Korea

A message sent to *PR* by the NZ Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK i.e. North Korea) Society reveals that "the NZ Defence Force is sending a further 41 personnel to the so-called 'United Nations Command' (UNC) in South Korea" to "support peace and stability and the international rules-based system in the Indo-Pacific region, and on the Korean Peninsula in particular". The DPRK Society notes that what we are looking at here is incredible military mission creep. NZ first assigned three personnel to the UNC in 1998. Some years later this was increased to six, and then to nine in 2020, 12 in 2022 and now 53 in 2024.

The group says that sending more NZ troops will add to the tension and put peace and stability at risk because the UNC is not a legal entity and is not controlled by the UN. It is a name that the USA has given to one of its military units and three UN Secretaries General have stated that the UNC has nothing to do with the UN and the General Assembly has passed a resolution stating:

"That it is necessary to dissolve the 'United Nations Command' and withdraw all the foreign troops stationed in South Korea under the flag of the United Nations". The message ends: Please have a look at Tim Beal's article "False Flag: Asian NATO Under A New Guise" which points out how the UNC is being used by the USA as a vehicle for mission creep by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation into the Pacific region. <https://johnmenadue.com/false-flag-asian-nato-under-a-new-guise/>

UK

UK Spying On Young Activists

A public inquiry into undercover policing in the UK is examining how Police deployed about 139 undercover officers to spy on more than 1,000 political groups between

1968 and at least 2010. One undercover Police officer has admitted that he spied on the current British Prime Minister in the (long gone) days when Keir Starmer was a young radical lawyer. The Police spy has said that he accessed confidential details of the legal advice that Starmer was giving to two environmentalist campaigners he was defending in the 1990s.

John Dines, who infiltrated anarchist and environmental groups between 1987 and 1991, has revealed he formed a two-year intimate relationship with Helen Steel, a defendant in a long-running libel case. Dines concealed from her the fact that he was employed by the Special Demonstration Squad (SDS), a covert Scotland Yard unit, and conveyed confidential legal advice to his superiors.

In those days Starmer had a reputation as a civil liberties barrister, and was giving free legal advice to two people sued for libel by McDonald's over a leaflet they had distributed criticising the company's practices. Starmer also supported striking trade unionists and prisoners who had been sentenced to death around the world.

Dave Morris, one of the defendants in the McDonald's case, cited evidence to the inquiry showing that the Police secretly passed information about the campaigners to McDonald's. He alleged the Police secretly shared Starmer's confidential legal advice and other information with McDonald's which gave the corporation an advantage in the legal battle (*Guardian* and other media, 15/10/24).

UK Naval Secrets At Mar-a-Lago?

"I was reliably informed by impeccable sources that among the classified documents which Trump, apparently unauthorisedly, took with him to Mar-a-Lago at the end of his Presidency were British naval secrets, some of the most sensitive ones in our governmental system," former UK spook, Christopher Steele says (*Guardian*, 8/10/24).

The UK Ministry of Defence responded by saying Steele's claims were untrue. Steele did not state what the "naval secrets" related to. A former senior MI6 agent, Steele

became famous as the author of a dossier revealing Donald Trump's links to Russia shortly after the 2016 US election. The accuracy of the dossier has been a topic of heated debate, but the investigation of special counsel Robert Mueller found Russia interfered in the election to boost Trump, and detailed extensive links between the former President and Moscow. And recently Trump lost the court case where he sued Steele and was ordered to pay costs.

PR does not imply Trump is in any way an agent of Moscow, but marvels at the man's self-centred stupidity. The *Guardian* article reminds us that Trump was also reported to have discussed US nuclear submarines at Mar-a-Lago with an Australian billionaire who then shared the information with associates.

Trump also illegally kept hundreds of classified documents in a bathroom at his Florida home after losing the Presidency in 2020. Federal indictments over this incredible dereliction of security (Mar-a-Lago was visited by all kinds of people, including some suspected of having links to foreign powers) were thrown out by a Florida judge appointed by Trump.

The *Guardian* reports that in his new book, "Steele discusses the reported occasion in May 2017 when Trump shared 'top secret intelligence', allegedly about an Israeli asset working inside the terrorist group ISIS, with Sergei Lavrov, the Russian Foreign Minister. Sources, Steele says, believe Russia told Iran, which tipped off ISIS, leading to the death of the asset" (ibid.).

GCHQ Glorifies Bude

Recently the UK Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), the huge British communications spy agency (and big sister to our GCSB) celebrated 100 years activity on its site in Cornwall: "200 feet up on the cliffs of Sharpnose Point in North Cornwall, GCHQ Bude continues to play a critical part in GCHQ's mission; collecting the essential data that underpins GCHQ's operations".

Starting in 1974 with just two 97-foot antennas, the site has since grown to 30 antennas. "Today,

GCHQ Bude remains absolutely central to everything we do as an organisation” (*GCHQ Website*, 16/9/24). It notes that besides the enormous site at Bude, it also operates offices at Harrogate (its biggest site, Menwith Hill), Manchester, London, Lincolnshire and Scarborough. “The operatives working at GCHQ Bude regularly work alongside MI5 and the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) to thwart threats to our national security,” we

tical tap device which is inserted into numerous international cables near Bude at a submarine cable repeater station (*Wikipedia*, retrieved 14/10/24). *PR* has noted many stories of unacceptable and/or abusive Five Eyes operations based on this kind of data, not least the renditions referred to in other sections of this edition of *Spooky Bits*.

Wikipedia describes the basic op-

data for the Echelon signals intelligence (SIGINT) network. Comparable stations in operation include Menwith Hill (UK), Sugar Grove (West Virginia, US), Yakima (Washington, US), Sabana Seca (Puerto Rico), Misawa (Japan), Pine Gap (Australia), Geraldton (Australia), GCSB Waihopai (New Zealand) and GCSB Tangimoana* (New Zealand) that cover other INTEL SAT areas such as South America and the Pacific



Chagossians protest outside London court. In 1968 the UK removed all the people from Diego Garcia to enable creation of a huge US base.

are told, but this is only the public relations side of the story.

PR readers will know that the ultra-secret site intercepts astronomical amounts of data, seizing any communications it wants to, with little regard for privacy legislation or human rights. The US National Security Agency (NSA) paid for most of the infrastructure and the technology, and there are significant questions about the use of the intercepted data. From its inception, the station has been an Anglo-American cooperative project.

In a British TV documentary, communications experts explained how mirror images of the signals running down submarine Ethernet cables are used to gather and analyse data. The programme claimed that this procedure involves an op-

erations of the facility: The station comprises 21* satellite antennae of various sizes including three that have a diameter of 30m, that could theoretically cover all the main frequency bands: L band, C band, K_u band, X band, K_a band and V band. Calculated on the basis of their position, their elevation and their compass (azimuth) angle, the antennae are generally orientated towards satellites of the INTEL SAT, Interspunik and INMA SAT communications networks over the Atlantic Ocean, Africa and the Indian Ocean, as well as towards the Middle East and mainland Europe.

Staff are drawn from GCHQ (UK) and the NSA (US) and the station is operated under the UKUSA agreement, gathering

Ocean (*Note: the GCHQ says 30 antennae, and the NZ GCSB base in this country is not now used for frontline communications intercept operations as far as *PR* is aware).

UK Fudges Past Injustice

Westminster has found a way around a historically embarrassing problem inherited from colonial days and founded on the grim determination to hang onto significant military bases far from the British homeland. The UK and Mauritius have signed a political agreement on the future of the Chagos Islands. In 1968, more than 1,000 islanders were forcibly removed at the request of the US which resulted in the massive US-UK military operations based on Diego Garcia today.

Besides ceding governance to Mauritius, the agreement provides assistance for the inhabitants forced from their homes to return to what has been called Britain's last African colony. In 2019 the International Court of Justice said the UK was "under an obligation to bring to an end its administration of the Chagos Archipelago as rapidly as possible" (*Político*, 3/10/24). The huge American base on Diego Garcia will be untouched while Mauritius will implement a programme of resettlement on all the other nearby islands, with the UK providing financial support for infrastructure projects to boost economic development on the islands.

Diego Garcia

Diego Garcia is an enormously important base, because of its position near the centre of the Indian Ocean and the facilities it has: port, storage and airfield. The nearest UK facility is some 3,400km away, and for the US, nearly 4,800km, with the island also an important location for space tracking and observation capabilities. Tankers operating from Diego Garcia refuelled US B-2 bombers that had flown from the US to carry out the first airstrikes on Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks.

During the "war on terror", aircraft were also sent directly from the island itself to Afghanistan and Iraq. Rumours have long swirled about the uses of Diego Garcia, including that it has been used as a CIA black-site - a facility used to house and interrogate terror suspects. The UK government confirmed in 2008 that rendition flights carrying terror suspects had landed on the island in 2002, following years of assurances that they had not (this information above comes from a very interesting take on the current situation on Diego Garcia: "What I Found On The Secretive Tropical Island They Don't Want You To See", Alice Cuddy, *BBC*, 30/9/24).

Diego Garcia is a tightly guarded area only accessible to US military personnel. It is a base for US Navy maritime patrol aircraft and especially US Air Force (USAF) heavy bombers. Many potential conflict locations are within unrefuelled combat range of B-1B and B-52H bombers (B-2 bombers, with an advertised combat range of 6,000 nautical miles, have been deployed to Diego Garcia in the past). USAF

bombers and tankers have conducted combat missions in support of US combat operations throughout Southwest Asia since 1991.

The base has a wharf and facilities suitable for an aircraft carrier, and the lagoon provides anchorages for other warships and ships loaded with prepositioned equipment. The US Navy often stations a submarine tender and a repair and logistics ship to support deployed attack submarines. It is also an isolated site where the Pentagon can test emerging technology and concepts.

US

NOTE: Some material in this section of Spooky Bits may be disturbing

Israel Accused Of Horrific Torture

Officials from Washington's main humanitarian agency attend daily meetings on an Israeli military base, Sde Teiman, that also hosts a notorious prison for Palestinian detainees. Human rights groups and released detainees say the thousands of Palestinians who have been through the facility have been subjected to severe abuse and torture (*Guardian*, 14/10/24).

Israel's humanitarian relief hub began operating at the desert military base Sde Teiman in July 2024. The site hosts regular meetings with officials from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), which has the job of facilitating urgently needed humanitarian assistance to Gaza. "I can't sleep at night knowing that it's going on," one US official told the *Guardian*. *PR* notes that in the past the CIA often used US aid organisations for covert operations, but no-one has so far suggested this.

Sde Teiman was set up as a temporary holding facility for detainees from Gaza after the 7 October 2023 Hamas attack and the ensuing war. *Wikipedia* has had articles which feature photos of blindfolded Palestinian prisoners and details their mistreatment. A *New York Times* story (6/6/24) reported that 4,000 Palestinians had been through the prison since 7 October. At least 35 died, either at the site

or nearby hospitals. According to the *NYT*, prisoners are blindfolded and handcuffed and detained without charges or any legal representation.

Guantanamo Bay Abuse Continues

Three men accused of plotting the 11 September 2001 attacks on the US have pleaded guilty to a number of offences, including the murder of the 2,976 people, in exchange for the prosecution agreeing not to seek the death penalty. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Walid Muhammad Salih Mubarak Bin Attash and Mustafa Ahmed Adam al-Hawsawi have been held at the US Navy base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for years without going to trial.

Brett Eagleson, the President of 9/11 Justice, an organisation that represents 9/11 survivors and relatives of victims, has said the families are "deeply troubled by these plea deals". Some felt the plea was a victory for the accused (*BBC News*, 2/8/24). Eagleson told the BBC the process lacked transparency and urged the authorities to pursue more information on the role of Saudi Arabia in the attacks (15 of the 19 plane hijackers were Saudi nationals and families are bringing a lawsuit against the kingdom, which denies any involvement).

Mohammed was a US-educated engineer captured along with Hawsawi in Pakistan in March 2003. He is accused of inspiring the idea of hijacking and flying planes into US buildings, and helping recruit and train some of the hijackers. Which can never justify being held for 21 years without trial, and being subjected to a number of "enhanced interrogation techniques", including waterboarding - simulated drowning - at least 183 times.

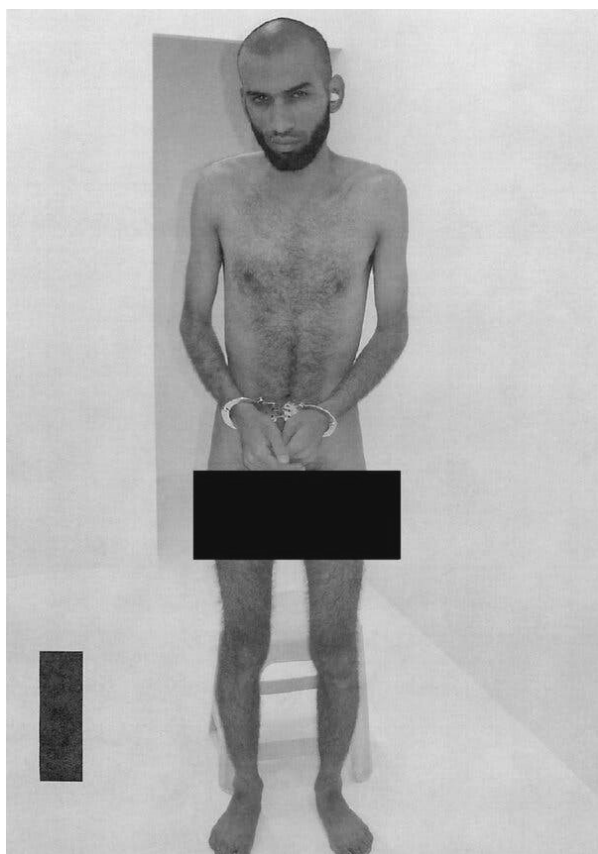
The whole story of "the war on terror" which followed 9/11 is a litany of abuse by the Five Eyes countries, and the rendition, torture and abuse of human rights involved is an appalling saga that should not be forgotten. *Spooky Bits* has regularly run stories related to these events. This is not to whitewash the fact that a few of the hundreds of men incarcerated in Guantanamo Bay were nasty characters, but

to remind readers that our own NZ spooks played a peripheral, and yet to be fully revealed, part in the story.

Awful Evidence

Lawyers in the case described above have released a single photo taken by the CIA of one of their prisoners, Ammar al-Baluchi, showing what the *New York Times* describes as “his gaunt, malnourished naked body”, around 2004 at an overseas prison (NYT, 2/8/24). This is the first photo ever released of a CIA prisoner at one of their many “black sites”. It was first published by the *Guardian* on 4/8/24. An image of Ammar al-Baluchi taken by the CIA at an overseas prison circa 2004 was recently declassified by the Government.

Baluchi did not accept the plea deal described above, and is facing the death penalty. He was captured in Pakistan in 2003 with another accused conspirator, Walid bin Attash. Baluchi has been seeking treatment at Guantánamo for the torture he suffered in CIA custody, including a traumatic brain injury. Some inmates had their heads banged against walls during CIA “training” of interrogators.



CIA photo of Ammar al-Baluchi, circa 2004, at “black site”

Previously some pictures of US troops abusing prisoners in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001, were leaked, including from the Army-run Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq in 2004. The one shown here is the first to have ever emerged from one of the CIA black sites. In 2005 the CIA destroyed videotape of interrogations at a black site in Thailand to make sure they were never seen. One of those involved was later appointed Director of the Agency!

FISA Again

Unusually, *PR* finds itself agreeing with a Rightist organisation, the libertarian Cato Institute, which is suing the American government for withholding information sought under the Freedom of Information Act. The Cato Institute, alongside an unusual coalition of civil liberties groups, requested records dealing with audits of the Government's compliance with Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, or FISA (*Huffington Post*, 4/10/24).

Section 702 allows US agencies to keep tabs on communications of foreigners abroad but has also caught communications between Americans and foreign nationals that had nothing to do with anti-terror probes, leading critics to label it “warrantless surveillance”. FISA has appeared in previous issues of *PR* because it has to be permitted by Congress at frequent intervals and renewal is hotly contested by privacy advocates. In April 2024, these groups demanded a dramatic overhauling of the law, or allowing the law to lapse. The spooks claim disabling the law would be dangerous for “national security”, and won again as a two-year renewal was signed into law.

Your Car Is Spying On You

In a previous *Spooky Bits*, we reported that a car company had been using the tech equipment in its cars to record

information on the driver, or anyone using their phone through the car system. Now General Motors (GM) has been sued by the state of Texas, which accuses the automaker of installing technology on more than 14 million vehicles to collect data about drivers, which it then sells to insurers and other companies without drivers' consent (*Reuters*, 13/8/24).

Never thought that *PR* would end up on the same side as the far Right Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton! He said GM led customers to believe that enrolling in its On-Star diagnostic products, which collected the data, was mandatory. The data, which included driving faults, was then sold to insurers and other companies without the drivers' consent. The technology used has been installed on most GM cars since 2016.

Green Beret Behind Venezuela Coup Attempt

A former US Green Beret who in 2020 led a group of Venezuelan army deserters to try to remove President Nicolás Maduro has been arrested in New York on federal arms smuggling charges. Jordan Goudreau and a female partner, Yacsy Alvarez, face federal charges of illegal arms smuggling. They allegedly assembled and sent to Colombia semi-automatic weapons, ammunition, silencers, night vision goggles and other defence equipment requiring a US export licence. Other ex-Green Berets were involved in the preparations.

The coup plotters went forward despite significant setbacks in what the Associated Press (AP, 1/8/24) described as a “comical, if tragic, way”. Media reports labelled it the “Bay of Piglets,” in reference to the CIA's 1961 anti-Castro fiasco in Cuba. Whether Washington's spooks had any pre-knowledge of the attempted coup, or encouraged it, is unknown. The “attack” was easily defeated by Venezuela's security forces, which had infiltrated the group.

If convicted, Goudreau and Alvarez face between five and 20 years in prison for each of the violations in the indictment (AP, *ibid.*). Media reports (e.g. *NBC*, 5/9/24) more recently said a federal judge has granted the accused bail, rejecting

arguments he would flee while awaiting trial on the weapons smuggling charges. Which seems a very lenient official procedure for serious arms smuggling charges.

ISRAEL

Israeli Dirty Tricks

Techopedia (26/7/24) reported that a 2019 US lawsuit against NSO Group over the Pegasus spyware (used by some governments to spy on their citizens), was obstructed by Israeli authorities. The widely employed Pegasus spyware is a product of NSO Group. The *Techopedia* story is based on a leaked court order obtained by a nonprofit group called Forbidden Stories.

Israel is reported to have confiscated Pegasus spyware documents from NSO in July 2020 to make sure it couldn't comply with a WhatsApp demand that it turn over internal Pegasus files. WhatsApp

claimed that NSO exploited a vulnerability to help countries snoop on over 1,400 users in the space of two weeks. WhatsApp requested the data in June 2020. The following month, the Israeli government obtained a search warrant that let it seize potentially revealing files.

Pegasus spyware is often used by unscrupulous and/or murderous government agencies. The programme infects a target's phone and sends back data, including photos, messages, and audio/video recordings. NSO Group claims the software can't be traced back to the government using it, so is ideal for black ops. One usage may have been tracking operations related to murdered Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi

Major Israeli Intelligence Failure

The Israeli spooks have an international reputation for effectiveness and success (and, less mentioned, brutality). But the failure to foresee the Hamas attack in October 2023 was a major failure. At a counter-

terrorism conference months before the attack, David Barnea, head of Mossad, Israel's main foreign intelligence service, did not mention Hamas in a speech about potential threats to the country.

When concerned local military commanders ordered assessments, and hundreds of Israeli SIM (subscriber identity module) cards suddenly were connected to Israeli networks in the early hours of 7 October, 2023, Shin Bet, Israel's domestic security service, sent only a small team to the border (*Guardian*, 7/10/24).

Being attacked on a holiday (not the first time!) and the faith placed in the supposedly impregnable billion-dollar fence built around the territory were other issues. Although several senior military and intelligence officers resigned, Benjamin Netanyahu, the fascist Israeli Prime Minister, has avoided accepting responsibility. We should note again; no matter how much is spent on spies and spying, or how ruthlessly clandestine operations are carried out, major cockups are inevitable.

WEST'S "DEMOCRACIES" PUSHING WORLD TO CATASTROPHE

- Kay Weir

(PIRMeditor@gmail.com)

We live in perilous times, with major wars expanding in the Middle East and in Ukraine's American-backed war against Russia. A third war simmers in the background with America provoking China over Taiwan, which legally is part of China. The present wars and conflict would quickly end without sustained funding, propaganda, weapons and military "intelligence" from America and its allies.

While America and its European allies claim to be "democratic" models, supporting human rights, justice and the rule of law, in reality they have, over decades, flagrantly violated international law, justice and human rights, attacking countries in wars of aggression that killed millions of people. One of many who have documented the appalling Western wars is Australian statistician, Gideon Polya, in his book "US-Imposed Post-9/11 Muslim Holocaust & Muslim Genocide".

There's now a widespread concern among informed commentators that the present wars carry the risk of rapidly escalating to a global nuclear war, devastating for all life on Earth. With our nuclear-free and independent foreign policy, surely, it's time for Aotearoa's voice to be heard in the world again on clear and present danger of nuclear annihilation? Israel has nuclear weapons as has America and its European allies, Russia, China and North Korea, and India and Pakistan.

But our nuclear-free policy looks to be a threatened species, sidelined, silenced when it's most needed. The recent reshaping of New Zealand's foreign policy with no public consultation by our new Coalition Government should be of great concern. Prime Minister Luxon, speaking at a Lowy Institute conference in Sydney on August 16

(2024), said he believed the days of New Zealand's "independent foreign policy" were over. Geoffrey Miller reports: "He 'gently' mocked the idea of an independent foreign policy, describing it as 'a nonsense'."²

How naive and ignorant can our Prime Minister be to rubbish the importance to the world of our independent, nuclear-free policy? Excellent past NZ governments drew attention to long-lasting devastation and pollution of pristine Pacific islands by America, France and Britain's arrogant experiments with nuclear weapons on pristine Pacific Islands. Dangers of nuclear weapons and war are growing today. Aotearoa must find its voice to oppose nuclear weapons again.

PART 1 – THE MIDDLE EAST

Western Powers Permit Israel's Genocidal War On Palestinians

Israel wages brutal war on Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, bombs apartment blocks, hospitals and schools, killing, injuring and starving civilians in refugee camps, or wherever people try to shelter from incessant attacks. Gaza is turning into rubble, with tens of thousands of uncounted bodies buried under destroyed buildings.

Israel's continual evacuation orders have displaced 90% of the region's 2.1 million residents, according to a United Nations official in August 2024 (<https://www.newsweek.com/topic/united-nations>).³ Evacuations have resulted in many residents being unable to access food, medicines, water, or soap, so diseases are running rife amongst starving, displaced Palestinians. Residents

are "running from one destroyed place to another, with no end in sight" due to evacuation orders.

In August 2024, Volker Türk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights reported: "Today marks a grim milestone for the world. The people of Gaza are now grieving 40,000 Palestinian lives lost, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. Most of the dead are women and children. This unimaginable situation is overwhelmingly due to recurring failures by Israel's Defense Force (IDF) to comply with the rules of war. On average, about 130 people have been killed every day in Gaza over the past ten months".⁴

So why aren't Western countries, who say they support human rights and the rules-based order, not responding to the UN High Commissioner's report by demanding that Israel stops deliberately targeting civilians, which violates the rules of war? They should then be prepared to sanction Israel if it does not do this.

In reality the number of deaths in Gaza is almost certainly more than four times greater than the estimates from Gaza's overloaded Health Ministry. The UK medical journal, the *Lancet*, reported on July 20: "Applying a conservative estimate of four indirect deaths per one direct death to the 37,396 deaths reported, it is not implausible to estimate that up to 186,000 or even more deaths could be attributable to the current conflict in Gaza".⁵

NZ's Foreign Affairs Minister Winston Peters, to his credit,

gave a speech at the UN on April 9 accusing the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) of failing in its responsibility and calling the war in Gaza “an utter catastrophe”. The *NZ Herald* reported the veto, available to deny passage of UNSC resolutions only by one of the five permanent members, has been used five times since the start of the war, preventing decisive action in ending the catastrophe. The article might have reported that the veto was cast by the US. Minister Peters also criticised Israel for expanding its illegal settlements into the occupied territories, saying “the misguided notion must end”.⁶

Although American-led allies, including Aotearoa’s government, say Hamas started the war with a “horrific attack” on Israelis on 7 October 2023, the claims are not true. The vile atrocity propaganda that Hamas killed babies and raped women has been shown to be false in investigations by the *Grayzone*’s Max Blumenthal⁷ and by the *Intercept*.⁸

Claims are still widely repeated that Hamas killed 1,200 Israelis on 7 October, 2023. This number is not correct, although widely repeated. Aside from the 376 deaths of Israeli security forces, legitimate as an occupying force (see below), many of the 767 Israeli civilians were killed by IDF over-reaction or inaction.⁹

Another rarely acknowledged aspect is that Hamas, which is demonised by Israel and US-led Western countries, is a socio-political organisation that has a military wing to defend Palestinians. It has the legal right under international law to resist Israel as an occupying force, internationally acknowledged over 40 years ago in the 1979 United Nations review “Right of Self-Determination of the Palestinian People”.¹⁰

Long before Israel’s mass bombing of Gaza from October 2023, Palestinians were already suffering from Israel’s illegal 17-year-old air, sea and land blockade and repeated cycles of attacks on civilians. As journalist Jonathan Cook reported, the Hamas attack on 7 October, 2023, was a long overdue response to concentration prison camp conditions of deprivation in Gaza. Palestinians have lived for decades without basic essential

supplies in an illegal enforced siege. By any measure Israel’s crimes are far worse than Hamas’.¹¹

American Healthcare Volunteers’ Letter: Israel’s Military Targets Children

In March 2024, 99 American healthcare workers wrote a letter to America’s President Biden and Vice President Harris, documenting horrors they witnessed while working in Gaza. Many of these professionals had experience in other war zones, but nothing prepared them for the overwhelming suffering they witnessed in Gaza. Below are extracts from this letter.

“We urge you to realise that epidemics are raging in Gaza. Israel’s continued, repeated displacement of the malnourished and sick population of Gaza, half of whom are children, to areas without running water or even toilets available is absolutely shocking. It was and remains guaranteed to result in widespread death from viral and bacterial diarrheal diseases and pneumonias, particularly in children under five”.

“Even the dreaded polio virus has reemerged in Gaza due to a combination of systematic destruction of the sanitation infrastructure, widespread malnutrition weakening immune systems, and young children having missed routine vaccinations for nearly an entire year. We worry that unknown thousands have already died from the lethal combination of malnutrition and disease, and that tens of thousands more will die in the coming months, especially with the onset of the winter rains in Gaza. Most of them will be young children”.

“Children are universally considered innocents in armed conflict. However, *every single signatory* to this letter saw children in Gaza who suffered violence that *must* have been deliberately directed at them. Every one of us who worked in an emergency, intensive care, or surgical setting treated pre-teen children who were shot in the head or chest *on a regular or even a daily basis*. It is impossible that such widespread shooting of young children throughout Gaza, sustained over the course of an entire year, is acci-

dental or unknown to the highest Israeli civilian and military authorities”.

“President Biden and Vice President Harris, we wish you could see the nightmares that plague so many of us since we have returned: dreams of children maimed and mutilated by our weapons, and their inconsolable mothers begging us to save them. We wish you could hear the cries and screams our consciences will not let us forget. We cannot fathom why you continue arming the country that is deliberately killing these children *en masse*”.

“The pregnant and breastfeeding women we treated were particularly malnourished. Those of us who worked with pregnant women regularly saw stillbirths and maternal deaths that were easily preventable in any developing country’s healthcare system. The rate of infection in C-section incisions was astonishing. Women underwent vaginal deliveries and even C-sections without anesthesia and were given nothing but Tylenol afterwards because no other pain medications were available. We all observed emergency departments overwhelmed by patients seeking treatment for chronic medical conditions such as renal failure, hypertension, and diabetes.

“Aside from trauma patients, most intensive care unit (ICU) beds were occupied by patients with type 1 diabetes who no longer had access to insulin. Lack of medication availability, widespread loss of electricity and refrigeration, and inconsistent access to food made managing this disease impossible. Israel has destroyed more than half of Gaza’s healthcare resources and has killed nearly 1,000 Palestinian healthcare workers, more than one out of every 20 healthcare workers in Gaza. At the same time healthcare needs have increased massively from the lethal combination of military violence, malnutrition, disease, and displacement”.

“The hospitals where we worked were starved of basic supplies, from surgical material to soap. They were regularly cut off from electricity and Internet access, denied clean water, and operated at four to seven times their bed ca-

capacity. Every hospital was overwhelmed beyond the breaking point by displaced persons seeking safety, by the constant stream of sick and malnourished patients seeking care, and by the huge influx of seriously wounded patients who typically arrived in mass casualty events”.

“These observations and the publicly available material detailed in the (letter’s) appendix lead us to believe the death toll from this conflict is *many times higher* than that reported by Gaza’s Ministry of Health. We also believe this is probative evidence of widespread violations of American laws governing the use of American weapons abroad, and of International Humanitarian Law. We cannot forget scenes of unbearable cruelty directed at women and children that our Government is a direct participant in”.

“As we met our healthcare colleagues in Gaza it was clear they were malnourished, and both physically and mentally devastated. We quickly learned that our Palestinian healthcare colleagues were among the most traumatised people in Gaza, and perhaps in the entire world. Like virtually all people in Gaza they had lost family members and their homes. Most lived in and around their hospitals with their surviving family in unimaginable conditions”.

“Although they continued working a gruelling schedule, they had not been paid since October 7 (2023). All were acutely aware that their work as healthcare providers had marked them as targets for Israel. This makes a mockery of the protected status hospitals and healthcare providers are granted under the oldest and most widely accepted provisions of International Humanitarian Law”.

Israel Systematically Devastated Gaza’s Healthcare System

“The 99 signatories to this letter spent a combined 254 weeks inside Gaza’s largest hospitals and clinics. We wish to be absolutely clear: not once did any of us see any type of Palestinian militant activity in any of Gaza’s hospitals or other healthcare facilities. We urge you to see that Israel has system-

atically and deliberately devastated Gaza’s entire healthcare system, and that Israel has targeted our colleagues in Gaza for torture, disappearance, and murder”.

“President Biden and Vice President Harris, any solution to this problem must begin with an immediate and permanent ceasefire. We appreciate you are working on a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, but you have overlooked an obvious fact: the United States can impose a ceasefire on the warring parties by simply stopping arms shipments to Israel, and announcing we will participate in an international arms embargo on both Israel and all Palestinian armed groups. We stress what many others have repeatedly told you over the past year: American law is perfectly clear on this matter, continuing to arm Israel is illegal”.¹²

Law Demands Arms Embargo & That Israel Leaves Gaza

Western governments have, for years, not acted on United Nations’ expert reports on the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza, nor on Israel’s illegal occupation of Palestinian territories. Highlighting this, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on 19 July 2024 ruled that Israel’s occupation of Palestine is unlawful.¹³ Israel is a rogue state, according to the world’s highest court, with its Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu being pursued for war crimes by the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Yet he has recently been received with a warm welcome from the US Congress.

Further, in September 2024, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution with 124 countries for and four against,¹⁴ demanding that Israel end its “unlawful presence” in Occupied Palestinian Territories. But still our “democratic” countries are deaf to their obligations under international law as mandated by the United Nations. The UN was set up in 1946 after the catastrophic World War 2 ended in 1945. The UN was set up with plans and strategies to end the horrors of wars and to build peace and cooperation in the world.

Prior to these rulings the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in its

26/1/24 decision (summary posted on 19/7/24)¹⁵ ordered Israel to take steps to prevent acts of genocide in Gaza. The Court required that Israel ensure it does not commit acts that might fall within the scope of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

This initial decision was in response to South Africa’s request for provisional measures and does not represent a final ruling in the case. Cases before the ICJ are long, often taking many years. But in circumstances of extreme urgency where the rights of either party may be irreparably harmed while the case is under consideration, the Court can order countries to take actions that “preserve the respective rights of either party”.

Considering the ever-worsening state in Gaza, under international law, all states must impose an arms embargo on Israel, a war criminal, apartheid state. Despite this obligation to stop assisting genocide by supplying arms, America, Germany, and the UK continue sending Israel weapons. How do major Western countries callously violate international law, while proclaiming they support a “rules-based order?” Clearly because Western countries don’t practice what they preach, effectively resulting in no law or democracy at the international level.

Israel Expands War To Lebanon & Threatens Iran

Israel continues defying international law with impunity, expanding its war against Arab countries into Lebanon. It secretly implanted explosives in hand-held walkie-talkies and pagers for distribution among the Lebanese civilian population, creating a weapon triggered on September 17 and 18 to terrorise the community by killing, blinding and maiming people.¹⁶

Former US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director, Leon Panetta, said on *CBS News*: “I don’t think there’s any question that it’s a form of terrorism...This is going right into the supply chain and when you have terror going into the supply chain, people ask: ‘What the hell is next?’.... The forces of war are largely in control right now....”.

"The Middle East is at risk of developing into the battlefield of the future, and warrants international attention now".¹⁷ The Lebanese resistance group Hezbollah blamed the explosions on Israel's Mossad intelligence organisation. US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, said the US was not involved with the pager explosions, nor informed in advance.

Meanwhile, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said its forces were entering a "new phase" in the 11-month fight against Hezbollah. On 27 September, using American bunker buster bombs, Israel destroyed apartment buildings in Beirut, killing key figures in the Hezbollah leadership, including Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah. Nasrallah was not only loved and admired by his people but also regarded with respect as an honest negotiator and a true visionary by Western foreign correspondents like Seymour Hersh.¹⁸

This planned destruction of Hezbollah's leadership followed Israel's deadly bombing across Lebanon that has displaced civilians on a massive scale. By the end of September 2024, according to the United Nations, there were already a million people displaced from their homes.¹⁹ There are now more displaced Lebanese civilians than there were during Israel's 2006 war on Lebanon, and that number will only increase. The vast majority of the displaced fled their homes in the first weeks after the start of intense Israeli bombing. The third war on Lebanon is already as destructive as the second war and "it hasn't even been two weeks yet," reported Dave de Camp on October 3.²⁰

UN Deplores Israel's Increasing Disregard For International Law

On 4 October 2024, United Nations experts reported from Geneva, deplores Israel for causing "unprecedented suffering" as it escalates its military campaign to

Lebanon which they condemned as violations of international law. "The number of internally displaced persons in Lebanon has more than tripled in less than a month due to Israel's relentless attacks on populated areas coupled with belated or ineffective evacuation orders, in violation of the principles of distinction and proportionality," the experts said.

"More than 1,600 people have been killed in Israeli strikes on Lebanon since October (2023). At least 346,000 have been internally displaced and plans are underway to shelter up to one million refugees. Hundreds of thousands have crossed into Syria. Many of those displaced were already refugees, some of whom have encountered xenophobic discrimination during the latest crisis. Over two-thirds are women and children, who face distinct and gendered impacts".

"Israel's latest breach of international law – a ground invasion in violation of Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity and Security

UN experts deplored Israel's relentless campaign against the most fundamental protections for civilians and called on Israel's allies to end their complicity. "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Conventions, like the state of Israel, arose in response to horrors inflicted on civilians during the Second World War. It is a terrible and tragic irony that Israel is operating as though every provision of these instruments were null and void," the experts said.

"Maintaining international peace and security requires the international community and Israel's allies in particular to act now to halt further military incursions, ensure the unconditional protection of all civilians, accountability for violations of international law, and an immediate and unconditional ceasefire as the only path forward for Lebanon and the region".²²

Iran Responds To Israel's Unbridled Madness

On 29 September, 2024, the Pentagon announced it had ordered the aircraft carrier USS *Abraham Lincoln* and its strike group, and other forces to the eastern Mediterranean as a warning to Iran. American authorities threatened: "Should Iran, or its proxies, use this moment to target American personnel or interests in the region, the United States will take every necessary measure to defend our people".²³



NZ Herald, 5.4.24

Council resolution 1701 – will only add to this mounting toll of death and displacement," the experts said.²¹ "While the humanitarian response has been commendable, Israel has impeded relief efforts through attacking vital civilian infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and water and health facilities, as well as health and humanitarian workers themselves," they said. "These are clear violations of the international obligation to respect and protect relief personnel that risk collapsing the system to protect and assist displaced persons".

However, Iran launched an attack of 200 ballistic missiles against "vital military and security targets in Israel," saying the attack was in response to the assassination of Hassan Nasrallah²⁴ the revered head of Lebanese group Hezbollah, and Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corp (IRGC) commander Abbas Nilforoushan in Beirut, as well as the killing of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh²⁵ in Tehran in July.²⁶ The Iranian official who spoke to *Al Jazeera* said that in the message to the US, Iran reiterated the need to curb Israel "and its unbridled madness" in the region.²⁷



NZ Herald, 3.10.24

Israel And US To Respond To Iran's Attack On Israel?

On October 8, *NBC News* reported that the US was discussing support for Israel's expected attack on Iran with intelligence or with airstrikes of its own.²⁸ See also *Antiwar.com*.²⁹ Apparently "senior US military officials" have discussed launching "very limited" airstrikes against Iranian targets inside Iran or outside the country, though the officials said intelligence support for Israel was more likely. So far, no final decision on US action has been made, and US officials said Israel has not briefed the US on its specific plans to strike Iran in response to Iran's missile barrage that hit Israel in October. The US said it would work with Israel to ensure Iran faces "severe consequences" for the attack.³⁰

The Israelis are considering several types of targets to hit in Iran: military and intelligence infrastructure, air defences, and energy facilities. Based on media reports, Israel does not plan to strike Iranian nuclear facilities in its first attack but could if Iran hits back and the situation turns into a full-blown war, which Israeli officials think is likely to happen.³¹

PART 2 - UKRAINE

Background Since World War 2

In the Ukraine War, Russia is fighting an existential war for survival against America and the European North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) countries, apart from Hungary, Serbia, and Slovakia. Yet Russia, as part of the former Soviet Union, was an ally in World War 2 and played the major role in defeating Nazi Germany, which committed two thirds of its forces to the Eastern Front.

No Russian family was untouched by the violence of Nazi Germany's attack. The older brother of President Vladimir Putin died in the siege of Leningrad. Also, the Soviet Union was the country that suffered by far the most in the Great Patriotic War as Russians call it, with thousands of cities destroyed and 27 million people dying. This shocking statistic is more than the combined loss of life from all the other allies in WW2.

Russia should be honoured for its major role and valiant courage in defeating Nazi Germany. But even directly after the end of WW2, when the United Nations was being formed in 1946 to end the horrors of wars, America and its UK ally, threatened Russia in an appalling manner, which undermined the very principle of the founding the United Nations, to stop wars of ag-

gression. By 1946, America had already, with terrible effects on civilians, used nuclear weapons of mass destruction on Japan's cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, when its defeat was already certain.³² Just one nuclear bomb dropped on each city caused the deaths of up to 146,000 people in Hiroshima and 80,000 in Nagasaki.

Former Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, one of the 50 world leaders who established the United Nations in 1946, wisely suggested that the atomic bomb should be placed under UN control but America refused. America and the UK had already developed a plan for a nuclear attack on the Soviet Union. Stalin realised that America's rejection of placing atomic weapons under UN control was a threat to his country, and went ahead to acquire nuclear weapons as fast as possible as a deterrent to an attack on the Soviet Union.

Constraints on nuclear weapons have been achieved since then with the Nixon-Brezhnev 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, and the Reagan-Gorbachev Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force (IMF) Treaty (1987), banning all nuclear weapons from Europe. Gorbachev's initiative also led to the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaties, START 1 (1991) and START 2 (1993) and the reduction in nuclear warhead stocks of both the US and Russia.

The New START Treaty in 2011 continues to 2025, but earlier initiatives toward a safer world have been terminated by the US, the ABM Treaty in 2002, and the IMF Treaty in 2019. For more background and sources, see "Hiroshima Unlearned: Time To Tell The Truth About US Relations With Russia And Finally Ban The Bomb", by Alice Slater (8/8/19).³³

The war in Ukraine began on 22 February 2022, announced by Russian President Vladimir Putin as a Special Military Operation in the Donbas region. He cited Article 51 of the UN Charter on the right to self-defence for Russia's decision on the use of Russian troops in Ukraine after requests for military assistance from the Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic after eight years of sporadic shelling and a recent increase in activity.

The Ukraine War could have ended in April 2022, six weeks after it began on 22 February. The peace deal in Turkey was negotiated and agreed between Russia and Ukraine. Russia's key requirement then was for Ukraine's neutrality. Dave de Camp reports on 9/9/24 that former US State Department official Victoria Nuland has admitted the US discouraged Ukraine from signing the deal. Nuland's comments are the latest confirmation that a peace deal was on the table in the early days of the war. <https://news.antiwar.com/2024/09/09/victoria-nuland-admits-us-discouraged-ukraine-from-signing-peace-deal-with-russia-in-2022>

Victoria Nuland was the US "diplomat" who helped organise a violent, illegal coup in Kyiv that displaced a democratically elected Government with a person chosen by herself. It's quite astonishing that US "diplomats" get away with such crimes interfering in other countries when the US is the country that frequently alleges that Russia or China are spying or interfering in their elections. Nuland is also famous for her "fuck the EU" comment stemming from her desire for a more anti-Russia person to head the regime than the European Union wanted. Both the EU and the US were in on the crime.

The Recent Role Of NATO

The scene had been set over a decade previously by the US-led NATO alliance, initially acquiring former Warsaw Pact countries Czechia, Hungary and Poland in 1993, and in 2004 Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. This was despite US Secretary of State James Baker, and other top Western officials having made a commitment in 1990 to Soviet President Gorbachev that NATO would not move eastward.

Russia was therefore deeply concerned by the US-supported coup in Ukraine in February 2014, and the legislation pushed through the new Parliament against Russian-speaking Ukraine citizens in the autonomous provinces of the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine. Attacks on civilians by Ukrainian paramilitary units led to a smouldering civil war with the provincial authori-

ties, and eventually their request for assistance from Russia.

The war could have ended in April 2022, shortly after it began. A peace deal between Russia and Ukraine was negotiated and agreed in Turkey in April 2022, requiring only ratification in Kyiv and Moscow. Russia's key requirement then was for Ukraine's neutrality, a key issue since 1990. However, the US and UK pressed Ukraine to continue the war, as acknowledged by Victoria Nuland in a recent interview,³⁴ and sent more and more weapons.

Subsequently, referenda on secession from Ukraine to join the Russian Federation were held in September 2022, in the four largely Russian-speaking provinces, Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia, leading to large majority support and their annexation to become part of the Russian Federation.

Nuclear Dangers From Ukraine War – Jeffrey Sachs

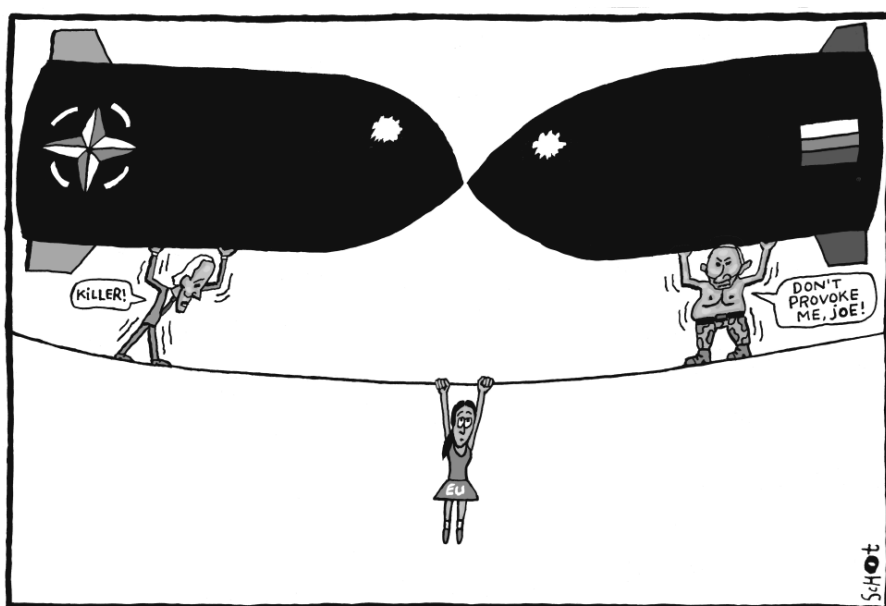
Ukraine's Western-backed and provoked war with Russia escalated dangerously in 2024. In May Ukraine attacked a Russian radar early warning nuclear attack system.³⁵ This could have ended in all out nuclear war, as Professor Jeffrey D Sachs reported at the time. Sachs is an award-winning economist and Professor at Columbia University, and director of the Center for Sustainable Development. He is also President of the UN Sustainable Development Solu-

tions Network.

In a recent article "Presidents Who Gamble With Nuclear Armageddon"³⁶ he reports: "The overriding job of any US President is to keep the nation safe. In the nuclear age, that mainly means avoiding nuclear Armageddon. Joe Biden's reckless, incompetent foreign policy is pushing us closer to annihilation. He joins a long, undistinguished list of Presidents who have gambled with Armageddon, including his immediate predecessor and rival, Donald Trump".

"Talk of nuclear war is currently everywhere. Leaders of NATO countries call for Russia's defeat and **even dismemberment**,³⁷ while telling us not to worry about Russia's 6,000 nuclear warheads. Ukraine uses NATO-supplied missiles to knock out parts of **Russia's nuclear-attack early-warning system**³⁸ inside Russia. Russia, in the meantime, engages in **nuclear drills**³⁹ near its border with Ukraine".

"US Secretary of State Antony Blinken⁴⁰ and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg⁴¹ give the green light to Ukraine to use NATO weapons to hit Russian territory as an increasingly desperate and extremist Ukrainian regime sees fit. These leaders neglect at our greatest peril the most basic lesson of the nuclear confrontation between the US and Soviet Union in the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962), as told by President John F Kennedy, one of the few American Presidents in the nuclear age to take our



WORLD POLITICS

survival seriously”.

“In the aftermath of the crisis, **Kennedy told us, and his successors:**⁴² ‘Above all, while defending our own vital interests, nuclear powers must avert those confrontations which bring an adversary to a choice of either a humiliating retreat or a nuclear war. To adopt that kind of course in the nuclear age would be evidence only of the bankruptcy of our policy - or of a collective death-wish for the world’. Yet this is exactly what Biden is doing today, carrying out a bankrupt and reckless policy” (*Common Dreams*, <https://www.commondreams.org/opinion/nuclear-armageddon>).

Recent Developments In Ukraine And Elsewhere

Ukraine in 2024 has continued to attack nuclear energy plants in Ukraine,⁴³ which threatens its own and European security. How much sense does all this make for global security, and why is there no debate about the dangers of nuclear war in Western governments and mainstream media, especially in Aotearoa with its nuclear-free policy?

The early August invasion from Ukraine’s northeast into the Russian region of Kursk taking 1300 km² and 100 villages, has been stalled by the Russian counter-offensive, and so to no advantage. The Russian military has advanced along the line of contact in the south since February 2024 with the liberation of Avdiivka.⁴⁴

This is a small but key city in Donbas that had served as a Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF) stronghold for over ten years. Russia’s military continues to destroy Ukraine’s forces in key locations in the south, recently capturing the hill town of Ugledar, a strategic link between southern and eastern fronts in the conflict and a major supply hub.⁴⁵ This is a major step in fully liberating the Donetsk People’s Republic, allowing Russia to protect a rail line running from Crimea to the Donbas.

With Russia leading in the US-led proxy war in Ukraine, and having managed its way through the West’s sanctions with growing economic strength as conceded by the recent Chatham House review,⁴⁶

the danger of a nuclear conflagration may lie in the desperation of Ukraine’s regime and America’s global strategy of “full spectrum dominance” over the last two decades.⁴⁷

An analysis by Phillips O’Brien, Professor of Strategic Studies at the University of St Andrews, Scotland,⁴⁸ concludes that despite the many provocations by Ukraine, with the backing of US-led NATO, including those previously considered to be red lines, Russia has limited its response to sophisticated but conventional weapons. However, O’Brien then argues that the prolonged conflict in Ukraine makes a nuclear attack more likely.

On 25 September 2024 the Permanent Conference of the Russian Federation’s Security Council revised its nuclear policy to be more explicit.⁴⁹ This is likely seen as necessary from recent threats to its existence from long-range missile attacks on its civilian population. It also indicates a more serious commitment to avoiding a nuclear catastrophe that some Western leaders have shown in their supporting such attacks – tantamount to declaring a state of war with Russia.

Nuclear Dangers From Ukraine War – Gilbert Doctorow

According to Gilbert Doctorow, an independent political analyst based in Brussels, Russia foresees the need for the West to be persuaded that a US consideration of a decapitating first strike is not in anyone’s interest.⁵⁰ “Underlying the new doctrine is a changed understanding of Washington’s nuclear strategy as it evolved from global strikes from the US triad to use of massive combined attack using tactical and strategic aircraft plus medium to long range cruise and hypersonic missiles based in Europe and in the Far East. The evolving situation in Ukraine fits into the new US vision of a decapitating strike on Russia that first destroys Russia’s land-based nuclear force”.

“Accordingly, Russia now declares that any attack on its territory by a non-nuclear state using missiles and other long-range weapons such as the F-16 provided by and guided by a nuclear state (meaning the USA, Britain or France) will be

considered as a joint attack by the nuclear and non-nuclear state and may prompt a Russian nuclear attack on both”.

“Note the timing of the Russian announcement: it comes just before Biden’s meeting in Washington with Zelenskyy and while the UN General Assembly is in session. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is presently in New York and is explaining the new nuclear doctrine to all those interested, of whom there are assuredly a great many world leaders”.

Kyiv MP Ignores Strategic Partnership Between Russia and Belarus

The Deputy Head of Russia’s Security Council, Dmitry Medvedev, responding to statements by a Kyiv MP to “move the war to Belarus,” said Belarus will have “full grounds to hit Kyiv with nuclear weapons if Ukraine attacks Belarus”. Russian news agency RT reported this on 8/10/24. Medvedev was responding to statements on October 4 by Ukrainian MP Oleg Dunda at a conference in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Dunda claimed it’s “crucial to move the war not only to the territory of (Russia’s) Bryansk and Kursk regions, but also to Belarus. I am deeply confident that, if we enter Belarus with relatively small units, the Belarusian army will lay down its weapons. It would be a gut-punch to Moscow.” Responding to Dunda’s remarks on his Telegram channel, Medvedev said such an incursion would promptly trigger a nuclear response... “Well then, Alexander Grigorievich (Lukashenko, Belarusian President) will have full grounds to ask Russia to use the tactical nuclear weapons deployed in Belarus”. There will be many, perhaps most, in Aotearoa that do not share Dunda’s deep confidence in such a plan, especially with the warning that it risks a nuclear response. It’s time to be on the right side of history and demand that our Government dissociates itself from supporting this madness, and reinstates our own independent, nuclear-free policy. For the future of life on Earth our voice against the insanity of these wars is vital.

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ECONOMIC WAR

- Greg Waite

Two recent books have discussed new forms of economic warfare used by the United States to further extend their corporate dominance in the global economy. What is “economic war”? *Wikipedia* defines it as an economic strategy used by belligerent states with the goal of weakening the economy of other states. Common means of economic warfare are trade embargoes, boycotts, sanctions, tariff discrimination, the freezing of capital assets, the suspension of aid, the prohibition of investment and other capital flows, and expropriation.

In this definition, there is a “belligerent state”, the bad guys and the good guys. In today's world the US portrays itself as the good guys, and the US as dominant national economy is the nation with the most clout to wage economic war. But it's not that simple. The economic actions taken by the US specifically benefit the US to grow its dominance of the world economy, which is built on the transfer of wealth from all nations back to the US. All other nations lose in this war.

And part of that strategy to dominate the global economy is the export of the US's favourite brand of economics, neoliberalism, which ensures all other nations have minimal protection from globalised corporations. A key feature of neoliberalism is its reliance on interest rates to manage the economy, a tool which increases unemployment to lower wages and worker militancy. This is also economic war, between global capital and national labour.

I'll first lay out the main points briefly to give you an overview of economic warfare, including not just the issues raised in these new books, but all the major tools which contribute to US dominance and extraction of wealth from the rest of the world. And at the end, I try to put a cost on each of these, to give some indication of how much we pay annually to put up with each element of this “war”.

Weapons Of Economic Warfare

- After 9/11 the physical location of most Internet servers in the US enabled the Government to enforce its right to control funds in the Belgium-based Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT) international banking system, and to gain direct access to spy on nearly all global Internet communications.
- The US has since ramped up use of big-data surveillance and sanctions, not just in the Russian invasion of Ukraine but also to limit the growth of corporate rivals like Huawei.
- A key aim is maintaining the US's technological edge, enabling US corporations to consolidate their market dominance and extract excess profits around the world, despite their low spending on research and development in favour of share buybacks, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) excess and shareholder wealth.
- US tech dominance has created this new world where every "smartphone" and computer monitors its user, sending data back to firms which extract fees from the productive economy for targeted advertising, influence our opinions through social media, and feed State surveillance.
- Pressure points limiting US control are the Netherlands' asymmetric digital subscriber line (ADSL) lead in key "fabs" technologies, (fabs are the extremely complex machines which manufacture high-end chips) and the many semiconductor plants currently sited in Taiwan which are vulnerable to China.
- Though neoliberalism has been discredited in recent years by serious economists, it continues to be well funded and effective, encouraging policies which enable global business and tax fraud.

- Ideologically it claims to offer freedom from government control but neoliberalism has two faces: In the developing world it protects the property rights of existing elites, encouraging autocrats who will sell local resources to foreign corporations in exchange for easy profits from military backing and State corruption.
- In developed nations, neoliberalism: first, justifies monetary rather than fiscal responses to downturns; interest cuts which increase unemployment to undermine workers and inflate asset bubbles, instead of Keynesian State-led spending to counter cyclical downturns.
- Second, neoliberalism supports unregulated financial movement over borders, so the threat of capital mobility forces lower taxation on all nations.
- Third, neoliberalism removes anti-monopoly regulation, allowing global corporations to dominate their supply chains and distribution, to charge us excess prices and get excess profits.
- As a result, business practices have become excessively extractive, resulting in a series of US-created global crises requiring bailouts by national governments.
- The result is the continued rise of corporate wealth and power, and the continued shrinkage of State resources and regulatory capacity.
- In addition to US economic interventions, there is a long history of secret UK and US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) interventions in favour of authoritarian governments in the developing world to support corporate asset control.
- Today, Israel takes this further with a complex combination of State and private start-ups developing and selling tools to support authoritarian governments: hacking, spyware, Internet and urban monitoring systems, drones and missile interception systems.

- This drive of corporations to grow their control of global supply chains is increasing pressure on nations to back US economic and military interference, while undermining alternative institutions of global cooperation and security.

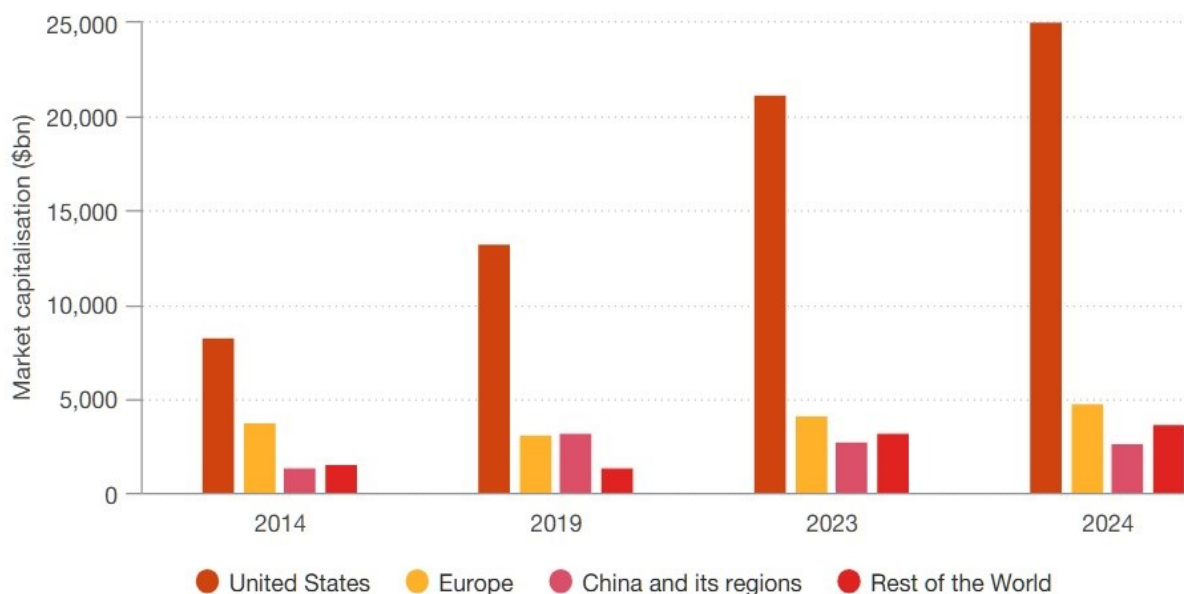
These changes have come to dominate our world today. Of course, the US argues that Chinese tech companies would use access to Western networks for State surveillance if they were allowed to compete. On the evidence so far, US abuse of tech dominance has taken this far further - taxing productive businesses across the whole world by monopolising data and advertising, creating a series of global crises and State bailouts, the abuse of surveillance data for mass murder campaigns (from Indonesia 1965 and Chile 1973 up to Palestine and Lebanon today). And with that track record for the CIA, we should worry about what new forms of hidden abuse it engages in today.

By accepting US policy and practice, we are supporting an extractive US system of monopoly. This system has global reach, using market dominance and ideological economics to transfer wealth from all other nations to US corporations and their supporters, and to grow the political power and influence of the wealthy elite.

US Global Economic Dominance Keeps Growing

You'll be aware that US corporations today dominate the global economy, but this chart highlights just how rapidly the US has moved further ahead, thanks to the extremism of its economic policies and the freedom of its corporations to plunder the world.

Market Capitalisation of the Top 100 companies by region (\$bn)



Source: PWC <https://www.pwc.co.uk/services/audit/insights/global-top-100-companies.html>

Underground Empire: How America Weaponized The Global Economy (2023), Henry Farrell and Abraham Newman

To sum up, “Underground Empire” emphasises that the support for freedom promised by global systems of communications and inter-bank finance are illusory. In fact, these are both data systems, and because the US government pioneered the Internet, most data server centres have been built in the US because it is efficient to build close to the existing infrastructure. The cloud, in real life, does not live in the clouds. It sits in climate-controlled data centres, large numbers of which are clustered where they can interconnect, reducing the massive amount of energy they need to run.

And there turns out to be a small number of choke points which most global data passes through. As a result, after 9/11 the US was able to use its jurisdictional power to force concessions from both the private companies that ran Internet servers and the Group of 10 (G-10) central banks which oversee the SWIFT interbank system.

The authors show how the success of America’s security agencies tracking terrorist funding encouraged law enforcement officials to use similar methods, particularly against foreign banks. Tracking the path of profits raised through criminal activities led to money laundering charges against Asian and European banks. Once a foreign bank committed any offence under US laws within the American financial system, it became fair game.

Farrell and Newman tell the tale of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC), caught in a 2012 money laundering case. Its eventual settlement with the Department of Justice later led the bank to divulge information about a Chinese client, telecommunications equipment supplier Huawei. This eventually led to the arrest and detention in Canada of Huawei’s Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou, who is the daughter of its founder, Ren Zhengfei.

Huawei, a low-cost provider with substantial support from the Chinese state, had become a serious challenge to US dominance in global telecommunications networks. This is the same model that created the US tech giants, piggy-backing on State-funded research for academic, space and military projects. When it threatens US dominance though, angles are

found to hold back foreign competitors.

Offences by US corporations which benefited the US, like offloading their toxic property derivatives across Europe just before the 2008 global financial crisis are, of course, legal in the US and will continue without financial consequences until we reinvent global agencies to force economic justice to include the US.

Global Banking And US Dollar Dominance

When the Internet allowed unregulated communication across the globe, American banks set up an international clearinghouse system that elevated the dollar to a global currency. An Italian firm could use \$US to pay its Japanese supplier, oiling the gears of globalisation. SWIFT arose in the 1970s in response to an attempt by the US company Citibank to impose its payments system on the rest of the world. This was a response by European merchants to American overreach. Belgium was picked for SWIFT’s headquarters, a deliberate choice to counter American financial hegemony.

The telecoms and the banks, in Farrell and Newman’s account, were led by libertarian-minded

characters set on creating systems that would evade political oversight. Yet the opposite happened: Internet networks, financial infrastructures, and global supply chains initially set up by private firms ended up being weaponised by the US government.

When the US Treasury learned that the September 11, 2001, hijackers had been sent money using regular wire transfers that passed through SWIFT, they demanded access to SWIFT's data. The US eventually got its way, but through a diplomatic marriage of convenience. Unlike the US, European Union (EU) privacy laws prevent European governments from harvesting data indiscriminately. So, in exchange for obtaining access to SWIFT data, US intelligence agreed to share "actionable intelligence" with their European counterparts.

This arrangement still leaves the US with a filter about what information it passes on, but it could be renegotiated. Imagine if the EU used its surveillance to identify and prosecute every corrupt bribe used by US corporations to monopolise resources around the world. It would be busy. And we'd all live in a better world. The bigger question is how to extend that information and power to the developing nations which are the biggest victims.

So, the United States had suddenly gained an unprecedented real-time look into clandestine financial transactions. Less than a year later, in response to suspicions that Iran was relying on SWIFT to finance its nuclear programme, American officials pushed for Iranian banks to be cut off from the global financial switchboard. SWIFT yielded to pressure once more. Since Iran is heavily reliant on exports of oil, which is traded in US dollars, it could no longer collect payments for its goods, and was reduced to bartering, with exports dropping by 75%. This was the turning point in the negotiations over its nuclear programme: in exchange for lifting the SWIFT ban, Iran began making concessions.

The sanctions against Iran created a playbook that the US Treasury Department applied with increasing frequency, first with North Korea, then Sudan, Belarus, Myanmar, and, most recently, Russia. When Putin invaded Ukraine in February 2022, the most widespread use of financial sanctions to date ensued. The United States and its European allies took two radical steps that only those who control the conduits of the global economy could pull off. They cut Russian banks out of SWIFT like they'd done against Iran a decade earlier, and they froze over 600 billion dollars' worth of Russian foreign reserves.

All Actions Have Consequences

The concluding theme of "Underground Empire" is that US use of international communications and banking systems has been secretive, without public debate on the limits and consequences. Every economic intervention creates a reaction. Forcing rogue states to create workarounds may mean a more dangerous world, for example, increasing reliance on weapons sales or military conquests. Even US allies have been looking into ways of reducing their reliance on the US dollar, US banks, and the US-centred Internet

infrastructure, because increasing use of sanctions made international business harder for European companies.

China has now created its own version of SWIFT. The BRICS group of nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), which from 2024 has expanded to include Saudi Arabia, Iran, Ethiopia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates, are crucial potential users. BRICS now represents 36% of global gross domestic product (GDP) and the potential for major developing states to trade with each other using their own currencies, possibly undermining the dollar system and the ability of the US, through sanctions, to lay siege to other economies.

BRICS' expansion emphasises new limits to America's ability to control developing countries, though there is a long way to go to develop a stable alternative to the dollar system. All of the nations involved are exploitative economies with distinct and divergent economic interests. Replacing one hierarchy with another will not produce a harmonious world. The current structures of globalised trade are exacerbating inequalities between nations, to the point that they *generate* conflict rather than suppress it. This points us back to

16th BRICS Leaders' Summit

With the addition of 5 new countries in 2024, BRICS now has a total of 9 member countries and holds a significant position in the global economy

BRICS²⁰
RUSSIA 24

Oct. 22-24, Kazan

Establishment Date 2009



Covers **30%** of the world's land area



Represents **45%** of the world's population

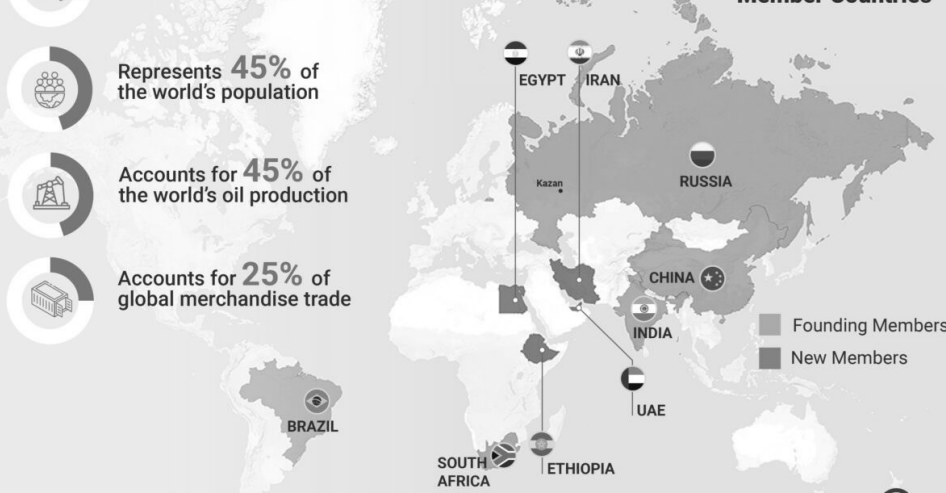


Accounts for **45%** of the world's oil production



Accounts for **25%** of global merchandise trade

Member Countries



October 22, 2024



Chip War

The Fight For The World's Most Critical Technology

the key task of renegotiating the conditions of global trade and corporate regulation.

Banning Huawei (The Chip War)

Most Western countries have now fallen in behind America's attack on Huawei, but to begin with, as Chris Miller notes in "Chip War", opinions differed. Australia and Poland, for example, banned the company from its 5G networks but other European countries, particularly Germany, did not want to lose trade with China. Britain, normally pathetically subservient to the US and its security demands, concluded the risk of Huawei's systems could be managed without a ban.

These different judgements were not about "technical disagreements", rather they were about China's growing role in the world's tech infrastructure. "Many Europeans also thought China's technological rise was inevitable and therefore not worth trying to stop". And it was this rise which was unacceptable to the US. While for decades, China's rapid economic growth was largely welcomed, this was because it was still firmly below America in the value hierarchy; the manufacturing sites for all kinds of goods could be outsourced to China, so long as the US retained ownership and a clear lead in the most advanced industries, which also tend to be the most profitable.

However, Huawei began to move into the relatively low-tech telecom and networking equipment because its annual research and development (R&D) spending now rivalled American tech giants like Microsoft, Google, and Intel, producing both the hardware for cell towers and designing cutting-edge smartphone chips. This was threatening American economic leadership over a strategically critical industry. Free trade is only a good thing when you're the one winning. Miller insists that security concerns

were entirely secondary in the Trump Administration's imposition of restrictions on Huawei.

"The point was less that Huawei was directly supporting China's military than that the company was advancing China's overall level of chip design and microelectronics know-how. The more advanced electronics the country produced, the more cutting-edge chips it would buy, and the more the world's semiconductor ecosystem would rely on China, at the expense of the United States". When the US targeted China's highest-profile tech firm, this sent a message worldwide warning other countries to take sides. And hobbling Huawei's rise was not just a result of the erratic Trump Presidency, since Biden greatly extended the sanctions against the company.

Economic Wars Past And Future

The trade conflict with China is not the first time in the history of the electronics industry that the US has found itself first encouraging the industrial advance of another country, and then acting against it when the competition got sharper. Miller points out that it is no accident that Taiwan has become the vulnerable centre of high-tech chip manufacturing.

From the 1970s, US industry was attracted to Asia's vast pool of cheap labour for low-cost manufacturing, and so the extended supply chains that now complicate the world economy began to take shape. This was not just a matter of firms trying to bolster their profit rates, but was part of a grander strategy for Washington 'to bind Asia to an American-led world'.

This US post-war strategy led to the deliberate integration of Japan into the American semi-conductor industry. Starting with Sony's transistor radios, Japan rapidly built a thriving consumer electronics industry during the 1960s, but at this time "US chip firms like Fairchild continued to dominate the cutting edge of chip production", while "Japanese firms paid sizeable licensing fees on intellectual property". America was not worried about technological transfers to Japan at

this time, as its firms were well behind the US.

Things began to change in the 1980s, once Japanese companies had narrowed the technological gap with Silicon Valley. Where once Japanese goods were competitive simply due to cheapness, now "American industries from cars to steel were facing Japanese competition" on efficiency and quality. The response to the Japanese threat to move up in the economic hierarchy was ferocious, considering it was an allied country, and no military threat whatsoever. CEOs of America's biggest chip firms spent more and more time in Washington, lobbying Congress and the Pentagon.

"They set aside their free-market beliefs the moment Japanese competition mounted, claiming the competition was unfair... Their chips merited Government help, they insisted, because they were strategic". In the end, the American chip industry rebounded, and the Japanese surge receded, for a variety of reasons, including the fall of US interest rates and the doubling of the value of the yen. But the biggest factor in the sidelining of Japan was the deliberate encouragement of the chip industry elsewhere in Asia, particularly in South Korea and Taiwan.

China's involvement in the chip industry was at first restricted to quite low-level assembling, while high-value aspects of the industry, such as design, were located elsewhere. Due in large part to the colossal capital costs of the most advanced chip manufacturing, (by 2014 an advanced chip factory, or "fab", cost over \$US10bn), this part of the industry has become maximally concentrated, and the advanced fabs are now exclusively Taiwanese and South Korean.

China, unsurprisingly, had ambitions to rise above its lowly position in the globalised industry's value chains, and did a remarkably good job of growing both market share and technology by focusing on the lower value technology used in phone and telecommunications. With Huawei hobbled, it will be interesting to see how Chinese tech competitiveness grows in future, given its higher research expenditure.

The Jakarta Method: Washington's Anti- Communist Crusade & The Mass Murder Pro- gram That Shaped Our World

(2020), Vincent Bevins

This amazing recent book talks about an earlier period, but is particularly relevant because it uses leaked and declassified documents to explain the US role in making autocracy the default form of government across the developing world today. That worked just fine for the US because from the 1960s on they cut deals with the generals for corporate control of key resources, while encouraging military and paramilitary crackdowns which guaranteed low wages.

Bevins brings back to the public discussion the lives, hopes, and dreams of Third World activists, before they were destroyed by a string of US-supported coups and murder programmes. This is the forgotten story of the "Third World", a phrase which has been sidelined because it evoked a new non-aligned force in global politics, independent from the Cold War First World (the West) and the communist Second World. It's the story of people freed from colonial tyranny after the Second World War, their many early successes.

So, this book is a reminder that the developing nations have the potential to create a much better world, if they can complete the enormous task of rebuilding civil society and demilitarising their economies. And "The Jakarta Method" is also a grim and timely reminder for us today of how brutal repression can be when the State monitors its citizens closely.

In each of those US-led coups the CIA, sometimes aided by corporations like the United Fruit Company (today Chiquita), provided lists of opponents for murder. Imagine the US in ten and 20 years if it fell into authoritarian rule under Trumpists, when all the personal information about everyone is already trans-

ferred into the Secret Service databases. Would union organisers and dissidents be able to get jobs? That's a type of economic warfare I hope I don't live to see. *Greg Waite's full review of "The Jakarta Method" is elsewhere in this issue. Ed.*

The Technology Of Social Control

The Palestine Laboratory: How Israel Exports The Technology Of Occu- pation Around The World

(2023), Antony Loewenstein

"The Palestine Laboratory" brings this story of First World interference in developing nations up to date, revealing Israel's global role selling tools for secretive monitoring of citizens and other weapons used by authoritarian governments. Israel's privatised security industry is so immoral it was sanctioned even by Trump - for selling weapons to both sides in Sudan. In secret dealings with corrupt regimes, shadowy Israeli companies sell the tools of their occupation as a success story, an example of how governments can spy on their populations, bomb them with drones, control their movements, limit and manipulate their lives to subdue opposition.

Israel works closely with Washington, often operating in places where the US preferred covert support rather than public backing. For example, Israel supported the police forces of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Costa Rica during the Cold War when the US Congress had blocked US agencies from officially doing so. Both Israel and the US trained and armed death squads in Colombia well into the 2000s.

The Israeli Ministry of Defense admitted selling weapons to about 130 countries in 2021. Ethnonationalist regimes, states that target one ethnic group over another, are over-represented in that list because that is the approach and expertise Israel has developed in Palestine. In his conclusion, Loewenstein says: "This book is written as a warning of the frightening world that could be born if Israeli-style ethnonationalism continues

its ascent in a century already dominated by the unaccountable State power from Russia and Israel to China and the United States". *Greg Waite's review of "The Palestine Laboratory" is in Peace Researcher 66, November 2023, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/peace-researcher-previous-issues.html> Ed.*

The Capital Order: How Economists Invented Austerity And Paved The Way To Fascism

(2023), Clara E. Mattei

Mattei makes a compelling case that austerity is much more than just a need to balance the State's budget; it is an economic programme formed by the theory of neoclassical economics in the early 1900s, specifically to undermine working class confidence and organisation to restore capitalist profits after the end of the First World War.

When governments actively intervened in the economy during that war, the old order had been challenged by Italian workers creating new forms of organisation like factory councils and British mine workers calling for nationalisation. Workers were disillusioned when called to work more for less to ensure recovery, while companies made record profits. There was wide popular support after World War One for continuing with a more active role of Government in resource allocation and labour markets, including a welfare state.

The new strategy to restore the "capital order" was the State's "austerity agenda", focused on lowering taxes (especially on the wealthy), cutting Government spending on welfare-related activities, tightening monetary conditions, and limiting the workers' rights to unionise and protest. Sound familiar? The intended outcome of austerity was wide scope for private enterprise, income highly concentrated in the hands of those who saved and invested rather than those who consumed and, especially, disempowered workers. This, the economists claimed, would pave the way to

“social harmony” in society, with people in their proper status, and “fair” distribution of prosperity. The underpinning idea was a deep distrust of the State and government, and a trust in markets.

Mattei’s strength is her thorough investigation of original sources in Italy and England, which uncovers on the one hand the publicly stated aims of this newly created economic technocracy – freedom, growth and rising incomes – and the real aim, illustrated with examples, of raising unemployment to reduce workers’ militancy, backed by force when required.

Neoliberalism Is A Global System

Neoliberalism As A Global System: Private Power And Public Weakness

(2023), Damon Silvers

In a 2023 talk at the UK Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose, Silvers provided this critical analysis of neoliberalism based on his long experience with the US AFL-CIO labour federation and various roles advising the US government. He notes that neoliberalism talks a lot about freedom, a theme carried over from its origins in classical liberalism.

There, freedom refers to freedom to trade and freedom from market regulation including labour, production and capital markets. But in practice the freedom of neoliberalism is freedom for property and asset owners, not workers. Neoliberalism takes this further to emphasise a single lightly regulated global economy, along with the weakening of public power and the growth of private power.

Back in 1970, Keynesian* economics and social democratic politics dominated the non-communist world. Neoliberalism was first applied only after Chile’s CIA-backed 1973 coup, when US economist of the Right Milton Friedman travelled to meet with General Pinochet. The generals were happy to cede control of natural resources to US corporations, provided they were well armed and left free to extract prof-

its from their control of the State. **John Maynard Keynes (1863-1946) advocated Government spending on public works to stimulate the economy and provide employment. He was the most influential Western economist for several decades after World War 2, until he was supplanted by the neoliberal monetarists. Ed.*

This case illustrates an important point – neoliberalism works differently in the developing and developed world. In developing nations neoliberalism’s guarantee of private property is fundamental because it allows the established elite to protect its wealth. Violence is justifiable whenever property rights are threatened. In the developed world the veneer of freedom has to be a little more convincing, but core features of neoliberalism remain reduction of State power and monetary rather than fiscal response in downturns to impose unemployment and weaken labour militancy.

The 1970s provided an opportunity to bring neoliberalism back to the centre. A few early rich backers in the US seized the opportunity to fund Reagan when the oil crisis introduced inflation. The first act of neoliberalism was to raise interest rates to crush labour organisation, while Reagan provided the soft sell: “The nine most terrifying words in the English language are ‘I’m from the Government and I’m here to help’”. The global campaign to create disbelief in Government’s capacity had begun.

Economic models were developed, claiming scientific status, but they had unrealistic assumptions and were static models, which is not how real economic interventions work. A second round of core neoliberal policies followed the union attacks: cutting taxes on corporations and the wealthy, removing anti-monopoly regulation, removing financial regulation, removing media and environmental regulation. The predictable result was the public sector shrinking, windfall private profits from underpriced asset sales, lower taxes, a shift from labour income to capital income, wage stagnation, concentration of financial and business enterprises, all contributing to rising inequality.

Neoliberalism as a global system has continued to develop – econo-

mies have moved from protectionism to globalisation; corporations control integrated global systems of natural resource extraction, production and distribution; tax havens find new loopholes; global regulators and “trade” agreements privilege corporations over states; currency markets and central banks’ “independence” combine to suppress wages.

And Silvers concludes by pointing out that neoliberalism has not delivered on its fundamental promise of increased economic prosperity and growth. Postwar global gross domestic product (GDP) ranged from 4-6%, but has ranged between 2-4% since the mid 1970s, and with an increase in volatility and crises which are a direct result of the neoliberal order.

Finding The Missing Revolution

If We Burn: The Mass Protest Decade And The Missing Revolution

(2023), Vincent Burns

If We Burn can be summed up briefly as follows. We had a decade of reformist mass protest from 2010 to 2020, with more people participating in protests than at any other point in human history, yet democracy in most of those nations went backwards. This was because these campaigns grew rapidly by social media communications, but there was no clear movement or programme of reform.

State power was destabilised, only for better organised vested interests to leap into the gap and consolidate power. Achieving social change requires many stages and much work along the way. Reformism shouldn’t be dismissed, as the old Leftists did. It is necessary steps to building lasting change – but the reforms need to get more radical in today’s corporate-friendly world.

Aotearoa’s Neoliberalism

Our Coalition Government’s policy playbook is clearly neoliberal. Cut State spending and use high inter-

est rates to create a recession, to raise unemployment and undermine wages. A recent business page in the *Northern Advocate* provides the perfect illustration: First story on the share market rally as interest rates come down from recent heights; second story on employers checking on worker mental health as survey shows 44% worried about job insecurity, up 33% on 2022; third story on the cost of the interest rate hikes, with the Government transferring \$300 million a month over the last two years to cover losses on the money-printing programme which raised interest rates (10/10/24).

And in the news recently, Prime Minister Luxon made \$460,000 in tax-free income in 2024 from capital gains on the sale of two of his rental properties, almost as much as the \$484,200 gross income from his actual job which he pays tax on. Asked about not paying tax on the income from capital gains, he said: "I don't see the point of questions about a capital gains tax. It removes the incentive for wealth creators". Luxon's policies are clear and they are poverty creators, which is the other face of increasing wealth for the already wealthy.

The Cost Of Global Neoliberalism

To conclude, think about the cost of all these transfers across the world, from productive workers to the rich – the extraction from every productive business by advertising-controlling tech corporations who steal our data, the raised prices we pay so market-dominating corporations make excess profits, the bailouts costs to all the world's governments each time US corporate greed and lack of regulation creates a new global crisis, the low wages ensured by neoliberalism's support for State austerity, the asset bubbles and wealth inflation created by lowering interest rates instead of spending in recessions, the resulting overpriced housing and rents which must be paid by every succeeding generation, the cryptocurrency fraud the US is facilitating today, the military and paramilitary spending by UK and US-created autocracies across the developing world, the escalating economic wars to control resources and undermine competition, the cost of climate change disruption

because market incentives won't work – that would be a very big transfer of wealth imposed by neoliberalist policies.

Below, I've put a number on the cost per year for each of these in Aotearoa. It's rough, and I'm sure some of the assumptions can be improved - but having a rough idea is better than having no idea at all of the cost we are paying to live in this particular version of our world.

Comparing these costs provides some food for thought, both on the relative cost of each component of neoliberalism, and the extremely large cost of living through climate change. And this is only Aotearoa today; the cost of imposed crises and reduced wages would be much higher in countries like Greece and Venezuela, while the historic and future cost of reduced government capacity, authoritarian militaries and corruption across the developing world is much greater again. That's some pretty good reasons to try harder to create a fairer future world.

Links to authors' presentations of books drawn on above:

Costs of neoliberal policies	\$NZ Billions	Assumptions and source
monopoly pricing	2.676	Consumer spending x 1.5%, Trading Economics to June 2024
digital advertising monopoly	1.866	Digital ad spending 2024, Infometrics
crisis bailouts	3.000	2000, 2008, 2011 \$20B each if well managed > p/a average 20 yrs
crisis economic losses	7.500	\$100B lost GDP each > p/annum average x 0.5, some inevitable
crisis wage losses	1.927	5% x est'd household income 2024 x households, Stats NZ > p/a
government cuts, lost capacity	8.091	5% x 2023 expenditure for restructuring and rebuilding capacity
austerity wage losses	12.848	5% x est'd household income 2024 x households, Stats NZ
asset bubbles, bank housing profits	10.891	Housing rose from 3.5 x income to 7 x, 6% interest on half all loan, RBNZ
asset bubbles, excess rents	6.271	Long term rents x2 in line with houses, median rent x52/2 * renters
crypto fraud	0.221	US\$134.7M, Statista
climate change, mispent credits	1.125	\$4.5B ETS /4 years, Treasury
climate change, aid costs	0.950	\$2.5B transition + 1.3 vulnerable nations /4 years, Treasury
climate change, transition costs	149.400	12% of GDP for each 1°C x 3, World Economic Forum
military, paramilitary	5.300	2023/24 Defense budget
secret services	0.402	2023/24 GCSB budget
Total costs 2023-24 budget or estimate	212.468	
Annual GDP 2023-24	415.000	June 2024 year
Total costs as percent of GDP	51%	
Annual Government expenditure	161.822	As comparison, government expenditure Dec 2023, Trading Economics

"Underground Empire: How America Weaponized The World Economy" (2023)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mOzr6s12ql>

"Chip War: The Fight For The World's Most Critical Technology" (2022)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PID3fb1bUfs>

"The Jakarta Method: Washington's Anti-Communist Crusade & The Mass Murder Program That Shaped Our World" (2020)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmCjHaelJJU>

"The Palestine Laboratory: How Israel Exports The Technology of Occupation Around the World"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JZeHI9PerY>

"The Capital Order":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4o0-Dxe4ko>

"Neoliberalism As A Global System: Private Power And Public Weakness" (2023)

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/public-purpose/neoliberalism-global-system-private-power-and-public-weakness-lecture-series-2023>

"If We Burn: The Mass Protest Decade And The Missing Revolution"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJrleT-4oj8>

NUKED

**The Submarine Fiasco That Sank
Australia's Sovereignty**
Andrew Fowler
Melbourne University Press,
2024

- Murray Horton

The first point to make is that this book was not written by a member of the peace movement. That is both a strength and a weakness. A strength, because Andrew Fowler is an award-winning investigative journalist, who has worked in mainstream Australian current affairs TV. So, it can't be dismissed as "anti-American, anti-military" propaganda.

But a weakness because it never questions the basic tenet of the book's subject – why does Australia need any submarines at all, regardless of whether they are conventionally powered or nuclear powered? The book's focus is a forensic analysis of who won the highly lucrative battle to supply Australia's new subs – it was all set up to be France but then, after hidden, sub-surface manoeuvring worthy of one of the book's subjects, Australia and the US torpedoed the French and did a deal among themselves.

This book is about AUKUS (Australia, UK, US), the new kid on the "Indo-Pacific" block – although it should be pointed out that the UK is an awfully long way away from either the Indo or the Pacific. It is an attempt to build a new Western military alliance, initially between those three countries but with the prospect of other countries (including New Zealand) joining the ill-defined AUKUS Pillar Two at some unspecified time in the future. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. The book is about the birth of AUKUS, which is all about submarines.

AUKUS

I've written about AUKUS previously (see "AUKUS: A Major Lurch Towards War With China" in *Peace Researcher* [PR] 65, June 2023, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/peace-researcher-previous-issues.html>). In 2016 Australia signed a \$A50 billion contract for France to build it 12 state of the art conventionally powered submarines for the Australian Navy. It was the largest defence contract in the history of both France and Australia. The Rightwing Liberal Party was in Government in Australia, headed by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

To quote the book: "There were those in high office, particularly in the intelligence agencies, who were wary of Australia becoming too close to France and shifting away from the countries they saw as Australia's natural philosophical, political and strategic allies: the United Kingdom and the United States. The French deal, they believed, added fresh complications to Washington's plans to contain China's rise. Instead of the old Australia-US axis, France would now have to be directly played into the mix".

"It was a perceptible move towards a more independent foreign and defence position for Australia – hardly revolutionary, but disturbing for the hardliners in Washington and Canberra. A deal with France would certainly unshackle Australia and, as Turnbull argues, allow the nation to maintain its sovereignty. France, after all, had its own nuclear strike force, separate from other members of NATO, and had refused to support the United States in many of that country's foreign policy forays, in particular the disastrous war on Iraq. Australia, it seemed, had the opportunity to head down a similar independent track".

Those hardliners swung into action. The book names names – the man who fronted the deception and betrayal of France was Scott Morrison, who replaced Turnbull as the Liberal Prime Minister in 2018, in an internal caucus coup (a common occurrence in Australian politics). Behind the scenes, the key man was Andrew Shearer, "a vehemently pro-American China

hawk" who went on to become Director-General of National Intelligence. Right up until just before AUKUS was announced in 2021, Morrison's government continued to assure France that it was proceeding with the contract to buy French submarines.

Dumping France For US

Instead of 12 diesel-powered French subs, Australia signed up to have the US and UK build eight nuclear-powered (but not nuclear-armed) subs for its Navy. The cost is astronomical – up to \$A368 billion by 2055. Yes, that's right – those eight subs will not be ready for more than 30 years. The first of them is unlikely to be ready until the 2040s so, to fill that gap, Australia will buy three existing US subs from the early 2030s, at a cost of up to \$A58b, with an option to buy two more. This is a staggering amount to spend on one military project from a country with a population of just under 27 million people.

"(AUKUS) was a clear victory for Washington, which had been concerned for some time that France had a different view on how to deal with the rise of China... There was barely a murmur of opposition from the media. Morrison had pulled off a major achievement of what US public intellectual Noam Chomsky describes as the political art of 'manufacturing consent'..."

"How did it happen that the bulk of analysis and criticism of the submarine deal came from two former Prime Ministers, Paul Keating (Labor) and Malcolm Turnbull (Liberal) who, though on opposing sides of politics, were united in warning that the submarine deal stripped away Australia's sovereignty. Journalists were mainly silent on the fact that there were those in Government who, for ideological reasons, had wanted to sabotage the French submarine deal right from the start, ignoring the warnings from former Liberal Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser that a close relationship with the United States was dangerous and might not be in Australia's national interest".

"It was even left to an American newspaper, the *Washington Post*, to reveal the huge number of for-

mer senior US naval staff employed by the Australian government in the submarine selection process. Once Australia switched to the nuclear option, the US military personnel hired by the Defence Department provided Shearer and Australia's other China hawks with a ready-made bridge to Washington".

Australia Expected To Fight Alongside US In War With China

There is only the feeblest pretence that these nuclear submarines (still decades away from reality) will be used to defend Australia. Their role will be to patrol close to the Chinese coast, to hem in the Chinese Navy and, in the event of war, to attack China with cruise missiles. That's the theory, anyway. The advantage of their being nuclear-powered is that they don't have to return to port to refuel. US hawks expect Australia to fight on its side in any war with China over Taiwan.

One such key hawk is Richard Armitage, who held high-ranking security posts during the 1980s' Reagan Presidency, and has been an influential Washington figure in the decades since. The book describes a 1999 Melbourne meeting where Hugh White, then Australia's Deputy Secretary of Defence, was giving a briefing on Australian defence planning. A journalist present remembers this exchange: "That's all very well, Hugh", Armitage cut in. 'But I don't really see the force structure you are developing giving you a lot of options to support us when the balloon goes up over Taiwan'".

"Well, Rich', White says he replied, 'you've got to understand that Australian defence policy is not based on the idea that we support the United States in those scenarios'. 'Well, they ought to be', Armitage declared. 'What do you think this alliance is about?' He recalled that Armitage 'in his inimitable way literally, not just metaphorically, thumped the table and said that in the event of a US-China conflict over Taiwan we'd expect Australia to be there'".



NZ Herald, 21.9.21

"Armitage had a special relationship with Australia that he built up during the early 1980s when he was Deputy Secretary of Defense for East Asia and Pacific Affairs. As well as the dirty tricks he played on those who questioned the legitimacy of the Iraq War, he heavily courted politicians and any foreigners believed to be rising stars whose politics supported the United States, be they journalists or diplomats. He was reported as saying of Shearer: 'We look after our own'".

Integration With US Military

There is a lot more to the US-Australia military relationship than some exorbitantly expensive nuclear submarines that may or may not ever materialise. There is the top-secret Central Intelligence Agency/National Security Agency Pine Gap spy base near Alice Springs, in central Australia, which is crucial to the global warfighting abilities of the US. There is the North West Cape facility on the westernmost point of mainland Australia, which the US Navy uses to communicate with its nuclear attack subs. There is Australia's increasing involvement with the US military and intelligence satellite programme, in preparation for war in space.

"Australia's integration with the US military was, of course, well underway before the AUKUS agreement. As already noted, Pine Gap and North West Cape are part of this. But there is also the basing of thousands of US Marines in Dar-

win, the stationing of nuclear-capable B-52s at Tindal (Australian Air Force base, northern Australia), and the stationing of US military throughout the Australian Defence Force, including from the National Reconnaissance Office at the military headquarters in Canberra... Though Defence Minister Richard Marles has ruled out automatic support of the United States in any war over Taiwan, it is difficult to see how Australia won't be involved. Pine Gap, Tindal, North West Cape and Perth will all be integral to the battle".

Change Of Government; No Change Of Foreign Policy

Scott Morrison's Liberal government was voted out at the 2022 Australian election and was replaced by Anthony Albanese's Labor Party one. But Australia's commitment to AUKUS remained unchanged. When AUKUS was officially launched in the US in 2023, Albanese was there, along with US President Joe Biden and the UK's then Conservative Prime Minister Rishi Sunak (since replaced in 2024 by Labour's Sir Keir Starmer, but nothing has changed in the US/UK military relationship).

Why did nothing change in Australia with the change of Government? "...Morrison's government was keen to reinforce the US relationship. The National Security Committee of Cabinet accepted the transactional nature of the relationship (where Australia lost some of its independence); as flawed as that thinking is, it believed it was a

price worth paying for what it saw as Washington's protection. The fact that the increasing US military presence in the Indo-Pacific could draw Australia into a conflict seemed of little consequence in Morrison's desire to wedge Labor on national security".

"Morrison was working at achieving what successive Australian Prime Ministers had tried and failed to do: draw the United States more closely into the fabric of Australia's defence. The closer alliance might cause problems of sovereignty, but Australia would become indispensable to the United States. As a bonus for Morrison, if Labor did not give the deal 100% support, he could portray the Australian Labor Party (ALP) as being weak on national security and anti-American".

"Nuked" specifically attributes Labor's fervent desire not to be seen as "anti-American" to the events of 1975, when the Central Intelligence Agency and its local collaborators, succeeded in getting Gough Whitlam's Labor government overthrown in a bloodless coup. The US covert state was particularly concerned about Whitlam's revelations about its Pine Gap spy base and possible threats to close it. I have previously written about this in *PR* 49 (June 2015, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/peace-researcher-previous-issues.html>) in my obituaries of both Gough Whitlam and Malcolm Fraser, who succeeded him as Prime Minister.

For half a century the Australian Labor Party has lived in fear of the same thing happening again, and has bent over backwards to prove its loyalty to the US. "Nuked" concludes: "Morrison left many legacies when he was driven from office by an irate public, and there was a chance after Labor took over in 2022 to reassess the AUKUS debacle, with all of its wishful thinking, and deal with at least some of the structural problems it threw up".

"But Labor lost the one chance it had to identify itself as independent and courageous and put the interests of the country ahead of its understandable desire to win government. The consequences of the fear that drove the ALP leadership to embrace AUKUS with barely a second thought will haunt them for years to come. Just as Morrison was only too willing to trade Aus-

tralia's independence for the chance to win an election, so too was Labor. Now it is left to make work a deeply flawed scheme that, more than ever before, ties Australia's future to whoever is in the White House".

Jobs For The Boys

And what has happened to Scott Morrison, who retired from politics in 2024? "Along with Trump's former CIA Director, Mike Pompeo, Morrison became a strategic adviser to US asset management firm DYNE Maritime, which launched a \$US157 million fund to invest in technologies related to AUKUS. DYNE Maritime was established by an Australian former JP Morgan investment banker, Matthew Kibble, and an ex-US Navy surface warfare and intelligence officer, Tom Hennessey".

"Morrison also became Vice-Chair of American Global Strategies (AGS), headed by former Trump National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien. AGS, stacked with former Pentagon, White House and State Department officials, boasts that it 'assists clients as they navigate US government processes', a useful addition to any company wanting to boost profits in the burgeoning area of military spending".

New Zealand & AUKUS

I'm a New Zealander but, like a huge number of my compatriots, one with ties to our closest neighbour (I'm a quarter Australian). So, we take a keen interest in what happens there. In relation to AUKUS, were we upset that France got shafted? Not a bit of it; couldn't have happened to a more deserving country. In the Pacific, France is the last of the old school imperialists. It is not many years ago that it used its Pacific colonies for nuclear testing. 2024 has seen an indigenous uprising in its biggest Pacific colony, New Caledonia (Kanaky).

And, of course, New Zealand has history with France. In the 1980s it sent a hit team of intelligence agents to bomb Greenpeace's *Rainbow Warrior* at dock in Auckland (to prevent it protesting at those French nuclear tests). The bombing killed one crew member. A couple of the hit team agents were caught, tried, convicted and

imprisoned (French pressure, threatening a trade boycott of New Zealand, got them released). Several of the killers got away on a yacht which took them to an Australian island. From there they were picked up and whisked home – by a French submarine.

There are plenty of similarities between Australia and New Zealand but also significant differences. Whereas Australian governments of either party fall over themselves to loyally serve the US empire, New Zealand has been nuclear free by law since the 1980s (and it was an Australian Labor government, on behalf of the US, which tried to pressure NZ to drop the policy. That pressure backfired).

The nuclear free law has held up through several changes of Government in the 40 years since. It has become a bipartisan sacred cow. It is the reason why New Zealand was never considered to be invited to join AUKUS (the nuclear free law bans nuclear powered, as well as nuclear armed, vessels from New Zealand waters). Nor has New Zealand been so enthusiastic to fight America's wars – Australia rushed into Iraq in 2003; New Zealand refused to join.

But there is a constant push to get New Zealand further entangled in the US war machine, including Pillar Two of AUKUS (which has been, thus far, only identified as involving "advanced military technology"). New Zealand currently has a very pro-American Government, which is already a non-member "partner" of NATO and which is eager to serve the US, whether by sending military personnel to the Red Sea to join the war against the Houthis, hosting the Five Eyes Waihopai spy base and getting actively involved in the US militarisation of space.

Not All New Zealand Politicians Lining Up To Grovel To Uncle Sam.

For a refreshing contrast, here's an extract from a recent (2/10/24) press statement from Te Pāti Māori, which has six Members of Parliament (out of 123). "Meanwhile the New Zealand government is in talks with the United States about joining AUKUS to further support their war efforts.

This represents the next phase of global colonisation, and it is being negotiated behind closed doors,” Co-Leader Rawiri Waititi said.

“The US wants to use Aotearoa as a Pacific spy base. This could mean the end of our longstanding nuclear free policy to allow their war ships into our waters. AUKUS threatens our sovereignty as an independent nation, and the Mana Motuhake of every nation in the Pacific. It threatens to drag Aotearoa into World War 3,” said Waititi.

“The New Zealand government is putting everyone in Aotearoa at risk through their complicity. They must end all talks about joining AUKUS immediately. They must sanction Israel and cut ties with all countries who are committing and aiding war crimes,” said Co-Leader Debbie Ngarewa-Packer. As Tangata Whenua we will not allow our sovereignty to be determined by others, whether it is the New Zealand government or the United States government,” said Waititi.

Actually, the New Zealand military is primarily a threat to its own personnel. In October 2024 our Navy somehow succeeded in sinking one of its own \$100 million ships (I wonder if that is what economists call a sunk cost). China has nothing to fear from us just yet.

THE JAKARTA METHOD

Washington's Anti-Communist Crusade & The Mass Murder Program That Shaped Our World

Vincent Bevins

PublicAffairs, New York, 2020

- Greg Waite

This is the best political book I've ever read, and I'd encourage you to read it too. It's a grim piece of our history, but it's also uplifting because it brings back the lives, hopes, dreams and eccentricities of Third World activists from obscurity, where Western media left them to preserve America's public lies. In 2017 Bevins moved to Jakarta to cover Southeast Asia for the *Washington Post*.

Just a month after he arrived, a group of academics and activists planned to put on a low-key conference to discuss the coup of 1965. A social media campaign claimed this was a meeting to resurrect communism, still illegal, and a mob of largely Islamist men surrounded the building, trapping everyone inside, chanting “crush the communists” and “burn them alive” through the night.

Bevins spent years seeking and interviewing survivors of military murder campaigns to gather their experiences, to spell out the terrible consequences of US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and US government support for military repression in developing nations. He came to the conclusion that the entire world, and especially the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America has been reshaped by the waves emanating from Brazil and Indonesia in 1964 and 1965. These events and their repercussions – that is, the global extermination network they engendered – (was part of) the wider story of the Cold War.

This is the forgotten story of the “Third World”, a phrase which has been sidelined because it evoked a new non-aligned force in global

politics, independent from the Cold War First World (the West) and the communist Second World. It's the story of people freed from colonial tyranny after World War 2, and their many successes - before America encouraged, incited and armed military elites in Asia, Africa and South America to align with the US corporate agenda, to murder their own people for personal gain. It's the American Way.

By combining the insights of political insiders with thorough reference to historical sources and declassified documents, you get a very clear picture of the truth hidden behind diplomatic and ideological language - the CIA's pathological inhumanity, the US government's endless willingness to justify CIA excesses, and the corporations which sought their support in service of greater profits. Now that the world is dominated by the US First World and its supporting cast of neo-liberal followers, with a Second World of nations under self-serving authoritarian-military alliances, a revival of an independent and co-operative Third World is just what we need.

Holding The Third World Down

This book, “The Jakarta Method”, follows on perfectly from “Legacy of Violence” (which I reviewed in two parts in *Foreign Control Watchdog*, issues 165 and 166, April and August 2024, <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/65/12.html> and <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/66/17.html>) which uncovered colonial Britain's reliance on increasingly violent repression, culminating in routine use of murder squads.

Bevin's book begins after the Second World War, when the United States emerged as the newly dominant political, economic and military power. America's innovation in the now-independent colonies was to foster and incite military elites to take over the job of murdering independent political activists and citizens, but on a much larger scale. Think that's an exaggeration? Read the book and you'll think again. The regime-change coups and killings are just the beginning of this story.

As Bevins explains, military takeovers in Indonesia and Brazil “led to

the creation of a monstrous international network of extermination – that is, the systematic mass murder of civilians – across many more countries which played a fundamental role in building the world we all live in today”. Yet this history has been hidden, then forgotten. Bevins again: “I came to a deeply unsettling theory as to why these episodes have been forgotten. I fear that the truth of what happened contradicts so forcefully our idea of what the Cold War was, of what it means to be an American, or how globalisation has taken place, that it has simply been easier to ignore it”.

CIA Beginnings: Wisner's Weirdos And “Soft Sell” Jones

When the US woke up to its post-war global power, it had no dedicated secret service. It did not have Britain's centuries of experience running an empire, or the defensive spycraft the Soviet Union inherited from the Czarists. But it had the wealth to fund a big new agency, and the men who fought in the war to staff it. Many came from Yale, upper class types who grew up in boarding schools and joined the right secret society.

Paul Nitze, who wrote the policy paper which first articulated US Cold War policies, gave this description of the imperial values children soaked up in those private boarding schools modelled on elite English schools: “In history, every religion has greatly honoured those members who destroyed the enemy. The Koran, Greek mythology, the Old Testament. Doing in the enemy is the right thing to do. Of course, there are some restraints on ends and means. If you go back to Greek culture and read Thucydides, there are limits to what you can do to other Greeks. But there are no limits to what you can do to a Persian. He's a Barbarian”. The communists, he concluded, “were barbarians”.

One key new hire was Frank Wisner, who was flown into Romania in 1944 as station chief of the temporary spy agency created during the war. His sources advised of Soviet plans to take over the country, but Washington wasn't interested given the wartime alliance. Wisner was unable to stop the trains which took thousands of men and

women back to the Soviet Union's labour camps. This was likely a formative experience in the CIA's future modus operandi of acting without informing Government.

“From the beginning the CIA has two basic divisions. On one side was the gathering of intelligence through espionage. Its job was something akin to providing a private news service for the President. On the other side was covert action – the rough stuff, the active attempts to change the world. Wisner was in charge of these clandestine operations. His team – often called the ‘gang of weirdos’ elsewhere in Washington – started looking for ways to fight the Cold War, in secret around the world”.

First, it built a network of spies and “stay-behind” agents in Eastern Europe, who mostly got killed thanks to Kim Philby, the British agent and Soviet mole who worked closely with the CIA. After largely failing there, it turned to fighting communism in the Third World, despite knowing almost nothing about this new world of non-aligned nations.

Another key early player was Howard Jones, a diplomat and war veteran whose experience included a beating by Nazi soldiers in 1934 when he failed to salute the Nazi flag properly. After the war he entered the State Department. His style was to engage deeply with the complexities of each country. He was a natural partner for the CIA's clandestine political interventions, providing the “soft sell” for the US government's official position.

CIA's “Operation Ajax” In Iran

After WW2 the British set up a deal in which they took twice as much income from petroleum as Iran. War had ended their empire but they didn't plan to lose control of the natural resources through nationalisation of oil production. When Britain asked the CIA for help in 1952, MI6 had already tried and failed to overthrow new Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh. They appealed to the Americans' anti-communism after Mossadegh legalised the well-organised communist-led Tudeh Party, along with all other political parties. This was a taste of things to come in the Third World. Postwar communist

parties were well-organised but independent of old-school Second World communism, with policies that won them hearts, minds, membership and critically, elections.

US political changes were critical too. New Republican President Eisenhower appointed John Foster Dulles as Secretary of State and his brother Allen Dulles to lead the CIA. John Foster had two life-long obsessions, fighting communism and protecting the rights of transnational corporations. CIA intervention got the Presidential green light, with a budget of a million dollars. When the local CIA station chief argued against the coup plan, Allen Dulles recalled him. The stop-at-nothing anti-communists were now in charge.

Agents bribed politicians, paid street thugs, strongmen, and even circus performers to riot in the streets, while the CIA sought a suitable general to take over. CIA posters and pamphlets proclaimed Mossadegh was a communist, an enemy of Islam. They paid off journalists to write that he was a Jew, hired gangsters to pretend to be Tudeh members and attack a mosque. At one point, two Iranian agents tried to turn down further work, saying the risks were too great; they were told if they refused, they'd be killed.

Parliamentary elections were rigged and the Shah returned to serve the international oil companies as ruler of Iran. The CIA celebrated. It had finally proved there was a real use for its new agency. Independent countries would no longer be tolerated, neutral countries were potential enemies, and Washington would act whenever it decided countries were not sufficiently anti-communist or subservient to US corporations.

The next big operation was Guatemala. When land redistribution purchases only paid US company United Fruit the low land valuations it had lodged to minimise taxes, the company started a PR campaign in the US denouncing President Arbenz as communist, bringing US journalists on junkets and sponsoring news coverage.

The CIA asked the Iran coup leader Kermit Roosevelt to oversee again but he refused, telling his bosses future coups wouldn't work

unless “the people and the army want what we want”. The op went ahead anyway with a new head. The CIA took three coup attempts to take over this time. The CIA planted boxes of rifles marked with communist hammers and sickles to be discovered, broadcast false reports on US-controlled radio stations, bribed a tiny ragtag army incapable of winning militarily, while US pilots dropped bombs on the capital. This was psychological rather than actual warfare, but it worked. The President resigned, handing over power to the Armed Forces head Colonel Diaz.

Days later, the CIA station chief and his deputy met with Diaz, explaining: “You made a big mistake when you took over the Government. Colonel, you’re just not convenient for the requirements of American foreign policy”. Diaz was shocked and asked to hear it from the US Ambassador. Peurifoy arrived at four in the morning to back them up. He also showed Diaz a long list of Guatemalans who would need to be shot immediately.

“But why?” Diaz asked. “Because they’re communists,” Peurifoy responded. Castillo Armas, the US favourite, took over. Slavery returned to Guatemala. The new Government established Anticomunism Day, and rounded up and executed between three and five thousand supporters of Arbenz. And back in the US, President Eisenhower was elated. This was another triumph for his new approach. Coups, bombing, bribes, coordinated lies and, ultimately, mass murder were the new plan.

Sukarno’s Independent Indonesia

After the Japanese left Indonesia in 1945, a man named Sukarno declared independence. He had reservations, so three impatient youth leaders kidnapped him until he proclaimed independence. The Dutch came back to reclaim “their” colony, calling their brutal reconquest “police actions”, and the Independence leaders were forced to move around various islands, making alliances with local kingdoms and mounting resistance.

Also in 1945, the Dutch East Indies administration received a ten-million-dollar loan from the United States to finance its return to Indo-

nesia. As resistance built though, international pressure on the Netherlands grew and by 1949 the United States threatened to cut all economic aid for postwar rebuilding. In these changes, you can see the US’s emerging strategy of breaking up colonial monopolies on global resources to build up their own postwar corporate advantage of scale.

The Dutch withdrew but in the new Republic of Indonesia, only 5% of the population of 65 million could read and write, thanks to Dutch neglect and extractive colonialism. The incoming Government, acting under a constitution drafted during the war by the Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence, began an enthusiastic programme of nation building.

Indonesia is the world’s fourth most populous country, the world’s largest Muslim-majority country, and was the CIA’s first really large-scale intervention. By 1965 it was also home to the world’s largest Communist Party (PKI) outside the Soviet Union and China, but the vast majority of those members joined because the Party was deeply involved in the everyday work of creating their newly independent nation – these were teachers, health workers, community leaders; not hardline, tightly organised communists. They didn’t see a mass murder campaign coming.

Bandung, The Third World And Independent Development

The “Third World” became something real, something organised, during the *Konferensi Asia-Afrika* in Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955. This ground-breaking gathering brought the colonised people of the world together into a movement, opposed to colonialism and subservient development, but independent of the US and the Soviet Union. The initial proposal was a response to the founding of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), a US-sponsored copy of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), but the agenda and invitation list expanded. The countries at the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference represented 1.5 billion of the world’s 2.8 billion people.

The conference agreed ten basic principles, ranging from promotion

of mutual interest and cooperation, respect for justice and international obligations, and settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means. It also provided the structure that became the global Non-Aligned Movement in 1961 in Belgrade (in the former Yugoslavia).

But to Eisenhower and the Dulles brothers, neutralism was an offence. If you weren’t against the Soviet Union, you were against the United States – or at least you looked like competition to corporate America. The CIA spent a million dollars trying to influence Indonesia’s 1955 elections without success, while the Indonesian Communist Party raised its share of the vote to 17%.

Turbulent Times

In 1956 Khrushchev’s Soviet Union sent tanks into Hungary. This was also a failure for the CIA, who had encouraged the Hungarians to revolt, and many did so, thinking that they would get US support which never came. Next came Nasser’s nationalisation of the Suez Canal and the invasion of Egypt by France, Britain and Israel. They were forced to withdraw after US pressure.

And in Indonesia the Communist Party was doing well in elections. It was the most efficient, professional organisation in the country, with a reputation for honesty in a country plagued by corruption. The CIA began sending arms to support regional rebellions and flying bombing missions against the Indonesian military to destabilise the country, which the US Ambassador denied. In 1958 Indonesia shot down one of the planes. The pilot was a CIA agent from Miami, Florida.

The CIA’s Frank Wisner, returning from stress leave after the deaths in Hungary, warned the Dulles brothers this rebellion could be unpredictable and explosive. They ignored the advice and approved another \$10 million. CIA bombing missions started flying out of Singapore, the US Ambassador was transferred out and the more compliant Jones brought back to keep up official denials. He was authorised to offer Indonesia’s Prime Minister 35,000 tons of rice if the Government “took positive steps to curb communist expansion within the country”.

Bevins explains: "Throughout the course of the CIA's history, this dynamic would often be repeated. The Agency would act behind the back of the diplomats and experts at the State Department. If the CIA was successful, the State Department was forced to back the new state of affairs the Agency had created. If they failed, the agents just moved on, leaving the diplomats to clean up the mess".

The CIA's 1958 operations were one of the largest in the CIA's history, but it failed in Indonesia. The Army put down the rebellions, greatly increasing its power within the country as a result. Washington had been exposed in Asia as an aggressor against one of the world's leading neutral powers. Very little of this made the news back home, but people in the Third World knew.

Breaking the country into pieces to slow down its development had failed. Jones and the US military attaché in Indonesia emphasised that the US should support the Indonesian military as a more effective, long-term anti-communist strategy. And behind the scenes the CIA continued its crazier schemes, including discussion of assassinating Sukarno, and funding a pornographic film made by Bing and Larry Crosby with a Sukarno look-alike to undermine his reputation.

In 1959, after all this foreign disruption, Sukarno replaced elections with a "National Council". Parties which supported the rebellions, like the Socialists and the Muslim party funded by the CIA, were excluded. Ironically, the Indonesian Communist Party also lost influence, because it had been heading for an electoral majority. And by 1962 there were more than 1,000 Indonesians studying operations, intelligence, and logistics in the US, mostly at Fort Leavenworth Army base.

Meanwhile, the US was also developing an academic justification for this shift away from support for democracy towards building military power and influence. In its think tanks and universities, Modernisation Theory proposed a series of stages before arriving at "modern" society. And a 1959 State Department study of Latin America

"indicates that authoritarianism is required to lead backward societies through their socio-economic revolutions... The trend towards military authoritarianism will accelerate as developmental problems become more acute". And the CIA was happy to help.

After the Congo's moderate independence leader Patrice Lumumba received no help from the UN to deal with a Belgian and mining-backed rebellion, he asked for Soviet military help. The CIA organised his assassination and backed Army chief of staff Joseph Mobutu, who staged public executions of his rivals and built a dictatorship. And there were two failed coups too, in Cuba and Cambodia, and multiple failed attempts on Castro's life. In 1962 the CIA helped South Africa arrest and imprison Nelson Mandela. In 1963 it backed a Ba'ath Party coup in Iraq, supplying list of communists and alleged communists which the new regime slaughtered.

CIA's New Plan: "Build A State Within A State"

Under President Kennedy, the CIA funded a new covert "civic action plan" in Indonesia which is still a classified secret today. Providing the military with US equipment and training to engage in fishing, farming and construction, it was increasing the Army's influence around the country, and no doubt its corruption too. And Indonesian Army officers were still pouring into Kansas for "training". In 1959 the generals pushed through a law limiting the economic rights of foreign nationals, which in practice meant excluding Chinese. The Army also organised violent anti-Chinese riots, using US funding.

Sukarno in Indonesia was continuing his strongly independent support for a new vision of the future and development, while the US was funding and building up the military as a political and economic force through its "civic action programme". Then, in 1963, Sukarno moved from words to action, publicly declaring his opposition to Britain's artificial borders for the newly independent Malaysia – just before his economic advisers met the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The IMF prescribed its standard structural adjustment programme – more raw materials exported, a currency devaluation, monetary tightening and an end to subsidies. Prices shot up, life became difficult and confusing for citizens. New President Lyndon Johnson declined to sign an agreement on continuing aid for Indonesia. And he made a deal with the British, backing them on the creation of Malaysia in return for support in Vietnam. In August 1964, Johnson declared war on North Vietnam and Sukarno established relations with Ho Chi Minh's government.

Another small, doomed coup with murky origins in the Army began on 30th September, 1965, resulting in the murder of six captured generals. On October 1st, the CIA's preferred leader seized control of the country and broadcast a set of deliberate, carefully prepared lies. These became the official story for decades, because there were no other voices allowed after that. All media were shut down.

The military story was the only story, and it seems a bizarre one today, but then it was the only story you could find. The 30 September plot was a failed communist plot. The six generals were murdered in depraved, satanic rituals (by communists!?). Members of *Gerwani*, the Women's Movement, danced naked, cutting off the generals' genitals and gouging out their eyes. China had delivered weapons to People's Youth Brigades. The Communist Party had long lists of people it planned to kill, and mass graves prepared.

Lists For Murder

Lists were provided by the CIA, and murders were encouraged by a wide cast of thugs, through the paramilitary brigades developed during the anti-Malaysia campaign. They began on October 7, 1965, in the province of Aceh on the island of Sumatra. Aceh's military commander, who studied at Leavenworth, USA, toured the province telling crowds "The PKI (Communist Party) are *kafir* (infidels). I will destroy them down to the roots. If in the village you find communists and do not kill them, it will be you who we punish. Crush the PKI!"



Chilean dictator General Pinochet with Henry Kissenger

Locals interviewed recalled they were being told to help kill the communists, or be killed themselves. And the military arrested a huge number of people. Many Leftists turned themselves in, feeling it was the safe and prudent option, and trusting in Indonesia's long history of social tolerance. The Army's internal name for this operation was *Operasi Penumpasan* - Operation Annihilation.

And by now the new US Ambassador was fully supporting the Army, after the first murders: "Some damage to its (PKI) organisational strength through arrest, harassment and, in some cases, execution of PKI cadres. If Army repression of PKI continues and Army refuses to give up its position of power to Sukarno, PKI strength can be cut back. In the long run, however, Army repression of PKI will not be successful unless it is willing to attack communism as such. Army has nevertheless been working hard at destroying PKI and I, for one, have increasing respect for its determination and organisation in carrying out this crucial as-

signment". It was now on the US payroll.

Embassy staff worked with CIA analysts to prepare lists with the names of thousands of communists and suspected communists. Managers of US-owned plantations also provided lists of suspected communists and union organisers. Now people weren't shot in the streets – they were disappeared. Family and friends had no idea if they were alive, paralysing them with fear.

US officials were in close contact with the military, making it clear that US assistance could resume if the PKI was destroyed, Sukarno was removed, attacks on US investments halted, and Indonesia adopted IMF and US approved economic plans. They bluntly warned if oil nationalisation went ahead, US support would be withheld. According to a State Department cable in December 1965, all the Army leaders wanted to know was "how much is it worth to us that PKI be smashed?".

In January 1966, the slaughter arrived on the island of Bali. People were killed with big machetes, which were not common on the island. Balinese people preferred the *klewang*, a thinner local blade used in agriculture. These weapons arrived at the same time as the Army's coordinated propaganda campaigns. Propaganda teams toured rural areas, spreading stories which again featured *Gerwani* (women's groups).

This time they claimed there were *Gerwani* plans to sell their bodies to buy weapons for a communist revolt, and to castrate the soldiers they seduced. The predictable result of these campaigns was to encourage widespread rape, mutilation and murder of women. At least 5% of the population of Bali, around 80,000 people, were killed. In total, between 500,000 and one million people were killed across Indonesia, and another one million were forced into concentration camps.

As Bevins concludes: "Almost everyone killed or imprisoned was en-

tirely innocent of any crime. They were sentenced to annihilation, and almost everyone around them was sentenced to a lifetime of guilt, trauma, and being told they had sinned unforgivably because of their association with the earnest hopes of Leftwing politics”.

Back in the US, the CIA's Frank Wisner killed himself. One person in the CIA had a conscience. In March 1966, pushed by student protests, President Sukarno called top Government officials to the Palace in an attempt to regain control, where he was surrounded by the Army and later forced to sign power over to Suharto.

The US immediately turned on the money again. Within days US mining company Freeport was exploring West New Guinea, where it secured control of the world's largest gold mine. By the late 1960s, Indonesia was operating a system of US-supported concentration camps comparable to the worst years of the Soviet Union. And a message had been sent from the US to the Third World.

Chile - “Jakarta Is Coming”

When Salvador Allende won Chile's election without an outright majority, he needed Congress to ratify the result. Nixon gave the CIA \$10 million to change the result. Notes from this meeting said “best men we have, make the economy scream”. Its first 1970 coup attempt was another failure for the CIA but the money kept coming. The words “*Yakarta viene*” and “*Jakarta se acerca*” appeared on walls – “Jakarta is coming”. An estimated 200,000 Chileans were forced to escape into exile.

Brazil Becomes Centre For Coups And Corruption

Brazil was more conservative than its other South American neighbours, signing a military staff agreement with US military officials in 1940. In 1949 the Escola Superior de Guerra (ESG) was founded, modelled after the US National War College. Economic relations were more complex. Eurico Dutra, President from 1946 to 1951, met US expectations by breaking off relations with Moscow and banning the Brazilian Communist Party, then the strongest communist party

in Latin America. But the US refused loans to fund Brazil's development and wanted US firms to dominate the local oil industry.

Brazil's next President, Getulia Vargas, frustrated by the same problems, announced he would support colonial freedom struggles at the UN and proposed a tax on excess profits. Clearly, he was a man ahead of his times. So, Brazil's Escola Superior de Guerra began plotting to remove him, with US support. Facing a military coup after murky events, Vargas beat them to it by shooting himself.

His 1955 replacement, pro-US centrist and economic nationalist Juscelino Kubitschek (JK), was next to be undermined by the US with “programs to educate Brazilians on the dangers of communism and communist-front organisations” and denial of development funding. Proposals to double the minimum wage really set off alarm bells. US Ambassador Lincoln Gordon warned if this wasn't stopped, Brazil could become “the China of the 1960s”.

1960's victor was provincial politician Janio Quadros, backed by the Right-leaning UDN party. Quadros was pro-West but wanted his country to become a leader of the Third World. The elite made its distrust clear and he resigned within months. Next up, Jango Goulart tried to shore up his support with significant land and electoral reforms.

Ambassador Gordon, briefing the US President in 1962: “I think one of our important jobs is to strengthen the spine of the military. To make it clear, discreetly, that we are not necessarily hostile to any kind of military action whatsoever if it's clear that the military action is – ‘Against the Left’, Kennedy finished”. CIA money poured into Brazil. The US had learned from its defeats though, and this time the money served to encourage powerful anti-communist elements in both the elite and the military.

A small attempt at an uprising led by disaffected regional soldiers was quickly put down, becoming the perfect material to create a mythology of planned communist takeover and mass murders of military officers. The military took over

in 1964 and elections disappeared for 25 years. The US had made tankers, ammunition and aircraft carriers available to the plotters, but they weren't needed. The new US model of supporting local elites and armies was a success (for US business). And Brazil became an active regional backer of anticommunism and military strongmen, notably in Bolivia and Uruguay

The Long-Term Consequences

Bevins: “How did the US anti-communist crusade affect life for billions of people today? In 1965, Sukarno and much of the rest of the Third World came together with the intention of changing the relationship between the First and Third World. They believed that after centuries of racist colonialism, it was their time to take their place in world affairs as independent nations, to assert their power and intelligence and potential, and to rise as equals”.

“It's now probably broadly accurate to say that all of Latin America, with the exception of Cuba, consists of crony capitalist nations with powerful oligarchies. Anti-communist programs (also) deformed the world socialist movement. Many of the global Leftwing groups that did survive the 20th Century decided that they had to employ violence and jealously guard power or face annihilation”.

“The major losers of the 20th Century were those who believed too sincerely in the existence of a liberal international order., those who trusted too much in democracy, or too much in what the United States said it supported, rather than what it really supported. That group was annihilated. Fanatical anticommunism has never really left us, even in the First World. This violent, paranoid style in politics remains a very potent force”.

Raises Big Questions

Because this historical story is told so thoroughly, it also raises big questions about today's world. What might new forums for non-aligned nations look like? How do states protect local producers against predatory global corporations? Which forms of political organisation can survive against the

combined forces of local authoritarians and international secret services? How can we constrain and reduce spies, military and paramilitary forces? How can we protect future whistleblowers like Edward Snowden, who leaked many key documents?

The book also left me worrying, if Western “intelligence” zealots were happy to initiate the mass murder of millions to increase corporate profits up to the 1980s, the period of this book, what hidden interference are they funding now? Beyond the obvious drone murders, State surveillance and economic warfare, how are they interfering in activists’ lives in this era when phones collect all our information, and secret services have a back door to the Internet servers? And internationally, how much is the dysfunction of global regulators an accidental result of history, flawed structures and personal advancement, and how much of it is well-oiled interference by spies on behalf of tycoons?

NUCLEAR WAR: A SCENARIO

Annie Jacobsen
Transworld, UK, 2024

- Greg Waite

This unique book has been very successful in raising awareness of the nuclear threat for a new generation. Jacobsen forces the reader to pay attention by centring her book on a feasible scenario. The detail of this story gives you a clear picture how a nuclear war could play out, and how that might affect all our lives.

Jacobsen: “A nuclear strike on the Pentagon is just the beginning of a scenario, the finality of which will be the end of civilisation as we know it. This is the reality of the world in which we all live. The nuclear war scenario proposed in this book could happen tomorrow. Or later today”. Since the early 1950s, the United States government has spent trillions of dollars preparing

to fight a nuclear war, while also refining protocols to keep Government functioning after most of the American population, without protection or guidance, dies.

On a planning day, a group of American military officials got together to share the secret plan which might have resulted in the death of one-fifth of the world’s then population. One of the attendees later said what shocked him most was that for Moscow alone “the plan called for a total of 40 megatons, about 4,000 times more than the bomb over Hiroshima”.

Chapter one describes the decision process, then ends by asking: “Can anyone stop the plan for mass exterminations before it happens?” Chapter two goes back to Japan in 1945, retelling the description written by 13-year-old Setsuko Thurlow when the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. Chapter three shifts to Los Alamos after the Second World War ends, when the Navy presented a plan to demonstrate the power of this new weapon to invited US leaders at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands, with a view to expanding the Navy’s post-war relevancy by increasing the number of atomic bombs.

After the test, the Joint Chiefs of Staff requested an evaluation of the atomic bomb as a military weapon. The report, classified until 1975, warned atomic bombs were “a threat to mankind and to civilisation” able to “depopulate vast areas of the Earth’s surface.” But also: “If used in numbers, atomic bombs not only can nullify any nation’s military efforts, but can demolish its social and economic structures and prevent their reestablishment for long periods of time”. The board recommended stockpiling more bombs.

Stockpile Overkill

By 1947 the US had 13 bombs, by 1948 there were 50, by 1949, 170. At that time military planners agreed that 20 bombs provided enough firepower to destroy the entire Soviet empire but by 1951 the US had built 438 atomic weapons. By 1952, 841. 1952 also saw the invention of the thermonuclear bomb or hydrogen bomb, where one nuclear bomb within a second

nuclear bomb creates nuclear fusion.

The prototype hydrogen bomb had 1,000 times the force of Hiroshima and was described by its inventors in a letter to the US President as evil and a danger to humanity. By 1957 there were 31,255 nuclear bombs, each one of which could kill ten million people. This crazy number of bombs was justified by the idea of deterrence: maintaining a massive nuclear stockpile is necessary to discourage nuclear attack.

But a key point of Jacobsen’s book is to show there are many reasons why deterrence might fail in practice. Her scenario is the launch of three nuclear weapons by North Korea; a US retaliation with hundreds of bombs - which must travel over Russia to hit Korea – followed by a full Russian response after failing to connect the two authorising Presidents to de-escalate. If that seems implausible, there is a window of less than ten minutes from satellites detecting a conventional intercontinental missile launch until command centres like the Pentagon are wiped out, or just three minutes from a submarine launch 400 miles offshore, so there isn’t much time to negotiate.

And, to date, US interceptors of this type of missile are more likely to miss than connect. There are some US systems with shoot-down records closer to 85% but they are generally only on battleships, typically deployed overseas on NATO duty. And anyway, how do you protect so many military and civilian targets? Imagine nuclear strikes targeted at major cities, nuclear power plants, at oil storage, Internet or transport hubs.

At the human level, this is also a story of the difficulty of exerting Presidential judgement against established military conventions (assuming you have a President with judgement). Phrases like “use it or lose it” and “launch on warning” appear to be part of the military culture. Guiding these decision-makers is the Decisions Handbook, with a range of pre-specified scenarios, responses, and consequences. For example, 700 million Chinese citizens could die in the scenario of a large-scale strike on Russia. This book is always carried with the President in a suitcase

("the nuclear football") which also contains the Presidential codes to unlock nuclear strikes.

One Example Scenario, Many Possibilities

"Nuclear War: A Scenario" then tells the human story of a potential conflict in detail. This is based on the author's interviews with 47 key nuclear decision-makers, including the Director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, US Secretary of Defense, and the Commander of the US Strategic Command. An incoming missile is detected, and negotiation begins e.g. "We retaliate to decapitate", argues the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, acting in a manner colloquially known as 'Jamming the President,' whereby generals and admirals pressure the President" ... while time ticks to impact.

An attempt is made to save the President but there is limited time to get to the backup command bunker. His helicopter transfer crashes in the first nuclear shock-wave, and line-of-command confusion follows. You might question the likelihood of some details, but by the time you understand nuclear decision-making, its clear plenty of other things could go wrong too.

After The Bombs, Winter

Following the nuclear bombing and retaliatory strikes comes a new section, After The Bombs Drop. What does the next year, the next decade look like? Beyond the immediate explosive levelling, the firestorms and lingering death by radiation, we now have a massive amount of soot in the upper atmosphere. Temperatures might be 27 degrees colder globally, and 40 degrees colder in the US (that's Fahrenheit; or 15 and 22 degrees Celsius, so around zero in NZ). The sun's warmth is reduced by 70%. Rainfall has halved, there are violent weather swings. It's not going to be easy growing food. That's the nuclear winter.

A 2022 paper by ten scientists across four continents estimated five billion people could die from a nuclear war between the US and Russia. Nobody really knows though. Very few have the skills to return to hunter-gathering in this wildly hostile new world. As Carl Sagan wrote: "The population size

of Homo sapiens conceivably could be reduced to prehistoric levels or below".

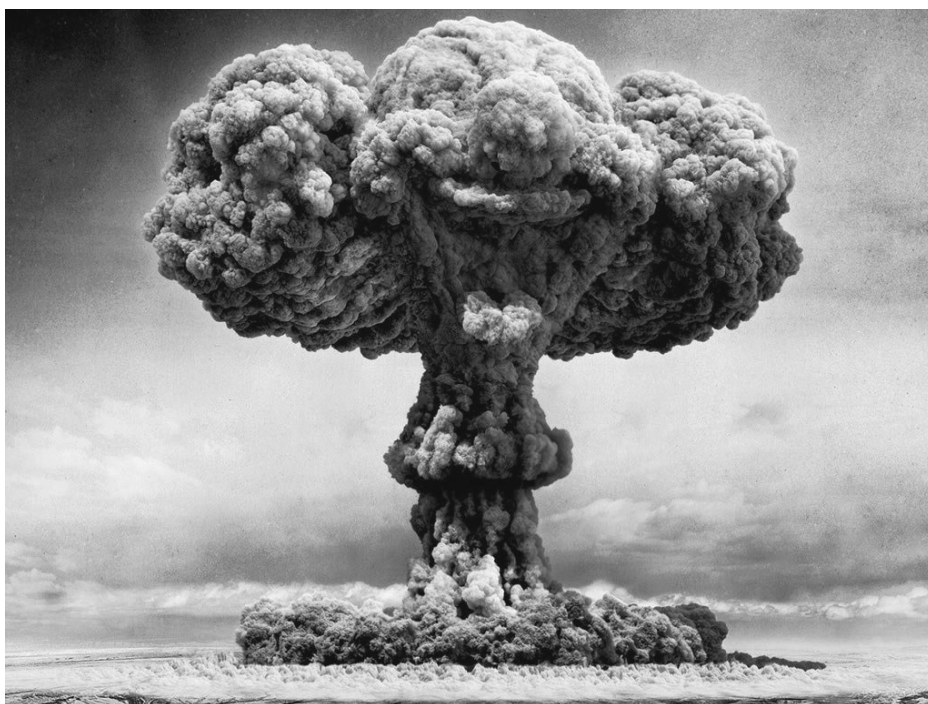
Here's a few more nuclear weaponry facts as food for thought: A US President can, on his or her own, launch a nuclear attack. All US land-launched intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) are designed so they cannot be stopped once launched. There are nine nuclear armed states in the world today. 82 warheads are the likely response to Korea to "restore deterrence". A typical Russia scenario hits 1,000 targets, with 100 in Moscow alone. Annie Jacobsen has done a great job here in bringing all these hidden details about the international nuclear threat into public view and starting this new debate.

US Militarisation

In the book, former Secretary of Defense William J Perry described what a person in his position might be considering at a time like this scenario. "In this case, if it was a nuclear bomb in Washington DC,

the Cabinet would likely be decapitated and an emergency Government would have to be brought into play. An immediate consequence of a nuclear strike would be that democracy would be completely gone and military rule would take place". Perry believes that if military rule is ever imposed on today's America "it would be almost impossible to undo military rule".

And there are plenty of other roads you could imagine to military rule in these Doomsday scenarios, beyond the regional divisions imagined in the recent US film "Civil War". Starting with armed groups controlling food stocks, then the limited crops of new food, the transport and oil, the medicines. Back in the real world today, I have confidence in a revival of peoples' power through the necessary struggle to reclaim our climate change responses back from ineffective corporate money-taking. Reducing the world's weapons has to be another essential part of those changes, and the increased national activism and international cooperation they will require.



Obituaries

By Murray Horton

KEITH LOCKE

Keith Locke, who died in June 2024, aged 80, was an absolute titan of the Anti-Bases Campaign (ABC) and specifically (but definitely not exclusively) of our decades-long campaign to expose and close the Waihopai spy base. That is why we have put Keith on the cover of this issue of *Peace Researcher* (PR). Keith was a regular speaker and participant at ABC's Waihopai protests throughout the 12 years that he was a Green MP, from 1999 to 2011. Of course, he was not alone – ABC has had an excellent working relationship with the Greens throughout our existence.

These are the Party Co-Leaders who have come to Waihopai protests: Rod Donald (a regular, until his untimely death*), Jeanette Fitzsimons*, Russel Norman, Metiria Turei and Marama Davidson. Other Green MPs to have taken part have included Steffan Browning, Golriz Ghahrahman and Teanau Tuiono. * My obituary of Rod is in PR 32, March 2006. Jeanette Fitzsimons' obituary, by Catherine Delahunty and myself, is in PR 60, November 2020. Both are at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/peace-researcher-previous-issues.html>

Central Figure At Waihopai Protests For Decades

Keith was an absolutely central figure at every Waihopai protest during his time in Parliament. Long before that, he joined ABC's protests at the spy base before it was even built, in the late 80s. Decades later he still proudly wore his "No Spy Waihopai. Stop The Base" T shirt. He came and spoke at Waihopai demos as, firstly, the Alliance spokesperson for the few years that the Greens were in the Alliance; after that he spoke on behalf of the Greens. And he did so for decades, when he was an MP, before he was an MP and after he was an MP. He was the longest-

serving Greens participant at our Waihopai protests.

For years he came in tandem with the late Rod Donald, and also with a whole raft of other Green MPs and Co-Leaders. Keith was an invaluable rock of the Anti-Bases Campaign and, as usually the only MP with any sustained interest in the subject, let alone an informed and progressive interest, he added a whole different dimension to our campaign.

He and Michele Donovan, his partner for 40 plus years, were always welcome guests at our camp, usually turning up in their rental car with some much-appreciated food and drink (fish and chips and wine) for the after-match function. Keith's last Waihopai protest was in 2018 and he was a keynote speaker at an accompanying Blenheim public meeting. By that stage he had the serious health problems – a vicious double whammy of cancer and Parkinson's disease – that were to kill him. That was the last time I saw him.

Keith's active involvement spanned decades of the Anti-Bases Campaign (of which he was an actual member from 2003 until his death). For example, he came on the 1990 Touching The Bases Tour, a week-long activity with international participants. It started at the Tangimoana spy base in the lower North Island and worked south via a tour of secret Wellington and then on to the South Island and the Waihopai spy base, a mountain climb (in spring snow) to the former US Na-

vy observatory at Black Birch, and finished at the US military transport and logistics base at Christchurch Airport.

Nearly 30 years later he wrote the lead article – "NZ Creeping More Into The Embrace Of The US Military" – for PR 56, November 2018, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/peace-researcher-previous-issues.html> His conclusion in that article is even more relevant today: "I'm not saying we should go the other way and back China against the United States, particularly as China has many faults and is a one-party State".

"However, on several issues, including support for the UN, action on climate change, the Iranian nuclear deal, trade, Palestinian issues, the peaceful resolution of disputes, opposition to Western intervention in the Middle East, China's stance is better than that of America. Surely, New Zealand would be better off with a truly independent foreign policy, taking a more 'non-aligned' stance in relation to the stand-off between the US and China, working with each power on the merits of each situation, and helping to mediate conflicts where necessary".

Keith was also a member of the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA), from 2000 until his death. Keith didn't merely express his support for ABC and CAFCA by paying his subs, and turning up at Waihopai protests. For many years, up until his death, he was one of the people regularly pledging money to CAFCA/ABC



Keith Locke speaks at Waihopai spy base protest, 2011 (Joe Hendren holds the megaphone)

Organiser Account that provides my income as the Organiser for both groups.

SIS Spied On Him For 50 Years, Including As MP

I had less to do with Keith in my CAFCA capacity, with one notable exception. At the end of the first decade of this century, Keith, CAFCA, Bill Rosenberg and myself were among those who successfully applied for our files from the Security Intelligence Service (SIS). As an MP, Keith's file was the highest profile one, particularly as it revealed that the SIS spied on him whilst he was in Parliament which, quite rightly, led to uproar. I well remember him coming to our Christchurch home and sitting down with Bill and myself whilst going through his file, line by line, to eliminate anything he deemed too personal for the media.

Here's the relevant extract from my article "SIS Spied On CAFCA For Quarter Of A Century" in *Foreign Control Watchdog* 120, May 2009, subsection "Spying On MPs A Step Too Far" <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/20/06.htm> "The most high-profile and controversial Personal File to have been released is that of Keith Locke (as the children of Jack and Elsie Locke, veteran communists and activists, Keith and his sister Maire Leadbeater had been the subject of SIS Personal Files since their childhood and onwards for 50 years)".

"The most controversial aspect of Keith's file was that the last entry was as recently as 2006, seven years after he was elected to Parliament as a Green MP. The SIS took a close interest in his meetings, as an MP, with members of NZ's Tamil community and a fact-finding trip that he made to war torn Sri Lanka earlier this decade" (i.e. the noughties. MH).

"Keith made the point that the SIS was spying on meetings that he was holding with his constituents. Unlike me, and others, Keith hasn't received an assurance from (then SIS Director Warren) Tucker that the SIS has stopped spying on him; nor (unlike me) has he received an assurance from Tucker that '...you have never encouraged unlawful activity such as sabotage, subversion or terrorism...".

"Spying on 'old Lefties' (Tucker's phrase) is one thing, but spying on a sitting MP is quite another. The revelation led to uproar in Parliament, the media and among the public. (Then Prime Minister) John Key, as Minister in Charge of the SIS, ordered Paul Neazor, the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security, to investigate. He produced an unusually speedy report recommending that the SIS should not spy on MPs, but gave the spies a great big escape clause by saying that if they have to it should be cleared with the Speaker (a member of the governing Party)".

"Neazor also dipped his toe into the broader issue of the SIS files and said: 'Historically, because of the extensive cross-referencing system, when a Personal File existed, information from any source about that person could find its way to the file. It could produce a vacuum cleaner approach to collecting' (*Press*, 18/3/09; "Watchdog Slates Scale Of SIS Files", Mike Houlihan). So, that's where all us 'old Lefties' et al are - we've been sucked up into the dustbag of (the SIS version of) history".

A decade later, I wrote another *Watchdog* article, titled "SIS Spied On Keith Locke For 50 Years" (issue 150, April 2019) <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/50/index50.html> "The SIS Personal Files released a decade ago came complete with handwritten opinionated notes on them. Here's another quote from my same 2009 *Watchdog* article: 'One of the last entries in the Personal File of Keith Locke MP is the handwritten word 'Eeeexcellent!' accompanying a selection of letters critical of Keith published in various papers in very recent years".

"Paul Neazor, the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security, wrote, in his March 2009 report on Keith's complaint about the SIS spying on him as an MP: 'Mr Locke suggested that some at least of this material might have been gathered because of his critical stance in Parliament on intelligence issues. All I can say is that one notation which could have given that impression was certainly unprofessional and ought not to have appeared on a file of a neutral intelligence service'. I would like to hear the SIS' definition of neutrality".

SIS & GCSB Labelled Him A "Threat"

This wasn't the end of Keith's dealings with the SIS. *Watchdog* 150 (April 2019) also included an article by Keith himself, titled "SIS Apologised To Former MP For Labelling Him A 'Threat'" (it was originally published in the *Spinoff* and reprinted with permission). "In April 2018 I received a letter from Rebecca Kitteridge, the Director of the Security Intelligence Service, apologising for the way I was referred to in internal SIS documents".

"She wrote that I had been described as a 'threat' in speaking notes for a Joint Induction Programme run by the SIS and the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) since 2013. In the SIS documents I was identified as an 'internal' threat because I 'wish[ed] to see the NZSIS & GCSB abolished or greatly modified'. The documents labelled this a 'syndrome'".

"In her apology, Ms Kitteridge said 'the talking point suggests wrongly that being a vocal critic of the agencies means you are a 'threat' or a 'syndrome'. In fact, people who criticise the agencies publicly are exercising their right to freedom of expression and protest, which are rights we uphold, and are enshrined in the Intelligence and Security Act 2017". * *Hilariously, Director Kitteridge's letter of apology to Keith admitted that the relevant document misspelled "threat" as "treat". So, the SIS and GCSB branded Keith as a treat to national security. Ed.*

"I haven't gone public on this until now, but given the recent news about several other State agencies spying on people, I decided that what happened to me should be in the public domain. In his December 2018 report (into the use of private spy company, Thompson and Clark, by various State agencies), State Services Commissioner Peter Hughes described the State spying on critics of deep-sea oil drilling, like Greenpeace, 'an affront to democracy".

"Like Ms Kitteridge, in her letter of apology to me, Hughes said that it was 'never acceptable for an agency to undertake targeted surveillance of a person just because they are lawfully exercising their

democratic rights, including their right to freedom of expression, association and right to protest'. Most disturbing, in the cases Hughes identified, is that many civil servants must have known about this illegal, anti-democratic surveillance without blowing a whistle on it. In my case, many SIS and GCSB officers must have heard me being identified as a 'threat' without challenging it".

"How else could the disparaging reference to me have stayed in the officer training material for ten years. Ms Kitteridge told me the 'threat' label was carried over into the Joint Induction Programme speaking note from a 'Protective Security Advice presentation (believed to have been developed in about 2008)' and 'a historical security aide-memoire (believed to have been developed in 2012)'".

"To make matters worse, the ten-year period when I was deemed to be a 'threat' includes the last three years (2008-11) of my 12 years as a Member of Parliament. It appears the SIS learnt nothing from the public controversy, in early 2009, when it was revealed that the SIS had a file on me, which they were updating during my time as an MP, with material going up to 2006".

"This resulted in an inquiry by the then Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security, Paul Neazor, which found that 'a sitting MP because of his or her function and standing [is] not generally a subject for intelligence collection or surveillance'. This, in turn, led to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Speaker, the SIS and the Minister in Charge of the SIS, signed off in 2012, endorsing the Inspector-General's recommendations".

"This MOU also had a section on 'political neutrality' whereby the SIS 'does not take any action for the purpose of furthering or harming the interests of a political party'. Clearly the SIS and GCSB were acting in a politically biased manner by treating my Parliamentary critique of the intelligence agencies, delivered officially on behalf of the Green Party, as representing a 'threat'".

"It seemed pretty clear that the SIS had breached the MOU requirements for political neutrality, by

treating a sitting MP and his views as a 'threat', so I wrote to the current Speaker, Trevor Mallard, about it. He didn't think the MOU had 'been breached in any way'. Mallard side-stepped my contention that the SIS had acted in a politically biased manner, but did admit that 'certain materials being used by the security agencies contained inappropriate expressions of opinion regarding your conduct, including during a time that you were a member of Parliament'".

"He said he met regularly with the SIS Director 'and will continue to ensure that she is aware of the need for security agencies to respect the role and independence of Parliament'. I have to disagree with the Speaker that it was just a matter of the SIS using 'inappropriate' language. For a spy agency to describe someone as a 'threat' is serious. It identifies them as a target for some form of monitoring or surveillance, and this is what has happened to me over many years. When I got my SIS file, I found it ran for hundreds of pages, beginning in 1955 and ending in 2006".

"It is a case study in what is wrong with our intelligence agencies. No criminality is identified. I have no criminal record. The file is all about my legitimate political activities, mainly in international peace and justice campaigns (e.g. against apartheid and the Vietnam War), but also in the labour movement. My file illustrates the main function of the SIS over the years, which hasn't been to track down criminals (which the Police do quite well) but to spy on political dissenters".

CAFCA holds the SIS Personal Files of a number of people (including me), as well as the SIS file on CAFCA itself. Keith is one of those who asked the SIS for his file during the spy agency's glasnost moment at the end of this century's first decade, and then accepted CAFCA's invitation to entrust us with a copy of all or part of it. It forms one of the source materials for this obituary.

Philippines Solidarity Campaign Leader

I knew Keith before he was involved with either ABC or CAFCA. I first met and worked with him in

the second half of the 80s, when the Philippines was the hot international issue (how cruelly ironic that today's Philippines President is Ferdinand Marcos Junior). Keith was the national coordinator of the Philippines solidarity movement. I made my first visit to that country in 1987.

I was one of the NZ delegates on the 1988/89 Asia Pacific International Peace Brigade (Keith's sister Maire Leadbeater was head of the NZ delegation). Although he didn't go on it, Keith slogged his guts out organising it. Throughout his five years heading the national solidarity movement, Keith took considerable flak from reactionaries and their media mouthpieces that it was all a "communist front".

I met my wife Becky during the Peace Brigade trip (she was on the staff of the conference which was part of it). I went back up to Manila for several months in 1991 and we got married there. Being good political activists, we timed the wedding to coincide with the Senate vote on whether to renew the treaty which had allowed the US to maintain its massive military bases in that country for nearly 100 years.

The progressive movement held a range of activities to coincide with the vote and Keith was one of the NZ delegates. So, he was also able to be one of the Kiwi guests at our wedding. And to cap it all off, the Senate voted to chuck the bases out. I was among the huge crowd outside the Senate, in the pouring rain, when the vote was taken.

I was the Secretary of the Philippines Solidarity Network of Aotearoa (PSNA), from its foundation in the early 1990s until it wound up in the early 2020s. Throughout that whole 30-year period, Keith was an active and key member of PSNA. We ran several national speaking tours of NZ by leading progressive Filipino figures – Keith was involved in those. He was a regular donor. He arranged for PSNA to get a regular source of income, namely by handing over to us a bank account which he'd set up and which had three regular pledgers. It was a modest amount but it made all the difference for decades.

And Keith never forgot those Filipino movement leaders with whom he'd worked when he was head of the NZ solidarity movement. In July 2008, when he was a Green MP, he made a special trip to Christchurch to speak at PSNA's memorial gathering for our great mate Crispin Beltran (universally known as Ka Bel – Ka means "comrade"). Ka Bel had been the national leader of the militant union movement Kilusang Mayo Uno (May First Movement); he'd been a Congressman and he'd been the Philippines' most high profile political prisoner. PSNA toured him through NZ in 1999 and Becky and I had the pleasure of hosting him when he was in Christchurch.

I was the Editor of PSNA's publication *Kapatiran (Solidarity)*. Issue 31 (October 2008) was devoted to Ka Bel <http://www.converge.org.nz/psna/Kapatiran/KapNo31/Kap31List.htm> Keith wrote: "I remember meeting him during the momentous day of September 16 1991, when the Senate of the Philippines annulled the Military Bases Agreement with the United States. I had been an international guest on the big peace demonstration outside the Senate building. I went inside the Senate building to follow the proceedings, and there was Crispin buzzing around doing his bit of last-minute lobbying. His was a life of struggle, lived to the full".

Here is an extract from the 2024 tribute to Keith by the current Aotearoa Philippines Solidarity: "From 1986-1991 Keith worked full time as the national coordinator of the Philippines Solidarity Network. This was a tumultuous time in Philippine history, marking the end of the Marcos martial law regime but also sadly the continuation of death squad killings of progressive activists".

"The anti-US bases movement was at its height, coinciding with the height of the ultimately successful anti-nuclear movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand. There was great interest in Philippine affairs in Aotearoa/New Zealand during this time. Keith organised many exchange visits between progressive New Zealanders and their Philippine counterparts – cementing ties that continue to underpin our work today".

"As an MP Keith continued his interest in Philippine affairs. When then Philippine President, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, visited New Zealand in 2007, Keith used his platform as an MP to bring attention to extrajudicial killings of activists in the Philippines and the unjust imprisonment of the Philippine Congressman Crispin Beltran, also known by his nickname 'Ka Bel'".

"Similarly, in 2010, when the New Zealand government designated the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army as a terrorist entity under the Terrorism Suppression Act, Keith also spoke out – calling for New Zealand to instead join Norway as a neutral facilitator of peace talks between the Philippine government and the communist movement. Keith was a firm advocate of peaceful conflict resolution to create a just permanent resolution of armed conflicts and the end of human rights abuses – a stance he also took on other conflicts, such as Palestine and Bougainville".

"Following his retirement from Parliament in 2011, Keith continued to take a great interest in the Philippines. He attended Aotearoa Philippines Solidarity events and happily signed statements calling for an end to extrajudicial killings, the freeing of political prisoners and other human rights causes. He was always happy to pass on his knowledge and experience".

"Most Notorious Communist Family In New Zealand"

Keith James Locke was born into political activism, in Christchurch, in 1944. "Former Prime Minister Robert Muldoon is said to have described the Lockes as the most 'notorious communist family in New Zealand'" (*Wikipedia*). I've known the Locke family for as long as I've been a political activist, that is, since 1969. I started off in the Christchurch Progressive Youth Movement (PYM) and had plenty to do with Keith's father Jack, who was the leading light of the local Communist Party (CPNZ).

Youngest daughter Alison was in the local Socialist Action League. I had dealings with Jack for decades in my later (and still current) CAFCA capacity. Next, I worked with Jack's wife, Elsie Locke, for

decades as a fellow peace activist, primarily through my (still current) capacity with ABC. My obituary of Jack is in *Watchdog* 84 (May 1997), <https://www.scribd.com/doc/24211537/Watchdog-May-1997> My obituary of Elsie is in *PR* 23 (June 2001) <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/peace-researcher-previous-issues.html>

Then I started working with Keith's sister Maire Leadbeater in the 80s, a partnership that continues until today. I've worked with her in three capacities – ABC, CAFCA and the former PSNA. And in my personal capacity – for example, I gave Maire access to my SIS Personal File, as part of her research for "The Enemy Within", her 2024 book on NZ State surveillance. I've seen both Maire and Alison since Keith's death, separately visiting their Christchurch home town (sadly, the section of the Avon Loop street where the Locke family lived for many decades, was red zoned and permanently cleared of all buildings after Christchurch's 2010/11 earthquakes).

So, Keith grew up in, and started as a political activist in, "New Zealand's most notorious communist family" (Elsie had been a leading CPNZ figure for decades before leaving the Party in the 1950s). The first entry in Keith's SIS file was made in 1955, when he was 11. He attended the University of Canterbury, where he was active in the New Left Club, and got a degree in psychology. He went to Canada to get a master's degree in sociology. Whilst in Canada he was Chairman of Australians and New Zealanders Against the War in Vietnam. The SIS kept tabs on him during his student years in both NZ and Canada.

Socialist Action League Leader

Keith returned to NZ in 1970 and worked as a junior sociology lecturer at Wellington's Victoria University until 1972. He joined the Socialist Action League (SAL) in 1970 and rapidly became one of its leading national figures. From 1972-77 he was the fulltime Editor of its fortnightly paper *Socialist Action*. "By 1972, he was both the National Secretary of the SAL and chairman of 'Socialists for Labour'" (*Wikipedia*). The latter group

did not end well. To quote from his SIS file: "In May 1974 Locke was expelled from the Farm Road Branch of the Labour Party for belonging to an organisation opposed to the Labour Party".

In his tribute to Keith for his 80th birthday (just months before Keith died in 2024) his old friend and colleague Matt Robson wrote: "We were not exactly the flavour of the month with the Labour hierarchy. In my branch in 1972 Mike Moore and his organiser Phil Goff summonsed us to plead that we would not sell *Socialist Action* at Mike's election meetings with banner headlines of 'Legalise Abortion'. Moreover, they were not too keen on Keith's headlines calling for a vote for Labour but demanding socialist policies, which Keith helpfully provided".

I didn't know Keith at all in the 70s. He had left Christchurch by the time I came onto the scene. What is now CAFCA was founded in the mid-70s. I didn't have any dealings with him in those days, but from memory, my colleague (and fellow CAFCA founder) Bill Rosenberg debated him on the question of "nationalism versus internationalism". That's a hoary old political argument on the Left.

Keith's time as a high-profile national leader and ideologue of SAL

saw him subjected to intense SIS scrutiny. One report in his file from the 70s records the difficulty that Keith and SAL had in paying the rent on their Wellington building, and details of the locks on individual doors. Another report was by an SIS agent who attended a screening at the Censor's Office of films that Keith had applied to import (the agent described the films as "rather monotonous and infantile").

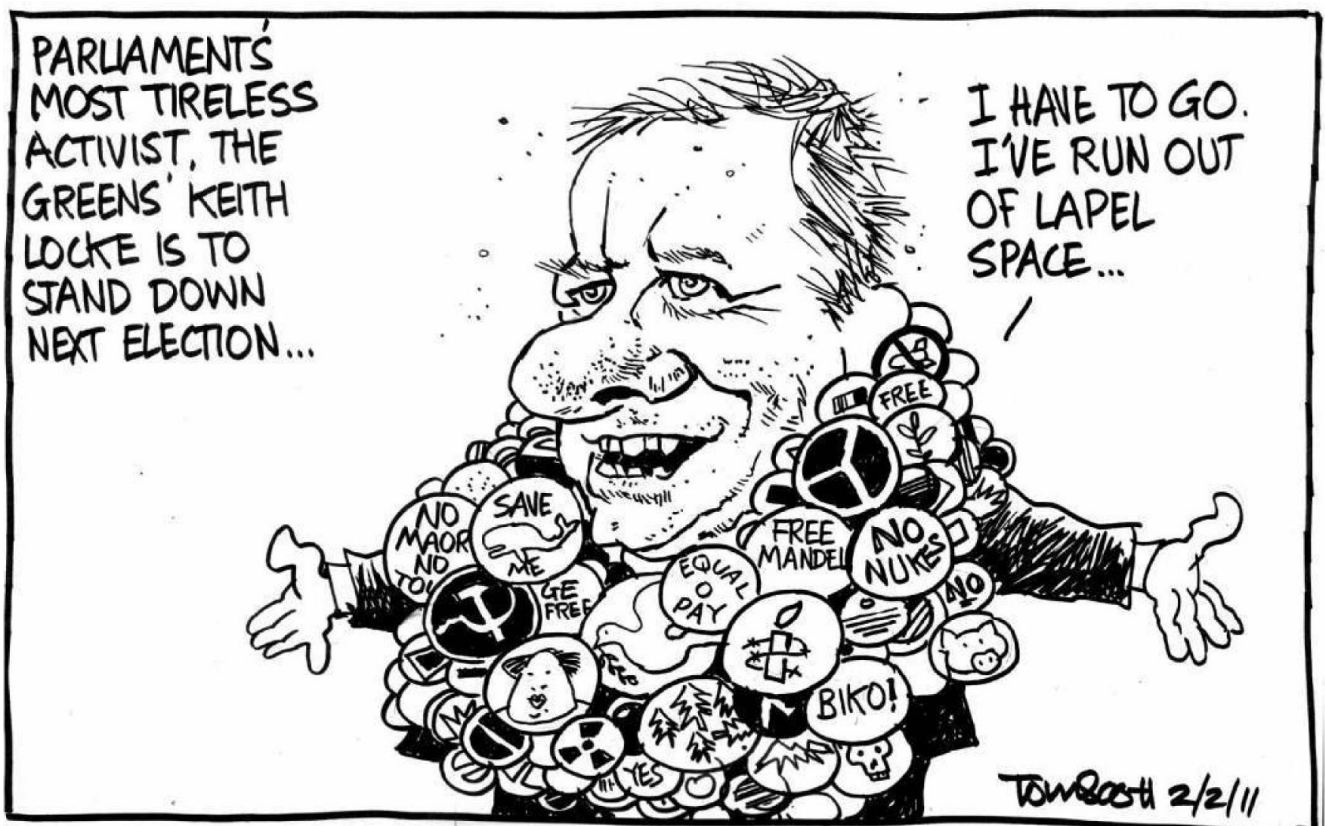
But even the SIS couldn't find anything bad to say about Keith personally. A 1977 report quotes a source within SAL as saying: "...he named Keith Locke as 'probably' being the outstanding (national) leader. He is treated with 'a lot of respect'. He is experienced and capable and when he speaks everybody sits quietly and listens. He is quiet and shy and does not talk over-much but when he does speak his expression is good and it is obvious he has thought deeply about what he has to say, 'he never talks off the top of his head...If you wanted to put your two bob on someone, you'd put it on Keith Locke'.... Source feels Locke has a theoretical depth of knowledge not matched by many others in the SAL".

Manual Work; Bookshop Manager

From 1979 until the mid-80s, Keith worked in, and was an active unionist in, a car factory, a freezing works and the Railways workshops in the Wellington region. In 1985, he moved to Auckland, working in the freezing works for a year (he spent the rest of his life in Auckland). This was all part of the SAL tactic of having its members integrating with the industrial working class, which was a practice also followed by the CPNZ.

Indeed, by working in the freezing works, Keith was following in his father's footsteps. Jack Locke was a Christchurch meat worker and active unionist for decades. Throughout this blue-collar industrial period of Keith's life, the SIS was closely watching him. One 1983 report says: "Locke is a quiet speaker. He speaks slowly and thoughtfully. 'He looks decent, like a school teacher', was the way (withheld) put it – in contrast to some other more animated speakers among SAL members".

By 1985 Keith had left SAL. I don't know why but factionalism and the continual quest for the holy grail of "the correct line" have always been features of the extra-Parliamentary Left (I have to say that I'm glad that I've never been a member of any party). I got a glimpse of this, decades after Keith had quit SAL.



Tom Scott, 2.2.2011

Becky and I were hosting another old out of town friend and comrade when I informed him that Keith was coming to visit right then and there.

He looked anxious. I asked why; after all they'd both been in SAL together. He replied yes, but Keith had been in "the other faction" (I'm pleased to report that they both behaved impeccably, and no blood was spilled on our carpet). The SAL and the CPNZ had different interpretations of socialism (rather like the whole Catholic and Protestant thing) and both ceased to exist decades ago.

For the next several years Keith was the full time, paid, national coordinator of the Philippines Solidarity Network, in which capacity I first met him. He'd already been actively involved in various international solidarity campaigns, such as for Chile and East Timor, plus other major campaigns, such as the nuclear-free and anti-apartheid movements. The SIS continued its surveillance of him during this period and spied on the Philippines Solidarity Network as a whole (it was routinely attacked in Rightwing media as a "communist front", organising "Red tourism" for New Zealanders to the Philippines).

One SIS report from this period covers Keith's attendance at, and speaking at, a Wellington meeting organised as part of ABC's 1990 Touching The Bases tour. From 1990 to 99 Keith was the manager of Auckland's non-profit One World Books (it also hosted the Philippines Resource Centre). That's where I used to visit Keith whenever I was in Auckland in the 90s.

New Labour; Alliance; Greens MP

Keith's political journey was evolving. In 1989 he joined the newly-formed New Labour Party (NLP) and went onto its first National Council. He was the NLP's foreign affairs and defence spokesperson. In 1991 the NLP, Greens, Mana Motuhake and Democrats joined forces to form the Alliance. He was its foreign affairs spokesperson until after the 1996 election, when he was replaced by list MP Matt Robson. By 1997 he was critical of the Alliance cosying up to Labour and when the Greens left the Alli-

ance that year, Keith joined them and became the Party's foreign affairs spokesperson.

Keith was elected as a Greens list MP in 1999. He only got in once special and overseas votes were counted, by which time Helen Clark and Jim Anderton had already stitched up a Labour/Alliance coalition government. In fact, Keith's election tossed out one Labour MP and cost the Government a majority but the Greens agreed to support the Government on confidence and supply. Keith was a Green MP for 12 years, until he retired from Parliament at the 2011 election. I once asked him what does a list MP do? He replied that he considered the whole country to be his electorate and he was as good as his word.

"Through his twelve-year Parliamentary career, Locke was the Green Party spokesperson for foreign affairs, defence, immigration and disarmament, and a member of the foreign affairs, defence and trade committee. He was also a Green Party spokesperson for state services, police, security, human rights, and Auckland transport".

"In 2000, Locke had two member's bills drawn from the ballot. The first, the Intelligence and Security Committee Act Repeal Bill, attempted to reform oversight of the SIS and the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB). It was defeated at its first reading. The second, the International Treaties Bill, attempted to give greater Parliamentary oversight of treaty-making. It was sent to select committee, but ultimately defeated at its second reading in 2003".

"As a Member of Parliament, Locke established a profile of being an 'unofficial civil liberties watchdog'. He was involved in campaigns against the Police being armed with tasers, and for repeal of the law of sedition. He advocated for refugee rights, most prominently in the drawn-out case of Ahmed Zaoui, an Algerian asylum seeker initially deemed by the New Zealand government to be a security risk, but later allowed to settle in New Zealand with his family".

"During his time in Parliament Locke was a leading critic of New

Zealand's anti-terrorist legislation, such as the Terrorism Suppression Act 2002, which he argued breached human rights principles. He also opposed New Zealand's commitment of special forces to the war in Afghanistan" (*Wikipedia*). You can read CAFCA's submission on the International Treaties Bill at <http://canterbury.cyberplace.org.nz/community/CAFCA/submissions-by-cafca.html> And you can read ABC's submission on the Terrorism Suppression Bill at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/abcterr.htm>

Red Baiting

Throughout his whole time in Parliament, he was subject to the most disgraceful Red baiting and sledging from his political opponents, Winston Peters being the most prominent. They dubbed Keith "Pol Pot" (because, as *Socialist Action's* Editor in the 1970s, he had initially supported Pol Pot's victorious Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. He quickly renounced his support once the genocidal nature of that regime became known).

Actually, that's one thing we had in common. Pol Pot was the nickname my Railways workmates gave me in the late 80s and early 90s, plus putting a hammer and sickle flag on my desk (it was all in good fun, nothing like what Keith had to endure). After his death the *Listener* ran a quote from Keith about Winston Peters' opinion of him: "I was a namby pamby pacifist who didn't believe in violence, and at the same time, I was a supporter of terrorism. I always found that a bit of a contradiction".

Keith was also a good sport and, most unusually for a politician, a man of his word. In 2005 he said that if ACT won the Epsom electorate at that year's election, he would run naked through the streets. It did, and he did – well, almost. "Locke's promise made headlines in media around the world. On Sunday 25 September 2005 Locke walked near-naked down Broadway (a main shopping street in Newmarket, Auckland) wearing shoes, socks, a G-string, and body paint. The paint camouflaged Locke's skin by depicting a suit and tie from the neck down" (*Wikipedia*).

MAY BASS

Waihopai Women's Camp 1988

May Bass, who died in August 2024, aged 82, was a key figure in the Waihopai spy base protest campaign at its very beginning, before it was even built or operational. She was one of the leaders of the 1988 Waihopai women's camp. Here is the relevant extract from Maire Leadbeater's 2013 book "Peace, Power & Politics: How New Zealand Became Nuclear Free": "The women-only peace camp, which began in May (1988), was an initiative of May Bass, at the time the Hamilton-based Editor of *Peacelink*, and June Gregg from Timaru".

"May had taken part in a women's peace camp at Cockburn Sound in Western Australia and both had been to Greenham Common (*the famous women's peace camp in the UK. MH*). The two of them sorted out the logistics, hiring some caravans and setting them up on a site made available by a sympathetic farmer. May was delighted that the camp drew in a new section of the women's peace movement – lesbian women, who had great networks to build up the numbers".

"There was always a lot of discussion before Waihopai demonstrations. Actions that might result in arrest would signal the depth of commitment and ensure publicity. However, it was accepted that there should be no pressure to join in on an 'arrestable' action. The women's first occupation of the construction site took place on May 12. They had decorated the machinery and the site with peace symbols, flowers and streamers".

"May and two others who had volunteered for 'arrestable' roles climbed on the earth-moving machinery, while the other women encircled them. When the construction workers arrived, they were angry. For May it was the first time in her life when she thought she might die. 'I've never seen a man so angry – he just came right up close to my face and said 'How dare you, how dare you'. Then he



Keith Locke and his lifelong partner Michele Donovan, outside Parliament

Keith certainly had a life outside of politics. When he retired as an MP, I asked him what he was going to

do. He replied that he might now have time to go to a few more Warriors' games. I told him that he must be a glutton for punishment. Actually, post-retirement, he stayed very active, writing for various outlets, coming to Waihopai spy base protests, etc, etc.

Throughout the decades that I knew him, Keith and I always looked each other up, whenever we were in Christchurch or Auckland, respectively. Keith was a regular and welcome guest at the Christchurch home of Becky and myself (always prefaced by a phone call that started with a cheery "Keith here"). Here's one story from those visits. It was not long after the February 2011 killer quake. By the time Keith visited, we'd had so many of the bloody things that we'd become rather blasé about them.

One struck while we were chatting to Keith in our dining room. We just kept on chatting to him. After what must have seemed like an eternity to him, he asked: "Shouldn't we get under the table"? Oh no, we assured him, this is only a magnitude 3 (or whatever) and, therefore, not worth worrying about. Besides, I doubt that all three of us would have fitted.

Kind, Generous, Fearless And Staunch

I was last in Auckland in 2017 and was privileged to be invited to a big Locke family dinner at Maire's home. It was there, whilst sitting next to Keith, that I was able to spot the telltale early symptoms of Parkinson's. I was one of those invited by his family to write a tribute to him for his 80th birthday, just a few months before he died in 2024, of cancer. Here is how I finished it: "Keith, I've valued your friendship for decades and I've valued your political partnership in what Filipinos call 'the parliament of the streets'".

"You have been kind, generous, fearless, and staunch. You have made a huge contribution to the progressive movement in this country and further afield. As for that old 'nationalism versus internationalism' debate, we both established that the correct answer is both. You have courageously withstood enormous amounts of abuse and provocation from your enemies, some of whom still hold high office today ...you can be proud of what you've packed into, and achieved, in 80 years".



May Bass (second from right), Owen Wilkes (right) 1980s' nuclear free campaign

got into the cab of his front-end loader and he drove it at full speed over really rough ground, and I was hanging on for dear life – I daren't look down, it was so frightening”.

“After three or four minutes the driver stopped his machine and May found herself on the ground, nauseous but otherwise unscathed. The three women who had clung to machines were all arrested. Amazingly, the peace camp kept going from May to September, a total of 117 days in the depths of a Marlborough winter” (Jeremy Agar's review of *Peace, Power & Politics* is in *Peace Researcher* 47, August 2014, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/peace-researcher-previous-issues.html>).

Back To Waihopai 2023

May didn't come back to a Waihopai protest until 2023. Here's the extract from my 2023 Organiser's Report about that February 2023 protest: “We (i.e. ABC) decided to start our day of activities with a gathering in Blenheim called ‘The Changing Face Of Spying’. Over the previous two years covid had

wreaked havoc with our plans to get people together at Waihopai. We were determined to try again”.

“In 2022 we had three speakers lined up - Green MP Teanau Tuiono; Sonya Smith from Rocket Lab Monitor, Mahia (to talk about the campaign against NZ's newest US military base); and May Bass, a leading figure in the very earliest Waihopai spy base protests in the late 80s, specifically the 1988 women's camp”.

“In 2023, we invited those same three people back again, with mixed results. Teanau got there but Sonya must be jinxed. Covid stopped her from coming to Waihopai 2022 (and a planned 2021 Christchurch public meeting - although she did get to a 2022 Christchurch public meeting). Sonya lives in Gisborne and just days before Waihopai 2023, Cyclone Gabrielle ripped through that part of the country, obliterating any chance of her flying to Blenheim”.

“May Bass and her partner Bill McAulay did make it, but only after a nightmarish journey on the Cook Strait ferry ‘service’, which saw

them arrive many hours late (they also endured a similar delay on the return trip). Waihopai Domebuster Adi Leason was another scheduled speaker but he couldn't even get a booking on any ferry run by either company. So, our Blenheim meeting had to go ahead without two of the advertised four speakers, namely Sonya Smith and Adi Leason. Nevertheless, it did go ahead....”

Over The Fence

“After the meeting we headed out to the base, where we held a low-key protest, with placards, banners and big posters which we attached to the base's outer fence. I was the MC and one of the several speakers. Nobody has been allowed onto the base land since the Domebusters' non-violent direct action dome deflation in 2008 (before that we used to have permission to protest at the inner gate). So, it was no surprise that when ABC's Warren Thomson (Waihopai Warren, of many arrests in years long past) went over the outer fence to plant a placard - as he does at every protest - the cops told him to get out”.

"What was a surprise was that the cops agreed to a request from a number of the women present for them to go over the outer fence and to go to a mutually agreed point on the farmland surrounding the base. May Bass had never been back to Waihopai since the 1988 women's camp, at which she was a leading figure (meaning that she had never seen the domes - they weren't in place in 1988 and they were gone by the time she next came back, in 2023). So, the women, plus one small dog, went onto the base land with police blessing. I ended up working with a cop, each of us on opposite sides of the fence, both physically lifting 80-year-old May back over that fence. I shook the cop's hand to thank him".

Peace Movement Leader; Peacelink Editor

There was a lot more to May than Waihopai protests 35 years apart. She started in the peace movement in 1981, eight years after she arrived in NZ from London. "She started working in the peace movement in Dunedin, Christchurch, then Hamilton, where she became Waikato coordinator for United Nations International Year of Peace, 1986. 'The whole community became involved in peace issues that year, places like women's refuges and men for non-violence all joined

us'" (*Waikato Times, Magazine*, 26/9/92, "Holding The Front For Peace", Lynda Drumm).

She was a Field Officer for the Peace Foundation in the 1980s and was on the Peace Movement Aotearoa Working Group. May was a leading national figure in the 1980s' peace movement, when it was at its strongest. In his funeral eulogy, Nicky Hager said: "In short: May helped make NZ nuclear free, a huge thing to be part of, and then continued working for the country to have an independent foreign policy"

Her biggest role in the 80s and 90s peace movement was as Editor of the former *Peacelink*. This brought her into a working relationship with ABC founder Owen Wilkes (PR 31, October 2005, is a Special Issue devoted to Owen, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/peace-researcher-previous-issues.html>). Here's an extract from my obituary of him: "Of course, his major contribution in those years was his co-editing of *Peacelink* with May Bass, a veteran peace activist, who produced it from Hamilton".

"Owen commuted there (from Wellington) to work on it and spent more and more time there, eventually living there permanently with May. *Peacelink* was an excellent publication, reaching the highest standards that we always came to

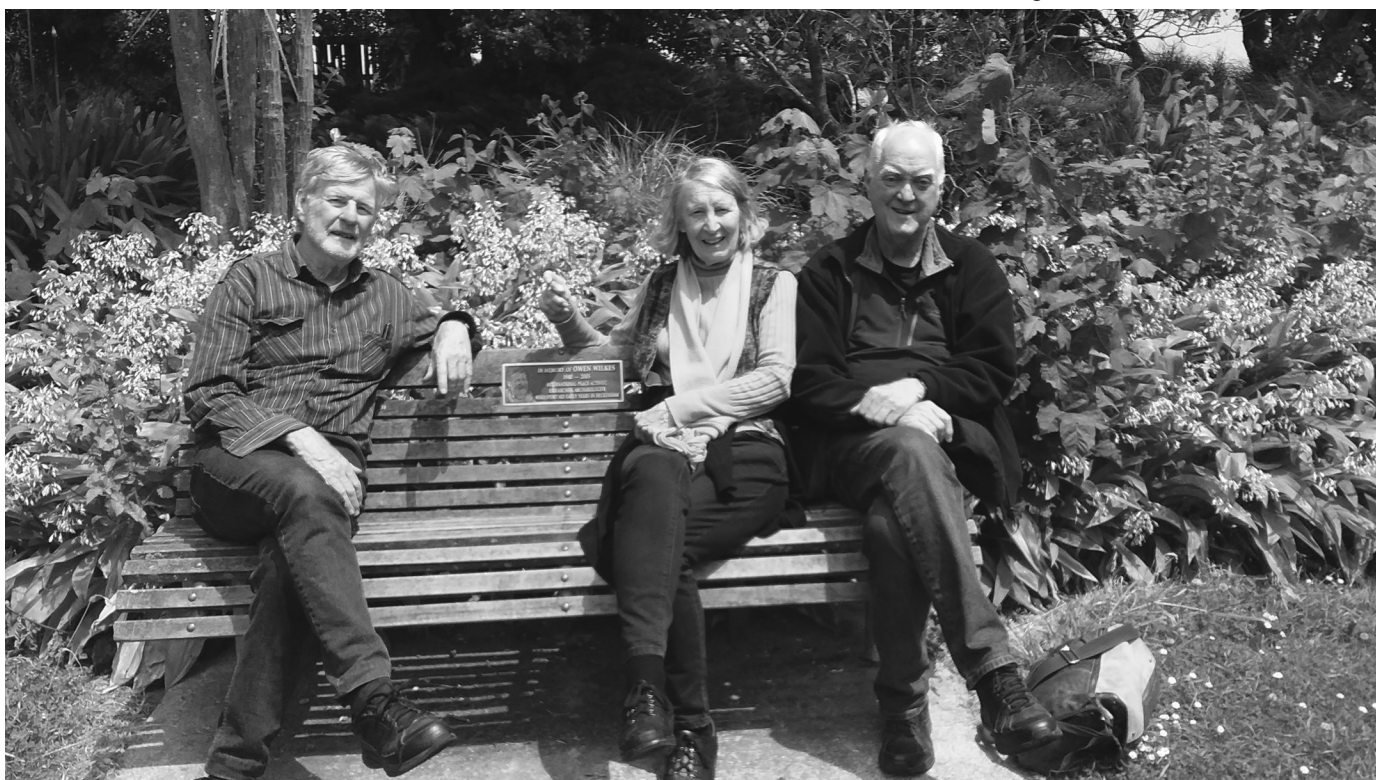
expect of Owen. Its demise, in the early 1990s, when the two of them were basically burnt out, was a serious blow to the peace movement and it has never been replaced by an equivalent publication. Its loss is still keenly felt".

Leaving Peace Movement

To quote from the 1992 *Waikato Times* article again: "But even May Bass is planning to move away from the movement. She has given up her responsibility as Editor of nationwide peace magazine *Peacelink*, not because of growing apathy in the region but because the peace worker has had enough ... 'After 5 ½ years you get stale and are no use to anybody - I felt that I really needed a change'".

"She is instead looking towards working for the environment, conservation, and art promotion issues. 'I am looking for something outside of the area I have worked in but where I can still deal with important issues and concerns. I have always seen art as a positive force. The (peace) movement was sometimes quite negative in saying what we didn't want. Artists see what we could be'".

She and Owen both dropped out of the peace movement and lived together in Hamilton. They did a lot of travelling, tramping and sailing, dividing their time between their



From left, Warren Thomson, May Bass and Murray Horton, on Owen Wilkes memorial bench, Christchurch, December 2022. Photo by Bill McAulay

Hamilton home and their place at Kawhia. The last time I saw Owen was in Hamilton in the course of my national speaking tour in 2002. They both came to my meeting and Owen invited me to their home the next morning. As we all know, Owen killed himself in 2005, aged 65. May was completely devastated – she had no forewarning. ABC and CAFCA organised a Christchurch memorial gathering and May sent some material down for it. That was my last contact with her for 16 years.

“Peacemonger”

Here's the relevant extract from my 2022 Organiser's Report: “In September 2021 I was contacted, out of the blue, by May Bass... May said: ‘A friend of mine rang me to let me know there was an article about Owen in the April (2021) edition of *Watchdog*. She sent me the magazine. It reminded me that having waited all this time since Owen's death I have still not found anyone who is interested in writing a book about him”.

“There is a huge amount of material that he left and which I arranged to be stored in Wellington Library. I am wondering whether you might have some ideas?”. I told May that I wouldn't be the writer of any such book (she was not the first person to suggest it), because I don't have the time necessary to do it justice”.

“But I sent her a whole lot of stuff about Owen that has come out since his death (such as various *Watchdog* (and *PR*) articles, and the reissued 1980s' documentary “Islands Of The Empire”). Within a remarkably short period of time, the whole thing fell into place. I mentioned the book idea to a newly joined CAFCA member (a 1980s' Wellington peace activist and colleague of Owen's, with whom I'd lost contact for decades)”.

“He took it upon himself to contact a professional writer (Mark Derby of Wellington, who has had books reviewed in *Watchdog* by Jeremy Agar over the years). Mark accepted with alacrity. He and May Bass are the co-editors. It is a collection of essays about Owen by a number of writers, and ‘Peacemonger’ was published in late 2022” (Warren Thomson's review of “Peacemonger” is in *PR* 65, June 2023, [http://](http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/peace-researcher-previous-issues.html)

www.converge.org.nz/abc/peace-researcher-previous-issues.html).

And here's an extract from my article “The Story Behind ‘Peacemonger’” (*PR* 65, June 2023, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/peace-researcher-previous-issues.html>): “In December 2022 ABC hosted the Christchurch launch of ‘Peacemonger’. Owen was from Christchurch and was a founder of both CAFCA and ABC, so it was entirely appropriate that we held a launch in his hometown (it was the first launch of the book). The launch was a modest affair, attended by 10-20 people, but it was a very enjoyable occasion. I was the MC and one of the speakers”.

“Our guest of honour was May Bass, who was Owen's partner in both peace work and in life (they were together for 12 years, up until his death) ... So, we were delighted to get her to the book launch (she is a Co-Editor of “Peacemonger”). We took her to Owen's memorial park bench. It was the first time I'd seen May since Owen's Hamilton funeral in 2005. ‘Peacemonger’ went on to have a better-attended launch in Auckland (bad weather on the day forced the cancellation of the Wellington launch)”.

Sadly, May's rapidly deteriorating health (she had Alzheimers) prevented the rescheduling of that Wellington launch, which was shaping up to be the biggest of the lot. As a result of our dealings over the book, May became a member of CAFCA and remained one until her death, even paying an annual sub for someone else. Ironically, she was never an actual ABC member.

Woman Of Many Roles

But there was a lot than the peace movement in the life of May Bass (born Gloria May Gilmore). I'll finish with this extract from the funeral eulogy by her partner Bill McAulay: “I first met May in 2020 when I knocked on her door, and told her that the (Kapiti Coast) neighbourhood was going to become noisy because I was about to start building a house close by and 60 poles would be banged into the ground. So began a surprise late life love affair that we had not anticipated. We happily spent half the week at her house and half next door at

mine. Who needs dating apps when you can simply knock on the door!”

“You will have known May in many roles: as wife, mother (*two sons. MH*), mother-in-law, grandmother, aunt, sister-in-law, friend, neighbour, shipmate, flatmate, workmate, activist, creator, photographer. But these don't adequately describe her many skills, enthusiasms and passions e.g. world wild-life photographer, felter, natural dyer, creator of wearable arts, silks enthusiast, fearless traveller, cross-country tramp, teacher, learner, counsellor, writer, editor, peace activist, protestor, battler for underdogs, conference speaker, astute and frequent buyer of second-hand clothes”.

CAFCA/ABC Organiser Account

Financial Report For Year Ended 31 March 2024

Prepared by James Ayers, Organiser Account Treasurer

	2024	2023
Income		
Pledges	\$24, 855.22	\$25,192.72
Donations Members	\$ 8,905.00	\$11,308.00
Interest (incl CAFCA TDs)	\$ 1,349.35	\$518.71
Other	\$ 1,380.00	\$1,176.00
Total Income	\$36,489.57	\$38,195.43
Expenditure		
Contractor	\$39,009.00	\$36,300.00
Internet/Phone	\$1,165.80	\$1,187.02
Printer	\$235.60	\$132.50
Other	\$120.50	\$—
Total Expenditure	\$40,530.90	\$37,619.52
Cash Surplus (deficit)	-\$4,041.33	\$575.91
Summary		
Opening Funds	\$5,099.32	\$4,523.41
Add surplus (deficit)	-\$4,041.33	\$575.91
Add CAFCA Donation	\$5,000.00	
Closing Total Funds	\$6,057.99	\$5,099.32
<i>Represented by</i>		
00 Account Westpac	\$6,057.99	\$5,099.32
Total Organiser Account funds	\$6,057.99	\$5,099.32

Notes

Other income includes phone/internet refunds from CAFCA/ABC
Annual deficit of \$4,041 funded by CAFCA donation

Financial report presented to, and accepted by, the Annual General Meeting of the Campaign Against Foreign Control Aotearoa, 23/9/2024

PEACE RESEARCHER

WELCOMES YOUR FEEDBACK

Peace Researcher is published by the Anti-Bases Campaign. The Editor is Murray Horton; the Layout Editor for this issue is Leigh Cookson. It covers a range of peace issues with emphasis on foreign military bases and intelligence topics. Contributed articles will be considered for publication based on subject matter and space requirements. We are particularly interested in reports of original research on peace topics in Aotearoa and the wider region of Australasia and the Pacific. We welcome your feedback and constructive suggestions on how we can improve.

Our address is –

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JOIN ABC AND GET *PEACE RESEARCHER*

Peace Researcher is the newsletter and journal of the Anti-Bases Campaign, Box 2258, Christchurch 8140, New Zealand. If you would like to join ABC, the details are below. All ABC members receive *Peace Researcher*.

Membership is \$20 per year (ABC is not registered for GST). **Donations welcome.**

Our bank account details are:

ABC Kiwibank 389000 0619007 00

Please include your name and "Sub" as references so that we can identify your payment, and please e-mail abc@chch.planet.org.nz when the deposit has been made so that we know to look out for it.

You can also personally deposit cash into ABC's account at any Kiwibank branch. If you do that, make sure that you include your name as the reference.

If you're a new member, please e-mail us your name, postal address, e-mail address and phone number/s. ■