

Book Two is entitled “FISA” (Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978) and is all about the biggest stumbling block to the warrantless eavesdropping programme. The chief legal architect of that programme was a chap called David Addington. “One reason why [Vice President] Cheney and Addington hated the [FISA] court [responsible for issuing warrants] was its tendency to resist attempts by the Bush Administration to push beyond legal boundaries, even before the events of 9/11”. Less than a month after those events “...Hayden received authorisation to bypass the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court and begin eavesdropping on international communications to and from Americans without a warrant”. Authorisation was from President W.

These abrupt changes at NSA had a profound impact on New Zealand’s Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB), the spies who operate what is effectively an NSA eavesdropping station at Waihopai. Nicky Hager stated in an online news item: “New information, prised out by former Chief Ombudsman John Belgrave and from intelligence insiders, makes it clear that Waihopai, and the GCSB that runs it, have been heavily focused on supporting the US War on Terror since September 11, 2001” (www.stuff.co.nz/4521682a10.html, 11/5/08). Was there a shift to warrantless spying on the international (and even domestic) communications of New Zealanders as there was on Americans? We have no way of knowing. But we do know that the NSA, not the New Zealand government, makes the rules for the GCSB.

Warrantless spying by the NSA was a futile exercise but it went on until early 2007. By the spring of 2000 the NSA actually had the international intelligence it needed in order to have revealed who was planning 9/11. What never happened was involvement of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) so that their legal monitoring of domestic communications could have revealed the “who, what and where” needed to stop the attacks.

“Cooperation” By Private Companies

Book Three describes the struggles of the NSA to cope with changing technology. Snooping on stray signals from satellites, as Waihopai does, is pretty straightforward as far as the physical interception goes. The problems began as communications were transferred increasingly to undersea and underground cables. “Echelon* began living on borrowed time...” around 2000. That was a bit of an exaggeration since satellite signals intelligence is still going on, and unfortunately Waihopai has not been abandoned. But Bamford’s 2001 statistic that “just 1% of the world’s communications travel by satellite...” is startling. Nevertheless, the NSA was slow to develop the technical means to tap into fibre-optic cables and complex packet switching (Internet and e-mail). In describing what might be called Echelon II, tapping into the global cable “spider’s web”, Bamford mentions little NZ: “It would be an enormous change in technology, but more important, the NSA and the other members of the Five Eyes – Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand – would have to get access to the cables either through secret agreements or covertly, or both (note that Five Eyes is Bamford’s term for the five partners to the UKUSA Agreement of 1948. Echelon is the code name for the programme operated by the five-nation spy network that systematically listens in to civilian telecommunications sent by satellite).

To accomplish this new interception feat the NSA had to enlist the “cooperation” of the big telecommunications companies (is this happening in New Zealand and Australia?). The story is long and complicated and involved much coercion and plain illegal manoeuvring. And it was not new to the present decade. The fascinating chapter entitled “Shamrock” relates the history of interception and code-breaking beginning shortly after World War I (there were no satellites then but there were cables).

The chapters in Book Three are somewhat encouraging to those who see the NSA and its partner agencies as all-knowing and all-powerful. And there is good news for communication among terrorists. As this section of the book draws to a close it becomes evident that recent communications developments are presenting terrific obstacles to the spies. To give just one example, VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocols) has proved to be a tough interception nut to crack. “Among the most popular VoIP systems is Skype, which is a revolution in telecommunications. Not only are Skype calls cheap and easy to make, they are virtually unbuggable....”

The Wall Of Secrecy Crumbles

The final two of the five Books are even more of an indictment of the NSA than the first three. Book Four chronicles the development of cracks, fractures and finally the collapse of the secrecy that allowed the Bush Administration to bug Americans domestically in the name of national security. A story in the *New York Times* in December 2006 blew the lid off warrantless domestic spying. The White House in panic mode tried desperately to block publication of the story. Meetings were held between the Government bigwigs (including Secretary of State Condi Rice, Director of National Intelligence John Negroponte, and Harriet Miers, the White House Counsel; Vice-President Cheney wisely avoided the press) and *Times* executives. A sample of the threats levelled at the *Times* if they published the story: “...Editor Bill Keller was warned that publication of the story would alert the terrorists and ‘shut down the game’. ‘It’s

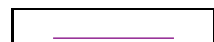
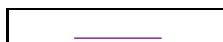
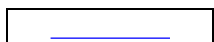
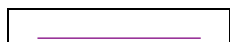
all the marbles,' said one official cryptically, adding, 'The enemy is at the gates'. Bush himself even warned the *Times* publisher that if another terrorist attack took place: "There'll be blood on your hands". The full story was published on December 16, 2006.

The final chapters (Book Five entitled "Future") are loaded with technical detail and heavy going, unless you are a computer geek. They are about the NSA's insatiable appetite for computer power and for land and buildings to hold all the hardware and the people needed to process and make sense of the oceans of information being vacuumed from around the planet every second of every day. NSA headquarters in Fort Meade Maryland has long been a vast, self-contained fortress city. But its appetite for growth, and as a black hole for tax dollars, seems limitless.

And What Of The NSA?

Bamford's last chapter is entitled "Abyss" and has a very clear message. It is a catalogue of severe problems facing the NSA. The massive collective brainpower of the NSA has developed a database called TIDE, an Oracle database with a Unix operating system that is the heart of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). Here are the punch-lines: "The only thing that makes the NCTC worth anything is the database, the TIDE database. This is the most important data since 9/11. If you screw this up, we know they're out there, we know they're operating, we know they're trying to get back in. This data is buried in this database" (quoted by the author from a senior intelligence official). "Nevertheless', he said, 'the system is a disaster. *The database is incompatible with both the NSA and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) systems*'. "That's the problem with data in the intelligence field – there is no leadership right now" (emphasis added).

Bamford ends the book with a dire warning about the NSA: "There is now the capacity to make tyranny total in America. Only law ensures that we never fall into that abyss – the abyss from which there is no return". "The Shadow Factory" brings James Bamford's invaluable story of this unbelievable intelligence monstrosity right up to date. After reading the book it is easy to understand why it was not well received by the National Security Agency.



REVIEW - "THE HOLLOW MEN"

Peace Researcher 38 – July 2009

A Film By Alister Barry, Vanguard Films, 2008

- Jeremy Agar

The new Government's in place and it doesn't look good. Soon after the election, Rodney Hide, Act Leader, prevailed on National to set up a commission to investigate climate change and Tim Groser, the Trade Minister, told an international conference that NZ would have to renege on our Kyoto commitments. There have been several other early signals of where the Key government's going, but these two could suggest its essence.

Key's last known public statement about climate change had been that it existed, it was caused by human activity, and it was a bad thing. Previously he had sounded like Hide, a denier. Since Galileo's time few civilised leaders have gone on record to affirm that the world was flat or that gravity was a greenie myth, so why now, several centuries since the Renaissance, do self-styled practical men like Hide and Key make out like Taliban clerics?

A common link is the needs of power. Religious dogmatists enforce obedience through their control of theology, and for National fundamentalists it's as important to assert that the world is not getting hotter because of pollution as it was for medieval popes to assert that they presided over God's static world. If it isn't hotter, there'll be no need to control carbon emissions or regulate industry. Hide and Key deny so that they can get rid of all those compliance costs that the nanny state imposes. They're saying that NZ is open for business.

Keynote Ideology Is So Behind The Times

The usual catechism was to the effect that what's good for General Motors is good for America. Trouble is, GM went bust, and what had been good for GM - petrol-guzzling cars and autocratic management - was bad for Americans. How time flies. When the National Party's 2008 Conference launched its election campaign, it was still possible to worship General Motors. Barack Obama had not yet secured the nomination to run as a Democrat for the US Presidency and the deregulated "free trade" model that enthralled Messrs Key, Hide and Groser had not collapsed. Less than a year ago it was possible for Nationalists to aspire to a George Bushite New Zealand. The film version of Nicky Hager's "The Hollow Men", which premiered in 2008, was prescient in its exposure of National's wish to ape a paranoid style of American politics. It would be a comfort to suppose (as Hager detractors will doubtless want to suggest) that "The Hollow Men" have fallen over and so we need no longer fret about them. That would compound the confusion. The free trading mullahs might be living through bad days but that's no reason to suppose that their ambitions will have dimmed.

While it might be thought that 2008's market mess ended an era, the new context could render the film yet more relevant. This is because there seem to be two main ways free traders seize control of a state. We're familiar with the shock doctrine of crisis, a tactic analysed most thoroughly and recently by Naomi Klein*. The alternative, when opportunity isn't knocking, is to settle in for the long haul, hoping that in time the electorate will be nudged your way. This would have been the advice offered Key by his hollow men. It's why he spent the campaign grinning and shrugging. *See my review of "The Shock Doctrine" by Naomi Klein, in *Foreign Control Watchdog* 117, April 2008, online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/17/06.htm>. Klein's analysis of neo-liberalism is spot on.

Key had set the tone by announcing his intention to be a compassionate conservative. Eight years earlier George Bush used the same phrase at a similar stage of his political career. It doesn't seem smart that Key would choose to parrot the slogan of the most reviled US President in living memory, a man whose record suggests anything but a compassionate nature. Why would Key opt for Dubya as a role model? If you see this movie, you'll know why.

A week earlier Key had said that a National government would retain Labour's Working for Families initiative. The PM-in-Waiting explained: "These are families with mums and dads who are working long hours, trying to get by on a modest wage in the absence of tax cuts under this Labour government. We don't want to make life more difficult for them" (28/7/08, www.tvnz.co.nz). Not long previously Key had been adamantly opposed to the programme, which he knew to be imposing "Communism by stealth". Those reds were still under the bed, but you don't expect a millionaire Prime Minister to succumb so meekly to creeping commies. Or was it Key's try at defining "compassionate conservatism"?

Key Has A Problem With Universality

Key explained that he was opposed to Government programmes including the middle classes. He supposes that it's wrong to treat people equally. Key has a problem with the principle of universality, the ethic that everyone deserves a healthy childhood and a secure old age, the ethic that built our roads and railways, our schools and hospitals. It used to be called the Kiwi way, which was neither creeping nor commie. So some time in July 08 it must have been explained to Key that the people who had been middle class welfare bums were more diplomatically - and compassionately - perceived as families with mums and dads who are working long hours. You're more likely to get a vote from Kiwi battler mums and dads than from a commie.

Key knew that those Kiwi mums and dads swim in the mainstream, as defined by Don Brash, his ill starred predecessor as National's Leader. The one law for all rhetoric is a code, not to be taken literally. Zealots like Brash and Key can never say what they really want to do, which is to shrink public government in the interests of corporate wealth, because, if they did, National would never make it into office. They believe in one law for all only when it can be defined so that it suits their partisan needs. By its own words, National is not concerned with the national interest.

Nicky Hager's original book came out in November 2006. It showed us how, in the 2005 election campaign and the build up to it, the National Party was being guided by some dubious public relations (PR) lads in Australia and secretly supported by a rich cult, the Exclusive Brethren, an outfit whose very name indicates its hostility to an inclusive national interest. Not all the private agendas coincided, but all concerned had a mutual, if tacit, understanding of the enemy. National's always been more united about what it doesn't want rather than what it does want. It came into being as Not-Labour, and has remained so. That's one permanent reason National's policy is best left vague. Hager exposed the result (see my review of the book "The Hollow Men", in *Watchdog* 114, May 2007, online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/14/03.htm>, for an analysis of the Brash e-mail saga). Publication coincided with Don Brash's resignation as National Party Leader. Brash had been under duress for some time, but "The Hollow Men" book hastened his departure. To illustrate the story, Hager has teamed up with director Alister Barry. It's a happy partnership, uniting NZ's best investigative reporter with a filmmaker of outstanding integrity.

Three years on, it might be thought, we've read the book, do we need to see the film? It's not like shooting a novel with its visual and interpretative aspects. In movie foyers people talk about whether they prefer the book or the film. How do you do that with a pile of e-mails? Hager and Barry solved any such questions superbly. We see details which weren't in the book. Some scenes and conversations are necessarily dramatised, but there are shots here suggestive of moles beyond the mystery of the e-mails themselves. Rather than being redundant, the film is complementary, enriching.

Subtly - it never explicitly makes the case - the film reminds us that John Key in 2008 was in a position analogous to that of Brash in 2005 (and of Bush in 2000). And Hager found that National was still using the same spin doctors who prescribed to Brash. Despite the scandal and the publicity, nothing had changed. The present version in fact tells us that Key flew off to Oz to see Messrs Crosby and Textor in his first week as Leader, ensuring that the film is as relevant and as topical as the book. This time round, with an election to follow almost immediately after the film's release, the electorate was forewarned. Sure enough, straight after the 2008 election, we heard that Crosby and Textor were still around.

At the start of the film we're reminded of the original context of the book. After the 2002 election, when they suffered a big loss, the National Party was ready to cast off its moderate fancy dress. If the good cop routine didn't work, the bad cop might as well drop pretence and go for it. Enter Don Brash, stage Right. Brash, known to the electorate as the head of the Reserve Bank, was the real deal, a neo-liberal fundamentalist. Richard Prebble, a Lange-Douglas Minister, Hide's predecessor in Acting up, was exultant. The Nats, he enthused, were now "enormously" more likely to win favour.

Prebble always gave the impression of believing his propaganda, of assuming that he enjoyed public support. More understandably, so did the ivory bank tower Brash. We see him, on his first day as Party Leader, announcing that he was itching to finish the unfinished business. Air New Zealand, TVNZ, the power generators and Kiwibank would have to be cut loose from the dead hand of the State. Prebble and Brash were revolutionaries, ready to complete the Douglas-Ruth Richardson reforms.

Spin Doctors Advised Brash Not To Tell the Truth

At this stage, the hollow men were wheeled on. It was explained to a reluctant and initially uncomprehending Brash that he'd never get elected if he told the truth. The advertisers had to design the "product" and "package" it. The "perceptions" of consumers (those persons formerly known as voters) had to be manipulated by "images" until they were induced to have an "emotive gut reaction" to the message. According to Hager and Barry, on the eve of the caucus poll incumbent Leader Bill English enjoyed a one vote advantage. The next day Brash won by one vote.

One MP had switched, the State house boy from Bryndwr, the Merrill Lynch whiz kid himself. John Key had been offered the position he wanted in a Brash Cabinet.

Brash was a neo-liberal rather than a neo-conservative. Neo-libs believe the State should set up rules so that big corporations effectively make policy. Then the now unnecessary Government need not interfere much at all with individuals' lives. Neo-cons, by contrast, are socially conservative. We see a man from the neo-con Maxim Institute complaining that the Civil Union Bill was going to remove any distinction in the law between various couples living together. To a liberal like Brash his private take would have been that's the way it should be. As his careful words in Parliament suggest (captured in the film) he came to inoculate himself against the outrage of the religious Right only reluctantly. Like the neo-liberal Young Nationals we also see, Brash took his opposition to the "nanny State" seriously.

Hager and Barry tell the story of National's notoriously clever 2005 election ads. In his earnest, boring way, Brash lit up at the Iwi-Kiwi billboard. In his eyes those seven letters conveyed more than neo-con racist resentment. Brash saw Government intervention, any Government intervention with the potential to affect pure contractual relationships, as just wrong. He would have been frustrated that his opposition is still seen in cultural terms. To neo-liberals what's wrong with the Treaty of Waitangi is that there should be only World Trade Organisation and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade-type treaties. The National campaign brilliantly, because effortlessly, united what could have been disparate elements within its natural supporters.

There's a great vignette of a particularly fierce Kim Hill asking Brash about his first speech at Orewa (Orewa 1). Doubtless mindful of Margaret Thatcher's assertions that there is "no such thing as society" (or perhaps National's idea that there's no such thing as a nation) there being only individuals and families, the formidable interviewer suggested that treating people as discrete individuals might destroy a culture. Knowing he had to stay on message, aware that the ground where he was being invited to tread was as slippery as a gangplank, and certain that the lefty Hill hadn't a clue about the market economy, Don looked bewildered. Two incompatible moralities looked at each other. For a moment, before the TV silence demanded to be filled, there was nothing more to say.

It seems that one of National's main spinning tacticians is Matthew Hooton. He told Brash that to go up in polls he needed to make big bold moves. That would enable future initiatives. A gradual or incremental style, Hooton advised, would make the leader a "prisoner of caucus". This is in the shock doctrine style of Roger Douglas, and the new Leader's apparent naivete on his first day would have been an attempt to seize a revolutionary moment.

The Orewa Speeches

Hence Orewa 1, the stated concerns of which had little to do with the real agenda of either spinner or spinnee. But Brash was soon floundering, unable to give specifics of Maori privilege. "We need", said Richard Long, another spinning Nationalist, "to come up with a credible holding answer". And what about superannuation? Should they take the Communism-by-stealth or the Kiwi-mums-and-dads line? National should "appear to support a tangible fund out there which seems to give people more comfort". Always the tone swings between condescension and contempt.

The film looks again at Dick Allen, a Reagan insider now seasonally resident in Central Otago. We learn that Allen was pushing for a better deal for landlords, private hospitals and tobacco transnationals. Hooton was chuffed that having Allen as a mate meant that National might be able to prostrate themselves before Allen's "close friends, Rumsfeld and Cheney" (*Secretary of Defense and Vice-President, respectively, in the former Bush Administration. Ed.*). Hooton wanted to suck up to the two most bloodthirsty neo-cons in a bloodthirsty Bush White House. *For a very detailed article on Richard Allen, see Peace Researcher 24, December 2001, "Covert Warrior Comes Out Of The Cold", by Dennis Small, which can be read online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/covert.htm>. Ed.*

The film never argues its case, allowing the witnesses to incriminate themselves. National had swallowed the dead rats of retaining some public assets and some progressive taxes. It had stopped opposing superannuation, four weeks annual holidays, the Civil Union Bill and Kiwibank. Hager and Barry could have added yet more examples of the party acceding to Labour policies that they had vowed to oppose. Interest free student loans, KiwiRail and subsidised early childhood care come to mind.

Learn From Bush

Hooton recommended the locals learn from Karl Rove, George Bush's main strategist, whose advice had been to target an opponent's perceived strengths. So it was that we heard doubts about Helen Clark's integrity and complaints about her "arrogance". In the US, too, as the Republican candidate, John McCain, flailed in the search

for a credible gambit during the 2008 Presidential campaign, someone told him to attack Barack Obama for being ... "arrogant". It lasted about one day.

Rove was bad enough a teacher. But worse even than Rove was David Horowitz. Hooton told National to ape Horowitz's idea that an effective election campaign was one that stirs up "anger, fear and resentment" in those mums and dads. Horowitz is a lone ranger nutter, his strings pulled by very rich - and very Rightwing - foundations. The puppeteers like him because they can present him as a former deluded radical youth who has seen the light. Horowitz, an attention-seeker, relishes extravagant gesture. In his revolutionary days, for instance, white, Jewish David became a Black Panther. He likes bold grassy knoll conspiracies.

Because they more readily evoke panic in an audience ready to be manipulated, Horowitz favours issues to do with personal and sexual morality. It's some relief that this part of the agenda is dated. The Christian fundamentalist strain in American politics has never travelled well and the demise of Bush and Rove means that we're likely to be spared the sort of rabbleroising manipulations that they cherish. Neo-con moral indignation served Reagan and Bush as a tactic to mobilise support for the strategic aim of transforming the economy. Post-market meltdown, we can expect a more gradualist, less hysterical style.

Poor Brash. Ultimately he's a comic figure. He had a safe multicultural line to use: "My wife's from Singapore". Beyond pleasantries, though, it was never easy. Keep on message, he had been told. You've been inoculated against the disease of a clear and honest foreign and defence policy. Repeatedly asked whether it had been a good idea to attack Iraq, Brash kept trying to raise his taxation talking points. But he's no Winston Peters or John Key. All he could do was repeat that Iraq was "no longer relevant at all". It used to be that National politicians evoked foreign wars centuries past to validate their prejudices. For Dr Don an ongoing war - it's still going on, post-Brash, post-Bush - was as dead as a swallowed rat. Key will be hoping to avoid foreign policy debate.

Key and his hollow men have publicly made much of their desire for NZ wages to match Australia's. In reality they're happy for NZ to become a cheap labour offshore island for the Aussie economy*. The 1990-99 National government gave us the former Employment Contracts Act (ECA) so that bosses didn't have to contend with a union and could intimidate employees into accepting lower pay. The present National government's December 08 rush to empower employers with its 90 Day Probationary Act is a "free trade" extension of this impulse. To view the intent of the ECA and its successor as the means by which inexperienced workers and bosses can arrange life to their mutual satisfaction, as the new Minister has done, is as wilfully implausible as Rodney's flat earth ethic. *See my review of "At The Crossroads: Three Essays" by Jane Kelsey, in *Watchdog* 100, August 2002, online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/00/07.htm>.

Brash Wanted To Stay An Honest Man, But He Was A Weak One

His political failure was brought about because he never found it easy to play the facile games that come so easily to successful politicians. He never seemed to enjoy dissembling, yet his final election pitch emphasised how "trustworthy" he was. It was the Exclusive Brethren who had urged a demagogic Trust/Distrust motif on National. Beyond Brash's self-aggrandising smugness lay a more serious moral failure. His last words as a contender to be Prime Minister were put in his mouth by a cult so far from his cherished mainstream that they regard social contact with the rest of society is sinful. That's exclusive all right.

Slyly, throughout the film, we see Rodney Hide. He was there apparently at all National events, looking on, confident that his mates would enact the full neo-liberal agenda for which his party exists as a revolutionary vanguard. The film has an unobtrusive feel for the machinations at play, the fruit of long observation. Brash's early advice had been to leave talk of the important item, tax cuts, to Hide. Out of options, Key wanted to talk of nothing else.

Hide's Act and the Maori Party have each secured two ministries. Post-election, the media has made much of how Key's four headed monster (Mr Sensible Dunne is there too) indicates that the Government will be centrist. It doesn't. It indicates that Key and his advisers have made a tactical move that will allow them a majority in Parliament. The hollow men think that the patient needs to be anaesthetised before the next shock therapy is carried out. They'll offer placebos to the Maori Party and Dunne. Three years on, they'll be hoping, the nine year remission allowed by the Clark government will have faded, and it'll be time to take the country back into the operating theatre. By then people will have come to their senses and accepted that Rodney Hide knows more about earth sciences than the earth scientists.

Full Speed Ahead To the 1980s!

Having been handed two keystone portfolios, Local Government and what's been described as Regulatory Reform,

Hide - and Act's most senior MP who's not a minister, a certain Roger Douglas - are hoping that they can soon perform major surgery. Though Key will, in the short term, disappoint them, mates are on hand. Newly prominent National ministers include Groser, a former "free trade" bureaucrat, and Steven Joyce, who was actually one of the hollow men. The strategic jobs are in the hands of neo-liberal purists. Of course the finance market debacles which coincided with the election will delay the hollow politicians. Who knows for how long? Permanently? It could be that world opinion will shift far enough that democratic countries will no longer stand for shock therapy.

As the Government settled in, Auckland issues have become dominant. The rest of the country thinks in terms of the Jafas feathering their nest, but a Key government will be no more (and no less) prone to easy vote grubbing as any other government. The north-west motorway and the Super City are more helpfully seen in the light of the neo-lib agenda, the common factor being that they're playing to the business gallery. Joyce is in charge of pulling down houses in Helengrad to make room for cars and trucks, and Hide is pushing for the Super City. There's a lot to be said for more unity and coherence in our cities' governments, but Rodney's doing it to dismantle popular controls. The city wide electorate for councillors will, as many have pointed out, empower big, well funded blocs which can override local choices, and it seems to be assumed that Banksy, as pro-business a public figure as any, will become Super Mayor. This much we all know.

But why has there been such quiet over the Key-Hide proposal for appointed councillors? In a democracy the people's representatives get elected and councillors should no more be appointed than should parliamentarians. The Super City looms as the culmination of reforms whose central purpose has been to convert councils into rubberstamping boards of governors for bureaucrats. The other shoe to drop is Hide's signalling that he expects councils to stick to their "core functions" - as interpreted by him. Auckland's important to the latter day Rogernomes not so much because of its many votes but because it's where the bigger businesses are. If other cities are influential enough to thwart neo-liberal policies, they'll get Super Sized too.

What this landmark film suggests us is that, in intent, Key will turn out to be as pure a neo-lib as Don Brash and Roger Douglas. The transparent Brash complained that there was no point in getting into power if you really had to abandon everything you wanted to do. We can be sure that, off camera, Key is just as upfront. The big difference now is that the version of shock therapy we're living through, our collapsing economies, was unintended. It's a Dr Frankenstein moment. The biggest shock of them all has been global, and it's been inflicted on the clients of the spin doctors - by themselves. Now that there seems to be a consensus that extremist neo-liberal ideology has been the disease all along, and not the cure, minds and policies are changing. Has any major Western leader looked as yesterday as soon as Bush has? So Key can't do Orewa-type stuff and he might not get the chance to operate as he'd like. But an old mate in Gibbston, Otago, thinks the rotten system's got life yet. Dick Allen is worried that the reform of world capitalism that he - now - says is desperately needed won't come about "anytime soon, because to accomplish fundamental change the foxes must be chased out of the chicken coop. Lamentably, it's the foxes who write the rules" (*Mountain Scene*, 3/10/08).

To buy a DVD copy, write to Community Media Trust, PO Box 3563, Wellington or e-mail alisterbarry@paradise.net.nz, including your postal address. A copy will be mailed to you with an invoice for \$30, which can be paid by cheque or online. If you wish to pay in advance, make your cheque to Community Media Trust.

REVIEWS

“THE BASES OF EMPIRE:
The Global Struggle Against US Military Posts”
edited by Catherine Lutz, Pluto Press, London, 2009.

“ISLAND OF SHAME”
by David Vine, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2009.

Peace Researcher 38 – July 2009

- **Jeremy Agar**

In August 1971, on a quiet coral island in the Indian Ocean, a man was sent by the US government to kill the local inhabitants' dogs. There were about a thousand of them, roaming free. He tried to shoot them, but some were merely wounded and howled. So he went off to get a poison and strewed strychnine. But still dogs survived. So the remaining ones were rounded up, put in a compound and gassed, while the island's children cried.

The next day all the children and their families were herded onto a boat and shipped away from their home. The island was thereby emptied of people and pets, and two hundred years of human culture was abolished. The people have still not been allowed to return. The expulsion is one of the moral watersheds of the last 50 years. These books explain why it happened, why it's so little known, and why it matters.

During the 1950s' Eisenhower era, when the Cold War between the US and the USSR had become the defining feature of global politics, America was exuberantly powerful. The Russians might have a bomb, but the Stars and Stripes flew over the oceans. It was a period when America could “project” its influence with few impediments, so officials pressed for it to take its chances while the going was good. Some farsighted staffers within the Government recognised that the colonies of Africa and Asia might soon attain independence and the locals might get stropy.

It occurred to a certain Stu Barber, from the Long Range Objectives Group of the US Navy, that the oceans of the world contained scores of small islands that were going to waste. “Our military criteria were location, airfield potential, anchorage potential. Our political criteria were minimal population, isolation, present status, historical and ethnic factors”. As a US Navy historian has explained, the idea was that the US “should acquire base rights in certain strategically located islands, mostly in the Southern Hemisphere, and stockpile them for future use”. The race to check out the world's islands was on, especially those that were “sparsely populated”. These would be “the easiest to acquire and would entail the least [sic] political headaches”.

Depopulating Diego Garcia

The Indian Ocean, handy to Africa, South Asia and the Middle East, was ideal. In no time, 60 likely sites had been found there. Best of all was Diego Garcia, part of the Chagos Archipelago about 1,000 miles south of India. Too small to show up on normal maps, the island was still long enough for runways, and its almost enclosed lagoon could shelter as many aircraft carriers as might one day be needed. There was one problem: people lived there.

Diego Garcia had once been uninhabited, a perfect example of the sort of palm-treed, coral-reefed atoll that features in magazine cartoons. That lasted until 1783, when the island's French “owner” brought in 22 African slaves to grow coconuts. In 1814, with Napoleon defeated, Diego Garcia became a British colony. Because slavery was abolished in 1835, Indians were imported to replace the slaves as cheap labour. That's how Diego Garcia remained for the next century or so, a pinprick on the map of empire, and less than a pinprick on the conscience of the Colonial Office.

The post-war American surge coincided with a tired Britain trying to cut costs. The UK felt it could no longer hang on to all its pink empire, deciding to give up on all its conquests between Suez and Singapore. This didn't mean they didn't worry about “the vacuum in the Indian Ocean” that might have resulted - had it not been for kind Uncle Sam. Successive British governments had become attuned to abasing themselves before the Americans and were quick to agree that the US deserved to have “exclusive control” over Diego Garcia. Parenthetically, spelling out the obvious rider, the UK added, “(without local inhabitants)”.

Whatever Yankee wanted, Yankee got. So as not to inconvenience Washington, it was accepted that Her Majesty's Government “should be responsible for acquiring land, resettlement of population at HMG's expense”. The people of

Diego Garcia would be shuttled off to Mauritius, the nearest available island, a thousand miles away to the south-west. The Chagossians wouldn't get off the boat in Mauritius, despite the promise of \$1 each as a resettlement bonus and a slum shack.

In the meantime, the worst worries of both imperial governments had been justified. The Third World, as the self-styled First World was pleased to name the colonies, was indeed becoming independent - in formal if not real terms - and the UK Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, warned US officials that he might have to "pay a price" at the UN for having ejected a whole culture from its birthright. A British official pleaded with the Americans. He needed a "bribe". It's an ambiguous plea. Did the Right Honourable gentleman mean the islanders needed a sweetener or did he have his hand out? Ostensibly the former, but the Brits have always favoured the nod and the wink.

In those more upfront days US officials might have felt neither Wilson's nor the Chagossians' pain. Wilson was to offer the new Prime Minister of Mauritius three million pounds to cover the costs of transferring an entire culture to his island, to which the Chagos Archipelago was formally attached. This arrangement gives a further clue as to the hapless bargaining position of the islanders. In so many colonial territories, the post-independence boundaries were haphazard, reflecting imperial convenience rather than the needs of the colonised. In this case, the locals didn't count at all because the day after the dogs of Diego Garcia were exterminated, the human locals too no longer existed.

Dumped Into The Slums Of Mauritius

In 1964 Chagos had been politically separated from Mauritius, allowing the co-opted local elite to wash their hands of the whole squalid affair. Fearing dominance by Indians, the conservative Opposition, which was largely Kreol (ethnically African) and Coloured, had come out against independence. Never mind that the people of Diego Garcia were themselves mostly African. With almost no resettlement money and the demise of the copra industry, the people who had been forced into a monoculture of coconuts had no place in the economy and no means to gain a toehold in a future economy. A vague plan to invent a culture for them as pig farmers was aborted and they were dumped into the slums of Port Louis, Mauritius, where they were derided as the bottom of the heap by those one tiny notch above on the ladder. Deprivation does that to people. Like pigs in crates, they turn on themselves and on each other.

Vine paints Diego Garcia as very much a tropical paradise, and the few other impartial observers who have been able to visit concur. The Americans based there seem to have delighted in the place - as individuals. As cogs in a machine they have dredged its pristine coral to make concrete. Throughout, the islanders have been refused even service jobs at the base on their own land. That's because any sort of occupation could one day allow a legal challenge to stay. The imperial masters reckon it's safer to deny any hope, however faint.

Eventually, shamed at last into a gesture of guilt, the UK gave some Chagossians citizenship. A small group bound by a common and intensely narrow experience, with no cultural ties to other sub-cultures from deprived backgrounds, the emigrants will find the going tough. At present they live mostly near one of London's airports (neither of the books discusses this present tense, the epilogue to their stories).

Vine, an anthropologist, is very good at putting their plight into context. Most accounts of this nature are written from an exclusively political or economic bias. Vine's understanding of culture, of the effects of dislocation, and of generational impoverishment, allows him to engage imaginatively with his topic. The injustice under scrutiny is so blatant that his book could easily have become a spluttering polemic. It's much more than that, at once sympathetic, scholarly and witheringly angry.

Amid stark contrast, irony abounds. Mauritius is one of the richer places in the region, its wealth deriving from tourism. Tourist venues in the "Third World", typically on islands, are like that, with the whims of rich First Worlders being met by some of the world's poorest workers. The central Indian Ocean thus has two big new airports, one for bombers and one for tourists, and many of the people expelled from their home to make room for the military now find work catering to the tourists who might, in a less neurotic world, otherwise have been enjoying an unspoiled Diego Garcia.

Legal Victories; Political Defeats

Supported by international solidarity, the Chagossians sued the British government in the British courts. Everyone was surprised when they won, with the UK Supreme Court declaring the expulsion to have been illegal. The problem was that the verdict had no coercive power. The law be damned, the Government lawyers fumed. The return can't happen. So it was that in 2004, an Order in Council, a decree from the Cabinet, banned it. Then, a

further surprise, the High Court judges overturned the ban, with some staunch comment: "The suggestion that a Minister can, through the means of an Order in Council, exile a whole population from a British Overseas Territory and claim he is doing so ... for the 'peace, order and good governance' of the territory is, to us, repugnant".

The judges can't be faulted, but there's an absurdist look to proceedings. The law, it seems, is unimpeachable - until the State discerns a serious threat, when all bets are off. According to John Pilger at the time, the British authorities brazened a blank denial of the truth. "There is nothing in our files about a population and an evacuation", declared the UK Department of Defence (antiwar.com: "Diego Garcia: Paradise Cleansed" 4/10/04).

In the US, in 1975, Ted Kennedy, then as now a Senator representing Massachusetts, put in an unwelcome but successful amendment to a Congressional bill, asking for a report on the expulsion. In their reply, the two complicit bureaucracies, State and Defense, were less abrupt than the Brits but more misleading. A simple lie can be challenged, but the US denial was couched in the evasive terms of public relations spin: "In the absence of more complete data", Washington prattled, "it is impossible to establish the status of these persons and to what extent, if any, they formed a distinct community". With the whole government machine determined to hide it, the "data" would remain "incomplete" for decades.

Washington suggested that the removal of Chagossian people from their homeland was doing all concerned a favour as it was a way "to avoid social problems". Vine translates. This was "a polite way of referring to trumped up racist fears about prostitution" at the base. To the State and Defense Departments, there was no problem as the Chagossians ("these people") "all went willingly". Always happy to look on the bright side of life, US military Websites can now enthuse about the good living on the island, with its great golf and snorkelling. After the "sweep" that had "sanitised" the base from messy human beings, Diego Garcia could be branded as pristine and perfect. Official amnesia allowed an impression that it had lain unspoiled and receptive for millennia, awaiting only the sympathetic power of the US Navy for it to achieve its destiny as a home away from home for the guardians of global peace.

In 2001, as domestic US opinion recovered a repressed memory, a class action suit was launched in Washington. The defendants included Robert McNamara, President Kennedy's whiz-kid technocrat, and those more familiar and recent villains, Donald Rumsfeld and the Halliburton corporation. The Chagossians had difficulties beyond the obvious imbalance in power and influence, most obviously in Mauritius. Opinion in the Archipelago was divided between one island and the next, and between Indian and African. While some opposed the base, others welcomed it as a potential job provider. While some Chagossians decried interference with their traditional lifestyle, others hoped for new opportunities arising from the new link to the world.

Most languished in local slums; a few got to England. Are you keeping count? The menial workers clustered around Gatwick Airport south of London represent a third diaspora. Diaspora 1: from Africa or India to Chagos; Diaspora 2: from Chagos to Mauritius; Diaspora 3: from Mauritius to England. And only now has the possibility of a normal freedom, in the sense of their being able to choose a way of life, arisen. It has for the younger generations growing up in England, triply displaced as they have been, with no cultural memory. You could say that they're on their own. It's an ambivalent legacy.

Base Central To All America's Wars

Since the base was built, Diego Garcia has been involved in all America's regional wars. In Gulf War 1 B-52's flew to Iraq. From there Afghanistan has been bombed. And after 9/11, it hosted a new "Camp Justice", a secret detention centre. Vine shows that the base serves as a model for any future "Diego Garcia" that could be set up in Africa. As one military planner notes: "It's the single most important military facility we've got. It's the base from which we control half of Africa and the southern side of Asia, the southern side of Eurasia [and]...the Persian Gulf region. If it didn't exist, it would have to be invented.... We'll be able to run the planet from Guam and Diego Garcia by 2015".

The base's motto is "Footprint of Freedom". The US State doesn't do irony, so they won't be concerned that people who really do care about the environment enjoin us not to leave a "footprint" on the earth. A greener consciousness than the US Navy might balk at the ethnic cleansing of a people so that their land could be paved for bombers. If you look at a map you'll see why Guam, which became vital to the military during World War 2, is seen as a natural partner for Diego Garcia as the future eyes and ears of Freedom. Its position east of Indonesia, the Philippines and China is comparable to Diego Garcia's position vis-a-vis north-east Africa and south Asia. In any strategic planning, the western Pacific and the northern Indian oceans will likely dominate into the foreseeable future.

While Vine treats his topic of Diego Garcia with thoughtful respect and depth, he provides context with sketches of

other islands. "Bases Of Empire" has the opposite emphasis, with chapters on each, including one on Diego Garcia by Vine. The latter book is mostly set elsewhere. The Pacific, big and empty, has been bounty galore for military planners. The first big American push followed its take over of the Philippines in 1898; the second followed the defeat of Japan in 1945. Since then the US has enjoyed a free run. The tropical seas were either unpopulated or, like Diego Garcia, peopled by a few dispensable locals. It's been a half century when no restraining rivals could check US impulses.

Prostrate Japan offered Iwo Jima and Okinawa, whose people are regarded by mainland Japanese as a lesser culture, and whose economy still lags the rest of the country. Tensions with the occupying Americans persist. Perhaps the closest parallel to Diego Garcia is the Bikini Atoll, whose population was removed to free it up for testing atomic bombs. Apart from giving its name to the skimpy two-piece bathing suits of the Fifties, a joke of sorts, Bikini has, like Diego Garcia, had no voice.

Polluting Puerto Rico

Some of the islands of empire are within the US itself. Puerto Rico, an island colony in the Caribbean and constitutionally American, serves as a sort of landfill site for the 48 continental states. To show that they're boss, the Navy routinely complains of "civilian encroachment" caused by the existence of neighbourhood Puerto Ricans looking for a place to live. The Pentagon has always opposed initiatives to clean the island's air, soil, water and hazardous waste, which has been fouled by decades of unrestricted military swagger.* Even in the mainland US urban sprawl near its many bases has compromised the health of civilians. *A domestic NZ version of this is the propensity of State-Owned Enterprises like ports and airports to try to exempt themselves from responsibility for their local environments by claiming that the existence of nearby residents creates "reverse sensitivity" issues which interfere with their efficient operation.

Eventually Puerto Rican opposition to gross pollution could not be resisted, and the Navy left. As in Diego Garcia it trumpeted its environmental credentials, in this case by agreeing that the land it had occupied be declared a national park. In practice this meant that they didn't bother to clean up the contaminants when they left. This chapter comments on the battle for public opinion in terms which will resonate with NZ readers. Co-opted journalists told Puerto Ricans opposing Iraq War 2 that the pro-Bush position was the expression of a "rational, inevitable and realistic policy". Democratic supporters of an independent and responsible foreign policy (two can play at the language game) were patronised as "idealists" and "romantics". Well meaning they might be, but that's the road to ruin. If they won, the peaceniks would bring about "chaos, political and economic crisis, coups and civil war". All debates over principles and values tend to echo with variations on this demagogic panic mongering. What else can you do when you control the government, the military and the press but your argument makes no sense? That's the problem posed by democracy and an educated population, the Diego Garcia problem for which Stu Barber devised a final solution.

The Philippines is at once a biggish country and a collection of smallish islands and its entanglement with the demands of empire has been as long and as complete as anywhere. So it is not surprising that the fightback in the Philippines has been strong. Filipino pressure freed the country from Clark Air Force Base, one of the world's largest and most intrusive. Long experience has created alliances between activists. The various campaigns - against foreign military bases, against social and environmental pollution - have been increasingly linked. Huge injustices remain, but each victory increases the chance of future successes.

But it is in Diego Garcia that the ravages of empire are most obvious in that the injustices committed have been without any mitigating excuse. The history of the island is the story of how a perfect storm of exploitation was created, and we can attach whatever label we wish to explain it, whether that be to do with imperialism or colonialism or militarism or racism or patriarchy. However, one explanation offered by a contributor, that the islanders were the victim of so-called "bureaucratic neglect", is harder to sustain. The neglect was not the result of careless negligence.

Another writer reminds us that the abuse was dealt out when Henry Kissinger ran US foreign policy. This man believed in "realpolitik", a fancy word for bullying. Eurocentric Kissinger used to boast that "southern" concerns were of no interest to him and that the African bureau of his department was a "bunch of missionaries". That's because officials at the embassy in Mauritius were appalled by the expulsion. Vine is particularly lucid in analysing the social dynamics of small, homogenous situations. For whites on the island the culture of the base was all they had as a reference for daily life. It's not realistic to have expected resistance from within the local power structure.

There is one misreading on Vine's moral compass. It's OK that he openly sympathises with the Kreols, but problematic when he ignores Indian experience and blames the Indian leadership for selling out the Africans. As he

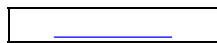
has himself demonstrated, there was a hierarchy of misery, and blaming one of the victims doesn't help. Chagos's ethnic history was a colonial construct, designed by the imperial power precisely to be divisive. It's a pattern along the lines of Trinidad, Guyana or Fiji. In all these instances, there has been an unfortunate habit among liberal white academics to chastise Indian politicians, when in all four colonies progressive, non-sectarian resistance has been largely led by Indians.

In 2004 the US announced its Global Defense Posture Review, which was all about how to "project" their power. That entails an indefinite "posture", squatting all over Diego Garcia. Just why did the Bushes attack Iraq and Afghanistan? All the likely critiques make the bases integral, whether the wars were just about the oil or Kuwait, or whether they've been "demonstration" wars ("pour encourager les autres") or whether they've been excuses to re-legitimise other Middle East bases. Whatever the emphasis or immediate motivation, the need for island bases is assumed.

US Washes Its Hands Of Chagossians

When at the Congressional hearing the Embassy in Mauritius asked home base to think about the US's "moral responsibility", the responding flunky suggested the Government bore no "legal responsibility. Moral responsibility is a term, sir, that I find difficult to assess". That might be bureaucratic, but it's not the voice of "neglect" or civil service caution. It's the voice of a bully who won't answer to anyone. To a State Department flunky would New Zealand be an "island"? Probably it was - until the nuclear row. That's one good news item for us locals. Another comes from an overview of US policy:

"Equally courageous are the banished people of Diego Garcia who are struggling to return home and to end their years of suffering and marginalisation as foreign outcasts. With activist allies in New Zealand and the help of leading journalists, human right organisations, and jurists in Britain, they have risen from oblivion and won case after case in the British courts" ("US Foreign Military Bases And Military Colonialism", Joseph Gerson, a US Quaker, "Bases of Empire", p67). As he was finishing his book, curious about the man who first proposed the expulsion, Vine tracked down Barber's son. Barber was dead, but, said his son, he had come to bitterly regret his part in the tragedy. Yet all his efforts to influence the system came to nothing. As an individual man with a conscience Stu Barber didn't count.



REVIEWS - "SPIES, LIES AND THE WAR ON TERROR"

Peace Researcher 38 – July 2009

by Paul Todd, Jonathan Bloch & Patrick Fitzgerald, Zed Books, London and New York, 2009.

- Jeremy Agar

The title of this brisk survey tells you pretty much about what's inside. That in itself is notable, in as much that the "War on Terror" goes back no further than the very recent, yet distant, George Bush-Tony Blair axis. In the last couple of years we've had available several accounts of post-9/11 US policy, so it's not a criticism to say that this analysis by three British-based writers doesn't add much to what's already available. However, it came out before much of the emerging evidence about torture.

Only a few specialists will want to read more than one or two of the books, and which one you pick is largely a matter of taste and style. Choose "Spies, Lies And The War on Terror" if you fancy something that respects the reader's ability to draw her own conclusions. It's short on rhetoric and moderate in tone. When Dubya announced his "terror" campaign he justified it by suggesting that he was only responding to events. Existing restraints on the projection of US power had been "designed for another era". A White House staffer explained: 'We are an empire now. And when we act, we create our own reality'. Is this new era thinking? It certainly has a post-modern ring, but po-mo itself often comes off as something Mussolini might have come up with.

Mainstream neo-conservative US ideology didn't seem to think that a new era was dawning. The authors quote a typical ideologue, Michael Lebden, who in 2002 suggested that "the radical transformation of several Middle East countries ... is entirely in keeping with the American tradition... Creative destruction is our middle name". Benito and the Italian futurists he championed would have liked to adopt these middle names. The Duce would have warmed to Lebden's irrational exuberance: "We do not want stability the real issue is not whether, but how best to destabilise the dependent world" (for a brilliant dissection of this mood - one that, far from being the child of a new era, has dominated elite opinion in the US for at least a century - read "The Shock Doctrine" by Naomi Klein, which I reviewed in *Foreign Control Watchdog* 117, April 2008, online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/17/06.htm>). Italy creatively destroyed Ethiopia and the US has been creatively destroying Iraq. There, let's hope, the parallel dissolves, because the Axis - that's the Axis containing fascist Italy, not Dubya's latter-day Axis of Evil - went on to creatively destroy much of the planet.

The All-Seeing Eye

In 2002, at the high tide of Bush's imperial venture, the Pentagon hatched a scheme to watch over everyone and everything. Total Information Awareness (TIA) "sought the open-ended gathering of 'transactional data' on every aspect of social activity - with 'financial, education, travel, medical, veterinary, country entry, place/event entry, transportation, housing, critical resources, government, and communication records' being declared targets". TIA aimed to collect DNA, iris scans and the now old-fashioned fingerprints. Phone tapping? One source said that the aim was access to "every call ever made".

TIA came to light by chance in 2005 in the course of Congressional hearings into giant US telecommunications company AT&T. The resulting furore forced it into retirement, but many aspects of TIA remain under different guises. So the paranoid can still obsess that someone sometime will control the world. Apparently the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) international terrorism watch list has 190,000 names and they keep records on 325,000 people.

Yet, overall, the book gives comparatively more weight to British and European responses than to American. The UK, America's "pillion passenger", was along for the ride. The CIA has funded the British in Afghanistan. As one US spook explained the reasoning: "They basically take care of the 'how to kill people' department". The authors emphasise PM Tony Blair's penchant for saying that the wars were justified by his "belief" in the cause.

That's not the way Parliamentary democracies are meant to work. Belief is best left to fanatics - like the Taleban. Blair always gave the impression of being intellectually arrogant. Certainty in the powerful is always dangerous, but when it's justified by the sort of moral snobbery that marked Blair's faith, it can be a lethal habit. If you think you're carrying out God's will, you won't let earthly good manners restrain you, and Blair made much of his religion. The Iraq War, he was pleased to think, was "a struggle that will last a generation and more.... It's an attack on our way of life". That's how the mullahs conceive of their jihad against those whom their God - the one Blair says he worships - regards as infidels. Messianic talk is best left to the likes of Mussolini, who prattled on about Destiny, or, it has to be

said, of Hitler, with his strutting faith in a "triumph of the will".



REVIEW: “KIWI COMPAÑEROS: New Zealand And The Spanish Civil War”

Peace Researcher 38 – July 2009

edited by Mark Derby, Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 2009

- Jeremy Agar

1939 newsreels showing German tanks plunging into Poland can make it seem that World War 2 had a sudden and surprising start. This impression goes along with a supposed knowledge that Hitler's generals had devised a "lightning war" strategy, for which neither Britain nor France was prepared. Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, is remembered for "appeasement", a policy based on the hunch that the whinging Herr Hitler had a point. His country had been hard done by and, treated with respect, the Chancellor would settle down.

In fact, the war had already begun. It could be dated to 1937, when Japan invaded China, or to 1935, when the Italian Army marched into Ethiopia. And of course Hitler's propensity to violence had already gone unchecked within Germany. Rather than accept that Chamberlain was a stunned mullet, it would be more accurate to say that the governing elites in the UK and France didn't mind what was happening. Their miscalculation was in gambling that the strategic interests they felt they shared with the Nazis would be appreciated in Berlin. They never thought the Wehrmacht would march west.

Spain Was The Cause Celebre Of the 1930s

These days, outside Spain at least, the Spanish Civil War is largely forgotten, but not long ago it provoked passion. Fought between 1936 and 1939, the war was historically significant as it served as a prelude to World War 2, which broke out the year it ended. In the Thirties, the drift towards catastrophe was there for all to see, and nowhere more clearly than in Spain. It began as a run of the mill military coup against an elected government in a country that normally didn't matter much to the big powers. But the times were anything but normal. In his Introduction, Mark Derby sets the context:

“In a highly volatile Europe already fractured along faultlines of politics and class, this desperate localised uprising swiftly became an international conflict....Over the next three years the names of at least 15 New Zealanders would appear among the bewildering cosmopolitan forces in this very globalised 'civil' war... [T]hey were drawn into the war's centre of gravity by their conviction that Spain's war would be a decisive bridgehead in the struggle against fascism, the ideology that already held sway in Germany and Italy and threatened much of the rest of Europe. By late 1936 it was apparent, even in secluded New Zealand, that if fascism were not defeated in Spain, a world war would eventuate”.

In ones and twos the Kiwi *compañeros* made their way to Spain, where they fought in defence of the Spanish Republicans - the Government - alongside Britons, Americans, Canadians and assorted Europeans in what came to be called the International Brigades. Against them were ranged the regular Spanish Army - or at least those parts of it on which the military leader, General Franco, could rely - and guns, bombs and planes supplied by Hitler and Mussolini. It was a unique historical moment, one that could not have occurred either earlier or later than it did.

Derby has collected chapters on each of the New Zealanders, from a variety of researchers. We're given the reminiscences of relatives and friends. It's a fascinating look at a past which might seem impossibly distant. It isn't though, not chronologically. A note at the end of one chapter reads, "Sir Geoffrey Cox died in April 2008 as this book was in preparation". Besides being the longest-lived of the *compañeros*, Cox was the only one whose name is widely known (but probably more so in Britain than in Invercargill or Timaru, where his young life was spent). Cox was sent to Spain as a cub reporter for a London newspaper. His dispatches and books on the experience and subsequently on hot spots for the rest of the 20th Century became classics of the genre. In the Thirties Cox, who went to Oxford on a Rhodes Scholarship, a contemporary of those other expat university men, Paddy Costello, John Mulgan and Dan Davin, held classic "old Left" views. Interviewed near the end of his life by James McNeish, Cox was happy to pronounce himself an admirer of Margaret Thatcher. Like his journalistic forays to the world's crises, Cox's ideological journey defined and reflected an epoch.

Doug Jolly, from Otago, a medical student active in the Student Christian Movement, became another expat in the UK with a background of classic New Zealand idealism. Jolly pioneered surgical techniques that were to be used by Allied surgeons in World War 2. Quotes from an articulate Jolly illustrate this chapter. Not all the volunteers were motivated by a love of democracy. Some were excited by the prospect of an adventurous OE. They're a lively lot.

One at least seems to have been escaping a dodgy life at home. There were even a couple who fought for Franco, but their motives seem to have been apolitical.

Labour Government Offered Only Tepid Support To Spanish Struggle

The contributors elucidate the interplay between New Zealand's domestic politics and Spain. Although the fascists were backed by Germany and Italy, France and Britain did not help the Republic, claiming that any intervention of theirs would provoke Hitler and Mussolini to even grosser aggression. The Soviet Union did chip in, but not on a scale that began to match what Franco got. Were the Russians acting out of socialist solidarity or did they fear they'd be the next target? At the time the Communist connection was a big deal, a reason for the tepid support for Spain offered by the Savage government, and for the heated opposition from the Roman Catholic hierarchy in New Zealand. The Spanish fascists paraded as defenders of God and landlords, guarding family values against the Russian bear, who wanted only to invade Spain (and then NZ) and burn down the churches.

Did Rightwing intellectuals believe their own propaganda? Nicholas Reid, a historian of the Church, quotes a letter from Archbishop O'Shea to the Editor of the *New Zealand Tablet*: "I know the Prime Minister and most of the members of his Cabinet well enough to be convinced that they have not the slightest intention of legislating on communistic lines nor in favour of anything forbidden to Catholics... Unless our Government did what they are doing, the Left Wing of the party, which such legislation holds in check, might easily prevail with Labour".

O'Shea was taking issue with the Editor for having printed a letter denouncing Labour's "socialism". This suggests that the Archbishop was concerned primarily to hold back progressive ideals. He assumed that censorship of opinion in the Church's paper was a justifiable tactic, and that support for social democratic legislation was needed in order to finesse the call for more radical measures. The Archbishop was an opportunist, a manipulator, looking at the end game. Editorials on the evils of democratic Spain dominated official Catholic writing throughout the late Thirties and it seems likely that the obsessive hostility of the church to the Republican cause was a way of discrediting Leftist ideals so that the Savage government would remain only mildly reformist, a safety valve. O'Shea was relying on the prevailing ignorance about foreign affairs among the population, using Spain as a scapegoat. The hierarchy had to take into account the strong Catholic influence within the Government. It knew that Catholics, in general, were more likely to vote Labour than were the members of any other religious grouping.

REVIEW: "PASSING BELLS"

Peace Researcher 38 – July 2009

by WJ Foote, The Glen Press, Christchurch, 2009

- Jeremy Agar

Will Foote's title alludes to a pacifist poem from World War 1. This war, one of the most miserable in the long and futile history of miserable wars, inspired several anti-war poets. Foote, who has a humane and wide view, sprinkles quotations throughout his breezy monograph. A large part of "Passing Bells" is a brief history of war, from a New Zealand perspective. As Foote points out at the start, the basic information he's passing on will be familiar to many readers and he's not pretending to break new ground. What he does do very well is sum up the sad legacy of human conflict.

As with his previous books, Foote is concerned primarily with making the case for pacifism. Wars don't solve problems because they never seem to end up how the warriors would have hoped. Their one sure outcome is death and destruction. A wise propagandist, Foote knows that the debate about the morality of violence is a long one and he's not going to change minds about fundamental principles. So he contents himself with a few general observations and guides the reader to where she might find more detailed expositions.

Foote thinks that popular justifications for war which locate lofty motives and happy outcomes are misguided. Two common examples: the American Civil War was not waged to end slavery, and World War 2 was not about saving Jews from the Holocaust. The broad sweep of events has a certain inevitability about it, which violence can affect only in the short term. Foote has a great sense of history, and his judgements are shrewd. Some examples of his take on pivotal decisions:

On World War 2, he quotes Noam Chomsky, a favourite source: "If the United States and Britain had wanted to stop Hitler in 1938, they probably could have done it. There wouldn't have been any war, but they didn't particularly want to". The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was unnecessary, even in narrowly military terms. It was prompted by President Truman's desire to forestall an expected Russian advance on Japan so that, as Truman himself put it, "little Harry could show Molotov and Stalin that we've got the cards".

In Gulf War 1, Bush the First left Saddam in power because "the Americans decided that 'the devil they knew' was better than rule by the 'mad Mullahs' or Communists that might succeed him. That led Saddam to vent his wrath on those, such as the Kurds, who had not supported him and had been promised protection by the Americans". The mess in Afghanistan continues, 30 years on from a 1978 call by the Americans and the British to help the Mujahidin, a reactionary, rural opposition to a popular secular government. That prompted Russian help for the Afghan government, the end of Soviet Communism, the rise of bin Laden, a ruined American economy, and al-Qaeda.

It's The Warriors Who Are Out Of Sync

Defenders of global violence like to decry pacifism as being based on a false notion of human nature. Foote thinks that this naive view fails to recognise that, on the contrary, "there's no original sin, there's original goodness". Modern science endorses Foote's optimism, and it's the warriors who are out of sync. Even when there are no actual wars they compromise our humanity and waste our resources. Every year the world spends \$1 trillion on its military. Productive investment with the potential to provide clean water and clean energy and eradicate acid rain and illiteracy would cost a fraction of that. It would also ease the causes of violence.

Non-violent protests work, Foote suggests, and he takes us through some examples. His important insight is that officials in the belligerent governments and the international financiers whose policies have been so destructive are not evil. They don't intend to crush the world's poor, but they do because they're caught in a system and a mindset. In a more rational world, society could readily organise itself to apply "common morality to the common good". Pacifist thinking traditionally has a strong religious component, but Foote seems inspired more by a sturdy secularism. Active in the New Zealand peace movement for 70 years, Foote knows that the way for a united vision to succeed is to present an argument in ways that invite broad acceptance. As an introduction to the topic, this book is hard to beat.

Copies of "Passing Bells" cost \$20 (or \$15 each if buying two or more) and can be ordered from The Glen Press, 1/52a Aorangi Road, Christchurch 8053.

Will Foote is a veteran and much valued member of the Anti-Bases Campaign, and until he was well into his 80s, a regular at Waihopai spybase protests from the outset. He is a prolific writer, and several of his books have been reviewed in PR, most recently "Saving Trees, Stopping Wars", reviewed by Jeremy Agar in PR 33, November 2006, online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr33-131a.html>. Ed.



OBITUARY - IAN PRIOR

A Long-Term And Dedicated Worker For Disarmament

Peace Researcher 38 – July 2009

- Nick Wilson

Nick Wilson is the Chair of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (NZ). This obituary was also published in IPPNW (NZ)'s June/July 2009 newsletter.

Ian Prior, who was well known to the New Zealand peace movement, died in February 2009, aged 85. Ian regarded the threat of nuclear weapons as a critical public health issue and with a group of physician friends he co-founded the New Zealand branch of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW)* in 1981. He played leading roles in the New Zealand branch (including as Chairperson), and provided sustained contributions to the international efforts of the organisation for over two and a half decades.

**See "SIS Spied On Peace Movement For Decades", by Murray Horton, elsewhere in this issue. That details the peace groups that the Director of the Security Intelligence Service has confirmed were the targets of its historic spying. IPPNW (NZ) was one of them. The Director explained that it had been necessary to spy on these groups because they had been infiltrated by "cynical Communists". Ed.*

Ian was particularly good at engaging young doctors and medical students (myself included, back in the early 1980s) in a way that made them feel part of an important and worthwhile national and international effort. Another attribute was Ian's ability to attract key international people to New Zealand to speak publicly on peace issues in well-orchestrated events. At these events it was easy to see what a great networker Ian was and how he engaged with politicians, diplomats, officials, scientists, artists and community leaders, both in New Zealand and internationally. As George Salmond* once wrote: "with great skill and sensitivity, Ian uses his networks to advance the cause of nuclear weapons abolition". *George Salmond is a long standing member of IPPNW, a long term friend of Ian's and he was a key figure in the World Court Project. He is a former Director General of Health.

Together with his late wife Elespie, Ian also provided critical financial resources to help IPPNW, particularly through the IPPNW Education and Research Trust. Elespie also provided strong and sustained emotional support to Ian, and frequently helped host IPPNW meetings at their Wadestown home. Ian contributed to many publications by IPPNW and other peace groups – and helped ensure that these were well produced, launched and distributed. He also contributed to various research projects, including work on the impact of nuclear testing [1].

The contribution that Ian made to nuclear disarmament activities has been well recognised, including in the book "The Health of Pacific Societies – Ian Prior's Life and Work". George Salmond also spoke eloquently about his important role on National Radio (1/3/09, Radio NZ). Furthermore, IPPNW (NZ) has recently deposited its key documents with the National Archive and this means that future historians will be able to study more closely the contribution that Ian and his colleagues have made in the disarmament field.

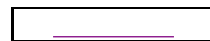
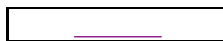
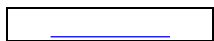
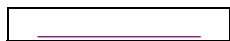
There was also other public recognition for Ian's long and varied contributions to disarmament, the environment, to the arts and to advancing public health. In 1988 he was awarded an Honorary DSc. (Victoria University of Wellington) and in 1996 he was inducted as an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM). Various articles expand on Ian's contributions in these other fields (e.g., [2-5]), but to me his contributions to advancing public health and disarmament particularly stand out.

Although never an ABC member nor involved directly in our branch of the peace movement, Ian Prior was an extremely generous donor to the CAFCA/ABC Organiser Account which provides Murray Horton's income. He was among the very first to donate when it was set up in 1991 and his most recent donation was in 2004. And he was a member of, and an extremely generous annual donor to, the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA) from 1993-99. Ed.

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OBITUARY - CONNIE SUMMERS

Peace Researcher 38 – July 2009

- Murray Horton

Connie Summers, who died in Christchurch in December 2008, aged 89, holds a special place in the history of the New Zealand peace movement. Connie Jones, as she was then, was the only woman imprisoned in World War 2 for pacifist offences. The best recent history on this subject is Russell Campbell's excellent 2005 documentary "Sedition: The Suppression Of Dissent In World War 2 New Zealand". Contact Russell at Russell.Campbell@vuw.ac.nz for details. "Sedition" was reviewed by Jeremy Agar in *Peace Researcher* 32, March 2006, online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr32-120b.html>.

"Constance May Jones – or Connie as she has always been called – was born on the 1st March 1919. She was the second youngest, the third daughter of four, and the last surviving member of the ten children born to Lillian and Ernest Jones. None of us here today can remember her mother, as she died in 1939, before any of us were born. However we can remember her father, Ernie, who had a big impact on her life and beliefs. He was an ardent socialist and would bike from Oxford to Christchurch and back again in order to attend political meetings (100 km over shingle roads)".

"She was born in Oxford where her father had also been born, while her mother came from Ashburton. Both families were of English/Welsh ancestry – and of peasant stock as she was fond of asserting. Shortly after her birth the family moved to Christchurch – Halswell Road – just a kilometre or two from where she died – appropriate for her who was very much a homebody, and proud of the fact that she'd never been outside of New Zealand.

"The family was poor, but this never featured particularly in her reminiscences. However her father's large garden, both vegetable and ornamental did – and she inherited a love of gardening from her parents. She also, of course, inherited many other qualities, including her principles, and her Protestant work ethic – both of which she has passed on to her children. She went to Spreydon School and for three years to secondary school at West Christchurch, as Hagley was called at that time. She learnt the piano briefly – and got a medal, and won a knitting prize for a two-tone scarf, which has recently been retrieved from her extensive archives and admired, in a Christchurch-wide competition.

"At 13 she joined the Socialist Guild of Youth and went to meetings every Sunday, and by 15 she was a committed pacifist and has remained so for her entire life. At first she was a Humanist Pacifist as her father was an agnostic, but she became involved in the Baptist, and then the Methodist Church and joined both the No More War movement and the Christian Pacifist Society.

Prison

"In 1939 when she was 20 she went to Wellington and boarded with prominent pacifist Archie Barrington for about three months, returning to Christchurch just before her mother died. She often talked about how she came back to organise her mother's funeral. When she returned to Wellington she boarded with the Reverend Ormond Burton, another very prominent pacifist, and had a variety of jobs as work was hard to get. She worked at the Centennial Exhibition, but of course, it being war time, the exhibition was a big flop. She also worked for an importer of German-made pharmaceutical display stands, and lastly and most successfully, as a ledger keeper for Turners and Growers.

"1941 was a defining year for her. Two years into the war, freedom of speech, the right of dissent, had been curtailed in the interests of the war. Christian pacifists who tried to influence public opinion were arrested – yet on Friday nights, week after week, activists climbed on their soap boxes and spoke for peace. And so it came to her turn. She climbed on the box – a young constable pleaded with her not to do it. She managed a few words: 'The Lord Jesus Christ tells us to love one another...' Chief Inspector CW Lopdell, the Wellington Police chief, arrested her..." (family eulogy at her funeral, delivered by her daughter, Bronwen Summers).

"Though she lived a further 67 years, she never regretted her action on the street corner that Friday evening. Neither did she regret the public vilification she attracted and the many times she was punched and jostled, as she walked the town wearing a sandwich board bearing anti-war slogans.... Two of Summers' brothers were conscientious objectors in the war. One served a month's imprisonment at Papanui, near Christchurch... Looking back in 1986, she told the *Press* she wished she had done more to oppose the war. By then she had also protested against the Vietnam War, from 1965 to 1973..." (*Press*, 17/1/09, "Frank pacifist stuck to anti-war beliefs", Mike

Crean).

“She was simply charged with obstruction under the emergency regulations, spared the additional Supreme Court appearance for attempting to hold a meeting, which had earned the others another 12 months’ gaol. ‘When I asked Lopdell why he’d only charged me with the one offence, he insultingly replied that he was being *kind* to me’... She told the Magistrate’s Court in 1941 that the State had no right to make her follow a law that she didn’t believe in. (the magistrate) didn’t agree. She got three months hard labour. She was 22.

“She served her sentence at the Point Halswell Reformatory, immediately above the girls’ borstal. ‘It wasn’t actually hard work, but the food was poor’. She was locked up for 14 hours a day without a toilet. Working in the hard land of the prison garden in winter, she froze in her thin prison clothes. ‘For the first time in my life I had chilblains, on my ears and hands’” (*Listener*, 3/9/94, “A matter of principle: Lifelong pacifist Connie Summers is armed with her beliefs”, Bruce Ansley).

“She recalled the matron of the reformatory saying to her ‘I suppose, Constance, you won’t sew the uniforms for the Army’. And we can hear her firm reply ‘certainly not’ – as that would have been helping with the war effort. After prison she returned to Christchurch in August and by late September (1941) had married Dad – and yes, I think it’s generally well known that she did the proposing” (family eulogy).

Marriage, Bookshop

“John Summers, surprisingly, went to war, on medical duties only. ‘He still believed in pacifism’, says Connie, ‘but John had a pretty violent side to his temperament. He knew about this and he didn’t feel that he could claim to be a pacifist in the true sense of the word while that side of him flourished. So he felt he had to compromise. We were married just over a year when he went overseas (he served in North Africa and Italy) and he was away near enough to three years. But, there was never one word of difference over his going to the war.

“John was not an easy person. Very quick tempered, very bad tempered. Anyone who knew both John and I would know it wouldn’t be an easy marriage, because of the strength of the convictions. When I get a conviction it’s strong, it’s not something I drop by the wayside. But I loved him very dearly for over 50 years that we were married...I love my children very dearly. Full stop. They are not my life. But when John died (in 1994), my life died. John *was* my life. It didn’t matter what the difficulties of my marriage were” (*Listener*, *ibid.*).

“It was an extraordinary marriage, built, so they said, on faith – which gave rise to the name of their first born. Faith was born in 1942 just before Dad went overseas as a medical orderly. She flatted in Hereford Street until he came back in 1945 when they moved to Hororata where he worked in a saw mill (*they had seven kids. Ed*). In 1958 they went into business, setting up in a bookshop in Chancery Lane. They subsequently moved to Manchester Street and finally to Tuam Street. Dad always said that Mum was the brains of the business and tempered his otherwise rash decision-making tendencies. Mum always worked in the shop – in early days, taking the bus home around 2 p.m. in order to get the dinners ready” (family eulogy).

“Her husband was an art collector and critic, a writer and a lover of books. Summers supported him in running a Christchurch bookshop and worked in it for many years... It became a ‘hang-out’ for arty and literary types and political radicals (*I was one of the latter category of customers. Ed*)... A former customer, who asked not to be named, says Summers ‘tended to be grumpy’, possibly because of her husband’s frequent ill temper. She was always frank and forthright. Her integrity, consistency and generosity won her wide respect” (*Press obituary, ibid.*).

“In 1968 they moved to the Domain Terrace house. Throughout all this time a wide variety of artists, poets and writers visited them at home – often staying for meals and talking late into the night. They were also collecting art works, always purchased very inexpensively through their friendship with artists who were still establishing their reputations such as Colin McCahon, Toss Woollaston, Tony Fomison and others. Thousands of books also made their way home. Regular outings were made to art show openings, and concerts – Mum was particularly appreciative of women singers such as de los Angeles, Schwarzkopf and Mahalia Jackson. They also saw Paul Robeson in concert – being a big fan not only of his singing, but his social conscience. The bookshop was finally closed in 1983 when Mum was 64. Once she had more time, Mum spent a lot of it in her garden, which gave her a lot of pleasure.

Arrested Five Times During 81 Springbok Tour

“Also during this time there were social issues to be involved in – the Vietnam War was a prominent one – and both Mum and Dad took part in many demonstrations. She hit her stride again in 1981, during the Springbok Tour, when

they participated in many demonstrations, and in the course of which she was arrested five times. As a consequence of explaining to the judge her long-held beliefs, she was discharged without conviction on all charges. Well the judges weren't stupid were they!

"Although intensely political, and a keen listener to Parliament when it was sitting, she did not join any political party because they all believed in the necessity for a defence force. She was proud of not voting for winners in elections – commenting quite recently that her father had never voted for a winner in any election. To her it was more important to vote for the one she most believed in – regardless of their likelihood of getting into Parliament. During this most recent election (2008) there were two billboards on her fence – one for the Greens, the other for the Alliance. In earlier years the New Labour Party put up their billboards, until Jim Anderton became persona non grata and was sent the inevitable letter!" (family eulogy).

Unyielding Principles

"I'd go to the bloody stake for my beliefs; it doesn't matter that they've hurt me a good deal'. In one (1981 Springbok tour-related) court appearance, she read a passage from Bram Fischer, sentenced to life imprisonment in South Africa. 'Were I to ask for forgiveness today I would betray my cause. That course is not open to me. I believe that what I did is right'" (*Listener*, *ibid*). "She expected her family to follow her lead, even though it caused difficulties, even alienation, among them. She admitted she was openly critical of family members and had many rows with them" (*Press* obituary, *ibid*).

An extraordinary insight into just what this meant can be found in Bruce Ansley's 1994 *Listener* profile of her, specifically the relationship between Connie and her son, Llew Summers, the famous sculptor. "My son Llew has said our marriage was a bloody disaster. Well, at least I stayed married and Llew didn't' ... Llew is one of their seven children, but he hasn't seen much of his mother since 1977. That year, a divorced man with children, he took up with Rose. She has been his partner for 17 years. But Connie wouldn't let Rose in her house. They were not married and that was that. Rose's name is not mentioned during our conversation" (*Rose died in 1998, of cancer, aged 49. Ed*).

"My children', says Summers, 'look upon me as unbending. I know it. I say, yes, but what about the other person. They're going in the opposite direction from me. Are they unbending? Or am I the only one? Llew lives in a way I don't agree with...When Llew told me he was going to do this, I said to him, well, you must live your life and I hope you find the living of your life easier than I know I'm going to find mine. I'm his mother, and I hoped the beliefs I hold very dearly had infiltrated enough for him to live by them. But, if they haven't, and he doesn't believe in them, well stuff it...Llew came to see me one night after John's death and said he supposed now I would change my mind, now there'd been a death. I don't believe a death is any reason to change what I believe. Well, he said, as he went out the door, it was just a bloody nuisance. I'm not setting out to be a bloody nuisance. I'm just continuing to live the only way I know how to live'" (*Listener*, *ibid*).

"No overview of her life would be complete without a word or two about her principles. And to quote from Mum herself: 'Being arrested has nothing to do with bravery. We have certain temperaments we're given. I have the background of these people, my grandmother, my father, who gave me these strengths'. And then referring to her marriage to Dad, she said: 'He thought I was malleable. After we were married, he thought it was the biggest joke of his life. The only woman jailed, as I was, malleable!'" (family eulogy).