



## Healthcare

# Danger: Privatisation

Anna Pha

The privatisation of Medibank Private has fundamentally altered the private health insurance (PHI) sector. Medibank Private, prior to privatisation, acted as a restraint on other private health funds such as BUPA, HCF and HCL. Now it is a share holding company listed on the Stock Exchange. It is obliged by law to put the interests of its shareholders first. That is, profits must by law come before patients!

This of course raises the whole question of private health insurance and the private hospital system.

Patients are the vehicle for making profits. Their hospitalisation, their surgery, their care and outpatient services are commodities.

Built into this private system are layers upon layers of profits:

- Private health fund
- Private hospital
- Private pathology and xrays
- Private cleaners
- Private body hire companies for temporary nurses and other staff
- Private catering for patients
- Charging visitors for car parking
- Private medical practitioners on blown out fees – and so on.

Every layer of profit adds additional costs to the system which ultimately come out of patients' pockets through higher insurance premiums, gap payments for services and through the taxation system for the PHI rebate.

But that is not all. In their drive to maximise profits, there is a strong incentive to cut costs. This is done by such means as lower nurse-patient ratios, employing fewer permanent staff, excessive overtime, contract labour, using cheaper and inferior products, short-cuts in procedures, inadequate cleaning, food not meeting dietary requirements, faster turnover of patients.

Unfortunately, such practices are increasingly occurring in public hospitals but they are not driven by the profit motive. They are the result of decades of deliberate under-funding. Low salaries, long hours, understaffing



and under resourcing are placing impossible pressures on nursing and other staff, to the point where their health is affected. Many have just left the system to find other types of employment.

The PHI industry, and it is an industry, promote their business as keeping pressure off public hospitals. They claim they are freeing up public hospital beds for the most disadvantaged.

This is nothing short of deception. The reality is every dollar more the government spends on subsidising private hospitals, on keeping an otherwise unsustainable system afloat, is one dollar less for public hospitals.

Australia is fast heading down the path of America. The listing of covered and not covered events is a slippery slope towards patients having to first gain the authority from their fund prior to surgery and other procedure. A bean counter in Medibank or BUPA, not the medical professionals along with their patients who they know, will be making life and death decisions.

The private health funds are feeding on the sick like vultures.

Australian Medical Association president

Professor Brian Owler told the National Press Club on July 22 that Treasury estimates \$57 billion in funding will be taken out of our public hospitals between 2017 and 2025.

The public hospital system cannot sustain such cuts. It is already reeling from past cuts putting in jeopardy its high quality care.

"Elective surgery is anything but 'elective'. It includes cancers and life-threatening conditions," Owler said.

"Meanwhile, people suffer. They can't work and support themselves or their families. These patients are in pain, and debilitated."

There is no end to the long waiting lists in sight.

### Privatisation by stealth

The Communiqué issued by the Leaders Retreat on July 23 gave little hope. They are looking at "efficient arrangements" – code for "cutting costs", cutting health costs. The GST is on the table along with an increase in the Medicare levy.

The government, however, is willing to rearrange revenue sources but "Tax increases overall do not represent tax reform," said

Treasurer Joe Hockey. He went on to say that overall taxation should be lower. That means cuts to government income.

Leaked documents from the Prime Minister's department suggest the federal government is planning to cut \$18 billion a year in support for public hospitals and leave states to fend for themselves.

The government point blank refuses to consider abolishing the PHI rebate, negative gearing, super tax rorts for the rich and the mining industry fossil fuel rebate let alone seriously address the question of transnational corporations not paying any taxes. At the same time it is hell bent on phasing out company taxation.

### USA here we come

Negotiations between private health insurers and private hospitals are usually secret. Patients are not usually aware of this process but current negotiations with the Calvary group of hospitals have been made public.

Medibank is refusing to cover the costs of patients for 165 items which it claims are due to "preventable events" and hospital mistakes.

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Culture & Life  
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# Guardian

Issue 1695

July 29, 2015

## Helicopter jaunts and equality of sacrifice

Last week's parliamentary leaders' retreat in Sydney was dominated by talk of tax reform. Prime Minister Abbott, state premiers and territory chief ministers were all pretty much on the same page. "Australia", that broadest of definitions encompassing a very unequal society, has a debt problem. The biggest component of this problem, supposedly, is the health budget. The Medicare levy doesn't meet the cost of public health and something has got to give. Public spending cuts will continue as will privatisation but now, it seems, taxation will have to be increased, as well. Of course, the idea of increasing corporate tax is not even considered. Neither is any measure that would dampen the drive of the already wealthy to go out and get even wealthier. The GST, the tax that clobbers the less well off hardest, appears to be the front runner in the tax hike stakes.

Working people are accustomed to sacrifice. They would be prepared to tighten the belt in a good, common cause. But "fixing" the supposed debt crisis is not such a cause. Underlining the class bias of the sacrifices being envisaged by the parliamentary leaders was the other big story of the week – Speaker of the House of Representatives Bronwyn Bishop's \$5,227 helicopter ride to attend a Liberal Party fundraiser in Geelong.

"It was done within entitlement," the conservative veteran said. It was an instructive choice of words. Federal Treasurer Joe Hockey became famous with a speech to a London audience for flagging the end of the "age of entitlement". Not so for the servants of the monopolies, it seems. The tabloid tidbit about the chartered helicopter ride opened the floodgates on revelations about the speaker's travel and other claims. A two week trip to Europe cost the taxpayer \$88,000. Bishop's attendance at arts events over eight days between 2010 and 2013 cost \$3,300. And, going back to the years between 1998 and 2001, the bill for her chartered flights came in at \$139,196.01. That was seven times the spend by then junior ministers Tony Abbott and Joe Hockey.

The PM has put Bishop "on probation". The period of the punishment is not defined. Neither are the consequences. It's a farce. The Finance Department is investigating but it is doubtful any impropriety will be discovered. Pampering and privilege are part of the system. Nothing will be done about Joe Hockey claiming a \$270-a-night taxpayer-funded travelling allowance to stay in a Canberra house majority-owned by his wife. In 2007, it came to light that the very wealthy Malcolm Turnbull rented a house from his wife when in Canberra. Mr Turnbull paid \$10,000 a year to his wife under the arrangement and claimed another \$10 a night in allowances when she stayed in Canberra.

Joe Hockey has also claimed that the surge in petrol prices won't impact greatly on low income Australians because they don't drive cars as much as their well off counterparts. He says he "totally understands" the frustration of Australians locked out of the housing market and condemned to pay high rents in the major Australian cities. His advice sounded rather like Marie Antoinette, Dauphine of France in the 18th century who, when told that the poor of Paris had no bread, suggested they should eat cake. Hockey's suggestion to Australians suffering accommodation stress is that they should get high-paying jobs.

The born to rule arrogance of the government is on display. Abbott & Co make quite a display of wearing hard hats and high-visibility vests during their photo opps. A more representative image was the secretly snapped one of Treasurer Hockey and Finance Minister Mathias Cormann chomping on cigars, revelling in their privilege in private while, in public, laying down demands for greater austerity for the working people of Australia.

The Liberals will try to absolve themselves by pointing to self-indulgent practices on the other side of the house. Workers should learn the real lesson from revelations about rule by the rich and work towards a new politics based on radical change and social justice. The forces needed to carry out those changes, including a strong mass Communist Party, have to be built. It's not enough to share a "meme" about Australia's plutocratic political class on Facebook, it's time to build the genuine left alternative.

### PRESS FUND

The former Labor government introduced the cruel policy of banning asylum seekers who tried to reach our shores by boat from ever gaining Australian citizenship. Now Labor has adopted the Liberal Party's very dangerous policy of turning back asylum seeker boats. How far will either party be prepared to go? For years the *Guardian* has argued for more humane solutions, for example by providing asylum seekers in transit countries with formal assurances that their cases will be given fair and sympathetic consideration within a given period, and that they need not engage in hazardous boat journeys. We intend to pursue this tremendously important issue, but we need your support, so please, if you possibly can, send us a Press Fund contribution for the next issue. Many thanks to this week's contributors, as follows: Mark Mannion \$5, "Round Figure" \$15, Terry Sharman \$50, Noel Hazard \$20

This week's total: \$90 Progressive total: \$4,380

## Healthcare

# Danger: Privatisation

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Some of these can clearly be attributed to a hospital such as leaving an instrument in a patient's body when sewing them up after surgery. But others such as deep vein thrombosis or maternal death may or may not have anything to do with the level of care.

But, for patients, who have spent a considerable sum on private health insurance believing they will not be any further out of pocket, it can come as a rude shock when they are confronted with a bill of thousands of dollars.

But the key question is not which items or events are covered and which are not. It is the fact that a private health insurer (possibly more than one) has already started the process of determining what a patient is or is not covered for. There is also the question of lack of patient choice regarding hospitals and medical professionals – "choice" was one of the promises given when the former Howard government and the private funds tried to panic people into private cover.

This is taking Australia down the path of the US health system which

has proven to be the most expensive and the worst amongst industrialised countries.

The Consumers Health Forum has called for the development of a clinically led national register setting out avoidable, adverse events where health funds would be exempt from paying benefits.

This is also going in the wrong direction. Private funds should pay up. Patients are not responsible. If a hospital is clearly responsible then it is between the private health fund and the private hospital to sort it out.

### Govt props up private system

The government heavily subsidises the premiums of PHI through means tested and age-based income tax rebates. These rebates are a percentage of the premium paid. They presently range from zero for an individual on an income above \$140,000 to 37.07 percent for a single person aged 70 or over on less than \$90,000.

Labor introduced the means testing, to try to contain the impact of subsidy on the health budget. The

cost of the rebate was growing at an exponential rate. It had already reached \$6 billion a year – \$6 billion that had been diverted from the public health system.

Privately insured patients do not expect to be out of pocket after a stay in hospital or day procedure. But depending on the health fund, the hospital and details of the policy, many patients are being hit with large bills and this is set to increase.

The under-funding of public hospitals is not just an attack on the most disadvantaged and vulnerable but a step towards privatisation of the public hospital system. Already public hospitals offer private beds and much of their work is contracted out to the private sector. The PHI funds also have their eyes on Medicare.

As the Abbott government continues with its cuts to hospital funding, the situation is set to worsen. The pressure will continue to mount for an increase in the GST or an expansion of its coverage to presently excluded areas such as health, education and fresh food. ✪



Melbourne

## WORKERS' RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

Communist Party of Australia with the support of Friends of KKE, Democritus & Greek Resistance Fighter

## Dinner Dance 2015

FAIR PENSIONS BUILDS A STRONGER SOCIETY

Saturday August 15 at 7:00pm

7 Union Street, Brunswick

DJ with "Chris Earthquake" – Entry Fee: \$45 per person

Contact: CPA Victoria for Tickets on 9639 1550 or email: cpavic@cpa.org.au

## Website and Computers Appeal

Life would be far simpler and cheaper if it were possible to buy a few computers, some software and just keep using them. But capitalism is far too cunning to let that happen. Built in redundancy reigns supreme in the high tech area. The CPA is no different to many other organisations in that it relies heavily on print technology for producing its material, including the *Guardian* and on its website and other social media as a means of communications and to promote the Party and its policies. The CPA has launched a special appeal to fund the updating of its website and computer systems. We urge you to dig deep for your party and for its work for a better world. The Appeal has got off to a great start. Our warmest thanks to the following for their generous contributions:

Jim Doyle \$100, Michael Smith \$50, Terry Sharman \$50, KM \$40.

This week's total \$240. Cumulative total: \$2,075.00

### Website and Computers Appeal

Name/Organisation \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Cheque/Money Order: make out to "Communist Party of Australia".

Credit card: sign, give name on card, card number & expiry date:  Visa  Mastercard

Name on the card \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

I agree /  I disagree to having my name published in *The Guardian*.

Send to: 74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, NSW, 2010 or phone it through on: 02 9699 8844

Thank you for your support.





# Abbott's inner clique splits Coalition

Peter Mac

**The secrecy and duplicity with which Abbott and a small clique of ministers rule the federal cabinet is causing major divisions within the Coalition government.**

According to Fairfax commentator Nicole Hasham the release of Agriculture Minister Barnaby Joyce's white paper on agriculture was delayed last March, because senior government figures considered it contained "every crackpot idea" from the previous quarter century.

Joyce later protested that "the world has gone mad" when he heard the government had approved the giant Shenhua open-cut coal mine at Breeza in the Liverpool Plains. Coal dust from the mine, which would be 1.7 times the size of the City of Sydney, would threaten the Liverpool Plains aquifers and local environment.

Joyce, the local member as well as a cabinet minister, did not hear from Abbott about the decision. Barely able to control his anger, he commented: "... it would have been nice to know about [the decision] a bit earlier ... but that's life, you have to take it on the chin."

The decision was a superb example of Abbott's duplicity. In 2010 he had told residents "The message I am getting loud and clear from locals is that they don't want to destroy this agricultural breadbasket with mining."

## The divisions reflect the struggle within capital for market domination.

However, he now claims that scientific reports have given the mine the OK, even though the reports express reservations about groundwater safety, and critics say the report's background data has not been released for public scrutiny.

Members of Joyce's New England constituency resent his unwillingness to confront Abbott. Labor has challenged him to resign as a minister, and popular retired independent

MP Tony Windsor, who previously held the Liverpool Plains seat of New England, has threatened to re-contest it at the next election.

### Rebellion against the clique

Having humiliated Joyce over the Shenhua approval, Abbott rubbed salt into the wound by ordering Joyce and other ministers not to appear on the ABC's popular current affairs discussion program *Q&A*, after controversy over a previous appearance by former terrorist "sympathiser" Zaky Mallah. The order deprived Joyce of the opportunity to publicly discuss proposals in his Agriculture White Paper.

Minister for Communications Malcolm Turnbull obeyed the order. However, he subsequently argued that exaggerating the importance of Daesh was just as misguided as downgrading its importance. In doing so, he contradicted Abbott's alarmist statement that terrorist group Daesh "is coming for you", and Foreign Affairs Minister Julie Bishop's absurd claim that Daesh poses a bigger threat than cold war tension.

The government can now jail journalists for disclosing information about intelligence operations, and seize nationwide metadata information about phone and email communications. It can reverse the onus of proof and jail persons without evidence for being in a declared prohibited area, and implement preventive



electoral support but "can still be a mistake."

For his part, Joyce resumed battle against the Shenhua proposal, telling a local paper that the mine was "an absurdity" which would probably damage the local aquifers.

Environment Minister Greg Hunt hastily intervened, declaring "... actual groundwater impacts are likely to be smaller than previous conservative predictions."

But Hunt himself nurses a grievance, because Abbott did not consult him about ordering the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) to cease funding wind farms and domestic solar installations, and concentrate on newly-developing technologies.

### Smouldering resentment

The government hates the CEFC. It tried twice to abolish it and was only blocked by the Senate. But there are other ways to abolish such an organisation. It's often difficult to make a business a financial success, but it's dead easy to make it fail.

The order to limit CEFC's operations has to be seen in conjunction with a directive earlier this year for

CEFC to lift its targeted financial returns, which are already very high, without increasing the financial risk.

The obvious way to fulfil that directive was for CEFC to continue financing wind farms and small-scale solar projects, the demand for which is booming. On the other hand, forcing CEFC to back developing technology projects would increase the risk of financial failure.

Other financial institutions are unlikely to provide investment funding for wind and small scale solar because of the government's ill-concealed hostility to renewable energy.

If the government succeeds in forcing the CEFC to focus solely on new technologies, it could make a further demand for CEFC to financially back the development of so-called "clean coal", a technological dead duck.

That would ensure a reduction in CEFC's returns and probably a financial crash. But even without taking that step, the ban on wind and small scale solar would undoubtedly reduce the returns from CEFC business, and that would provide the government with a pretext for closing down the organisation on the grounds of lack of financial viability.

CEFC management may refuse to obey the government's directive, on the grounds that it contravenes their current charter of operations. If they don't, the government will give the directive legal standing by tabling it as parliamentary legislation.

The discord within the Abbott government is not just the result of Abbott's dictatorial style, or his habit of humiliating his ministers, setting them against each other and failing to consult them before making "the captain's pick".

The divisions reflect the struggle within capital for market domination. Abbott's inner clique is dedicated to preserving the economic power of the coal industry, to the point of suppressing renewable energy industries and ignoring potential damage to agriculture, tourism and other industries, (not to mention human health and the environment) from coal mining activities.

Contradictions within the coalition's ranks may result in a challenge to Abbott's leadership before the next elections, but it's also possible that Abbott will call an early election. Let's hope so, because if he does we can help end his odious period in office. ✪

### Pete's Corner



Sydney

CPA Port Jackson Branch  
invites comrades and friends to join us for our  
**Port Jackson Discussion Hour**

Tuesday August 4  
**The public housing crisis**

Tuesday August 18  
**The fight for workers' rights**

Tuesday September 1  
**What is wrong with local council amalgamations**

Tuesday September 15  
**The implications of Russian-Chinese co-operation**

Tuesday October 6  
**Why is there an environmental crisis?**

All classes 5:30 pm  
at 74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills  
Enquiries: Hannah 0418 668 098



# Anniversary of the attack on the Moncada barracks

Vinnie Molina

**On July 25 close to 200 people gathered at the Fremantle Navy Club to commemorate the 62nd anniversary of the attack on the Moncada Barracks led by Fidel Castro on July 26, 1953.**

The event began at 7pm with a welcome by Elizabeth Hulm, secretary of the local Australia-Cuba Friendship Society (ACFS). She highlighted the importance of the 1953 event. Despite the failure of the attacks in which the Batista dictatorship captured, tortured and assassinated most of the young men and women, the process is considered to be the spark that led to the triumph of the Cuban Revolution on January 1, 1959.

Speakers on the night toasted the agreement signed by both presidents Raul Castro and Obama Barrack on December 17, 2014 that saw the

release of the remaining three of the Cuban Five after 16 long years in US prisons.

The gathering welcomed the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the US and Cuba and the opening of embassies in Washington and Havana but acknowledged that to fully establish relations of mutual respect the US blockade on Cuba must be lifted and Guantánamo Bay returned to the people of Cuba.

Until this is realised the ACFS Perth will continue to work in solidarity with Cuba demanding the end of the criminal blockade and the return of Guantánamo. The society will continue in its aim to strengthen the friendship between the peoples of Australia and Cuba.

The Santiago de Cuba Carnival was also a good opportunity to salute the 500th anniversary of the foundation of the city of Santiago de Cuba. ✪



On Sunday people gathered together at Sydney's Coogee Beach to celebrate Cuba's National Day, its Revolution and the 62 years since the storming of Moncada Barracks. We shared stories and photos from brigada solidarity trips to Cuba, Cuban food "congrí" with chicken, salsa music, good weather and great company.



## Rally against racism and fascism

Richard Titelius

**In Perth as in other parts of Australia there has been an awakening of groups which choose to represent the less enlightened views of a multicultural and tolerant Australia at the forefront of which is Reclaim Australia.**

The Perth chapter of Reclaim Australia had announced it would hold a rally on the steps of state Liberal Premier Colin Barnett's office in West Perth on July 19. Some left political groups and sections of the union movement decided they would hold an anti-racism, anti-fascism rally in Solidarity Park adjacent to where Reclaim Australia would be holding their rally but an hour beforehand.

The rally was organised by the Socialist Alternative and Socialist Alliance. The idea was to present a progressive political message against the message of racism.

The MC for the event was

Miranda Wood who opened the rally by saying, "The policies of the Abbott government give encouragement to the position taken by Reclaim Australia and other far right groups." There had also been an increase in racist graffiti and racist attacks in public with Muslim women having their veils ripped off in public.

Midway through the rally a group of women dressed in black Muslim outfits from Reclaim Australia taunted the rally.

The next speaker was a Muslim woman from Iraq who spoke about family and friends in Iraq who were killed at the hands of ISIS.

There were also speakers from the Community and Public Sector Union/Civil Service Association and the Maritime Union of Australia who spoke of unions representing a more tolerant and united Australia and that when the politics of hate and division is on the rise through the climate of fear generated by

the Abbott government – that the attacks on unions also increase. This we have seen, said Ian Jamieson from the MUA, through the anti-worker Royal Commission which seeks to weaken unions and the rights of workers.

The Abbott government also stokes the fires of racism with the ideology behind anti-terrorist laws which target Muslims.

There were dozens of police present including several mounted police who formed a no man's land to keep the two groups apart.

The rallies were relatively small – about 300 people in each group.

The Communist Party of Australia opposes racism which is based on fear and ignorance and used to divide and rule. Future rallies against racism need to be more inclusive and broader in their appeal to attract more progressive groups and to have more influence in the wider community. ✪

## Border Force staff actions

**The CPSU has confirmed union members in the Australian Border Force Marine Unit are imposing a range of work bans as part of protected industrial action aimed at securing a fair enterprise agreement.**

However, the union has emphatically rejected any suggestion that the protected industrial action its members are taking has resulted in an asylum-seeker vessel being located off the Dampier coast.

In a statement, CPSU national secretary Nadine Flood said:

"The protected industrial action underway includes a ban on a range of 'in port' activities such as loading/unloading stores, rubbish and equipment, pre-departure checks, routines and maintenance activities. These actions are causing some in-port delays.

"There is also a ban on members undertaking boarding or enforcement activities at sea which is primarily impacting on vessels targeting illegal foreign fishing activities.

"Australian Border Force Marine Unit staff take their responsibilities very seriously and have given commitments to ensure that none of the actions taken would compromise the safety of lives at sea.

"It is important to note that this protected industrial action, including 'safety of lives at sea' and national security safeguards, has been fully negotiated and properly notified with the Department of Immigration and Border Protection and approved by the Fair Work Commission.

"Staff in the Australian Border Force Marine Unit have one of the toughest jobs in the public service. They are at sea and away from their families for up to a month at a time, often in very confronting and difficult situations.

"They literally put their lives on the line to keep Australia safe, yet the Abbott government continues to push a policy that will dramatically cut their take-home pay.

"Immigration and Border Force officers are being hit particularly hard by the Abbott government's bargaining policy which forces agencies to cut many of the allowances many staff rely on to make up their pay packet.

"Under a new agreement many staff face losing \$5,000 to \$8,000 a year; highly specialised officers stand to lose even more. Many are worried about how they'll pay their bills.

"They feel undervalued and disrespected by the Abbott government and are taking industrial action to show that they are serious about protecting their rights, conditions and take home pay.

"The Abbott government has slashed more than 17,000 public sector jobs and now it's going after the conditions, rights, allowances and take-home wages of public sector workers.

"For the past year we've been asking the government to change its unworkable bargaining policy so that agencies can negotiate new agreements that protect the rights, conditions and take-home pay of public sector workers.

"This dispute could be easily resolved if the government is prepared to sit down with the union and discuss a sensible path to settlement," said Ms Flood.

### Background

Officers can receive allowances for a range of workplace situations including being at sea, using firearms, meeting high fitness standards, working long hours, unusual shifts and performing dirty and/or dangerous work. Some of the allowances at risk in the new agreement include:

- Use of Force Allowance: for officers required to maintain specified fitness level so they can carry firearms
- Marine and Marine Accommodation Allowances: for officers deployed at sea for up to 36 days at a time. ✪



# Long road to recognition

Michelle White

**It's taken 100 years, but the Winmar family in Western Australia say they have finally been given the recognition they deserve for their contribution to the Wheatbelt town of Quairading. The local council and the state government have renamed a local street Winmar Road.**

It's the first time a Noongar family has been given the honour in the town.

More than 50 family members turned up to a civic ceremony at the Shire of Quairading council for the official unveiling of the newly gazetted Winmar Road.

As the oldest family member living in town, Basil Winmar did the official honours, cutting the red ribbon. He was joined by local parliamentarian Mia Davies and Shire Freeman (an honorary title given for community service) Don Brown.

"I'm very happy for the government to recognise our Winmar family; my dad, brother, sister and I all worked for this shire," Basil said. "My dad worked for them for more than 20 years. So did I."

A delegation of Winmar family members has been lobbying the Shire of Quairading for more than two decades for some sort of local acknowledgement.

Many streets, parks and public facilities in Quairading bear the names of non-Indigenous farmers or townsmen. The Winmars have always vehemently believed they deserved the same recognition.

The family said that the name Winmar comes from a Noongar name known as spirit hand (wiern marr). They traditionally hail from Mount Stirling, a prominent landmark in the

heart of the wheatbelt. However, they have lived and worked in and around the town of Quairading ever since it was formed more than 100 years ago.

Generations of the Winmar family have served the region, either by clearing land, working the farms or serving the shire.

In 1910, Bill Winmar, Bernie McHenry and Richard Wilkes started working for the shire and were provided with three Native Welfare houses in town. They worked there until they retired.

In their submission for recognition to the government, the family stated they believe their family has made the largest contribution to any shire in WA.

In March this year, the Shire of Quairading received formal notification that the re-gazetting of a main road in town had been officially approved.

## Decree

The decree said it was in recognition of the contribution of past Elders Bill, Bruce, Charlie and Fred Winmar.

The Winmar family, their friends and supporters in town all gathered outside the council offices, where the Aboriginal flag was raised and flew beside the Australian flag for the first time to cheers from the group.

Then it was off to the newly named road for more pomp and ceremony.

Basil's sister Iris was so delighted when she first saw the street sign that she jumped for joy! "At long last we got recognition," she said.

"I am so proud. Our parents and all our family members were hard-working people. We built this town."

Winnie McHenry (nee Winmar) said it was a proud day for all.



Proud Winmar family members and supporters point to the new road sign in the Western Australian Wheatbelt town of Quairading.

"After 20 years, we finally got the road. Our father, his father before him, our two grandfathers they all worked on the shire. It's about time we had recognition for our family," she said.

Winnie herself worked for the Shire of Quairading for 20 years, as did her late husband.

Elder Richard Wilkes, who is related to the Winmars by marriage, says the suggestion that the Winmars be officially acknowledged in the town first came from the Noongar Progress Association 50 years ago.

That committee has since long gone, but the subsequent generations of the Winmar family never gave up their fight for recognition.

And now, at long last, they have it. Winmar Road.

Koori Mail ☘

## TAC issues warning

Jillian Mundy

**The Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre TAS (TAC) has warned the federal government's decision last month to award Aboriginal legal service funding for Tasmania to the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS) may be a sign of things to come. "This could well be the tip of the iceberg for the Abbott government, and have a domino effect in getting rid of all our community-controlled organisations throughout Australia," TAC acting chief executive Pat Turner warned.**

VALS chief executive Wayne Muir has confirmed his organisation signed a five-year funding contract, and measures are in place, which includes significant assistance from Legal Aid, to begin operations in three locations in Tasmania from July 1. Muir said VALS applied for the funding after being contacted by the Commonwealth, a number of individuals and four Tasmanian Aboriginal organisations, whose identity he would not reveal, because VALS feared the contract would

be awarded to a non-Aboriginal provider.

He said that when the current "feeling" died down he would be more than happy to work with the TAC. "We understand the upset. If the shoe was on the other foot we would be upset too," he said.

It's a major blow to the TAC, whose legal service has been operating for 42 years, offers a range of integrated services, has been instrumental in significant legislative reform, has longstanding professional relationships with Tasmania's justice system, employs 15 staff and has 606 open cases, many now in the courts.

Turner spoke of one of those relationships, where an arrangement is in place for a TAC legal field officer to be notified whenever an Aboriginal person is arrested and put in the lock-up, as recommended in the final report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

She said there have been no Aboriginal deaths in custody in Tasmania since.

The TAC believes an interstate provider will be unable to duplicate

community control and self-determination in the delivery of service, because they lack local knowledge and long-standing trust.

It rejects claims by the Attorney General's Department of ongoing concerns about compliance, saying it has never been in breach. Ms Turner said the TAC was working to keep the Aboriginal Legal Service in Palawa hands.

High-profile legal professionals and politicians have rallied behind the TAC's push to have the funding decision overturned.

Former judge Pierre Slicer, who helped set up the TAC legal service, has offered to come out of retirement to help on the campaign.

Tasmanian Law Society president Matthew Verney said the decision had been made without proper consideration, and he warned of more incarceration.

Tasmanian Greens leader Cassie O'Conner says it is the most disrespectful decision to ever come out of Canberra and a blow to Aboriginal self-determination.

Former Tasmanian Premier Lara Giddings said the decision was an attack on the TAC, and that Abbott was trying to muzzle it.

Ms Turner encourages people on mainland Australia to sign and circulate a petition on [change.org](http://change.org). Comment has been sought from the Attorney-General.

\*Jillian Mundy is on the State Committee of the TAC.

Koori Mail ☘



"I'm a GP and I oppose the Border Force Act" – hundreds of doctors gathered under this slogan to protest against the law that makes it a crime for people working with asylum seekers in detention centres from speaking out about what they see. The rally at Town Hall in Sydney was organised by University of Sydney professor Maria Fiatarone Singh who stressed that there was no justification for the provisions which went against medical codes of ethics. "How does reporting that a child has been raped by a guard or exchanged sexual favours for food threaten national security," she asked. The protesters including social workers, psychologists, nurses and doctors, signed an open letter to Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Immigration Minister Peter Dutton. Psychologist Nicholas O'Dwyer called it "a gag law". "It seems to me it contradicts The Hippocratic Oath of medicos not to be able to report on the welfare of their patients. It's unbelievable in the 21st century". Well, it may be the 21st century but the mentality of the present government is certainly closer to medieval times.

"There is a large demand on crisis services and they are full," Ms McKernan, chief executive of Homelessness NSW said. "There's nowhere for people to be taken in," she said. A growing number of those people turned away were older women. "Women are finding themselves, later in life, in poverty. We are finding that there are more homeless women as a result," said Ms McKernan. Cold weather may have claimed the life of a homeless woman whose body was found off a walking track in Hornsby bushland. "She may have died of hypothermia. It is believed she was sleeping rough," said the police spokesperson. The police said the 50-year-old woman had been homeless, spending time in a nearby squat. More than 28,000 people were homeless in NSW on the latest census night in 2011.

Workers at Queensland coal mines wore safety stickers on their gear as part of a Day of Action to promote safety in their workplaces. "I will stand up, speak out, come home" was the CFMEU message on the stickers. A very reasonable sentiment considering the dangers of work in mines and the deaths of three mine workers in Queensland this year alone. CFMEU Queensland district president Stephen Smyth said the union is ramping up its safety campaign as safety standards are dropping. But the BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance was not impressed with the safety message on the stickers and responded in a letter demanding that "posters and stickers should not be placed on BMA property" which includes workers' hard hats. Workers were allowed to display the safety message on notice boards. The only problem was – there were no notice boards.

Something to say?

Write to the Editor!

email: [tpearson@cpa.org.au](mailto:tpearson@cpa.org.au)



# Strategy for a failed system

Anna Pha

**On August 26 there will be a National Reform Summit of representatives from employer organisations, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), academics, the Australian Council of Social Service and other community organisations. The Murdoch and Fairfax media have put aside their own bitter competition to jointly sponsor the Summit.**

“In view of the failure of current leaders to agree about the way forward, it is time to broaden the policy debate beyond Parliament to enable the wider community to settle on a reform level that is politically acceptable,” says economics writer Bill Carmichael in an article promoting the Summit in the *Financial Review*. (“Ankle-deep political reform must leave the policy shallow end”, 15-07-15)

His statement reflects the failure of the Abbott government to implement its policies for a major restructuring of the economy and role of government. There is growing frustration in big business circles with the government and impatience with the Senate which has blocked some bills.

The government has not even revealed its planned industrial relations legislation or tax reform agenda. Company taxation has not been slashed. Financial, superannuation and other reforms are still in the pipeline and details are unlikely to surface until the eve of the next election.

The main areas of concern to big business are covered by the four themes to be discussed at the Summit:

- Fiscal sustainability – budget surpluses while slashing company taxes and spending on social security, health, education and other services; and privatisation. Focus is on cutting not on how to increase income.
- Sustainable retirement incomes policy – phasing out the age pension.
- Tax reform in a modern federation – increasing and expanding coverage of GST with the federal government ceasing to provide any funding for education, public housing, community and other services, and whether to make changes to negative gearing and taxation of superannuation.
- Productivity and workforce participation – individual contracts, abolition of minimum wage and penalty rates, unrestricted use of overseas workers, union-free workplaces, no right of entry for union officials, and other anti-union measures to be able to increase exploitation of workers and hence profits.

Craig Emerson, who held trade and competition portfolios in the last Labor government, is one of the initiators of the Summit. He said, “The idea is to make good reform easier and opposition to good reform harder.”

The other initiator is Nick Carter who is the director of the Liberal Party’s Menzies Research Centre. Carter and Emerson have worked together on preparations for the Summit.

Apart from opening speeches from PM

Tony Abbott and Opposition leader Bill Shorten, politicians are excluded from participation in the Summit.

“It would also test the opposition’s understanding of the challenges facing the economy and its preparedness to confront them,” Carmichael said. A strange comment considering the Labor Party will not be part of the discussion, apart from Shorten’s opening speech.

But in many respects it is about how far Labor would be prepared to go in not opposing the next round of major restructuring and changes to the role of government. It is also a question of whether Labor would be prepared to implement such policies if in office and whether it could bring the trade union movement with it.

In effect a carrot is being dangled by big business and the Murdoch and Fairfax media if Labor wishes to gain their support in the next elections.

## 1983 Accord

Comparisons are being made with the Prices and Incomes Accord signed between the ALP Hawke government and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) in 1983. The Accord was based on the phoney premise that the then economic crisis could be solved by co-operation with employers, that the class struggle could be dispensed with.

The Accord ushered in a period of cooperation with employers, wage restraint and compliance as Labor introduced a program of economic restructuring (economic rationalism) contrary to ALP and ACTU policies. This program later became known as neo-liberalism. If the Liberals had attempted to introduce the same policies they would have met with strong resistance from the trade union movement. But under the Accord there was little resistance.

The ALP government effectively did the work of the Liberals and did it “better”: floating the dollar, reducing tariffs, competition policy, privatisation, decentralisation and erosion of awards, enterprise agreements, real wage reductions, trading off concrete conditions to pay for a wage rise, suppression of struggle by union leaders and much more. In return for the losses suffered by workers (employers’ gains) the government introduced Medicare and later superannuation.

In effect the union movement abandoned the class struggle for class collaboration with the expectation of many that employers would do likewise.

Employers on their part had no intention of abandoning their interests, they never let up for one minute, continuing to pursue maximum profits by increasing the exploitation of workers.

## Sucked the blood out of workers

In 1987, the Victorian Branch of the Australian Amalgamated Metal Workers’ Union ran with the headline: “Do the employers want co-operation?” in a newsletter (April 28) to its members.

It continued, “Despite the proven efforts by metal workers to improve productivity ... and



reduce industrial action the employers just want more and more blood.”

“Despite almost four years of wage restraint, including discounted wage increases, and no extra claims, the employers want more and more,” the newsletter said.

While AMWU members were cooperating, the employers were refusing to negotiate a wage claim and making more and more demands on the union to agree to longer hours, abolish holiday leave loading, cut overtime payments back, etc.

The reality is that under capitalism the economic interests of workers and employers are diametrically opposed. One worker’s wage rise is one employer’s cut in profits and vice versa. Wage rises do not destroy jobs, they eat into profits. That is why employers oppose them.

The ALP government delivered the structural reform that big business wanted with minimum resistance from the trade union movement. So it is not surprising now, with the Abbott government’s failure to deliver (regardless of reasons) what big business is after, that the possibility of another social compact or Accord is being examined.

This time, the employers have become involved. But they are not interested in giving away very much. “What we’ve said upfront ... is that we all understand we have to give a bit,” Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry’s CEO Kate Carnell said.

No prizes for guessing what the ACCI expects workers to give but in return for what? It will certainly not be for anything that hurts the profit bottom line. The recent trade-off of penalty rates for a few extra dollars in the base wage by the South Australian branch of the shop assistants’ union is one possible example.

Under the old Accord, workers ended up trading off hard won conditions for wage rises with employers making a profit out of the deal! What might be called a little bit of give by employers and a big take by employers.

This August gathering is going to apparently rise above partisan politics! It will dispense with ideology:

“We have got to a stage where there is so little discussion about the national interest and so much discussion about vested interests,” Emerson said. (“Forum a wake-up call to warring politicians”, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13-07-15)

## Social compact

The Accord was between a Labor government and the ACTU. The employers came along to the 1983 Summit organised by Labor PM Bob Hawke but never signed onto the Accord.

What is being planned now is a new tripartite Accord or social compact between the ACTU and either a Labor or Liberal government! ACTU president Ged Kearney appears to be seeking consensus with Labor or Liberal.

In her opening address to the ACTU Congress held in Melbourne in May 2015, Kearney said, “... whether Labor or the Liberals are at the helm, we need a new social compact that continues to deliver a fair distribution of national wealth for all Australians.

“A new social compact for the new economy and the workforce of the future.”

In an address to the National Press Club, Ged Kearney also advocated the concept of collaboration: “The IR debate in Australia is about a lot of things – wages, productivity, output, rights – but at its heart it is about people.

“It does not have to be about productivity or profits at the expense of fair and decent wages and working conditions.” (17-03-2015)

Employers are not interested in “fair and decent wages and working conditions”. As the experience of the Accord demonstrates, all that employers are interested in is maximising profits.

Whatever agreements are reached around the table, the trade union movement will still have a fight on its hands to defend wages, penalty rates, trade union rights, collective bargaining and working conditions. The class struggle will not go away. ✳

**The reality is that under capitalism the economic interests of workers and employers are diametrically opposed. Wage rises do not destroy jobs, they eat into profits. That is why employers oppose them.**



# "A turning point in history"

Kenia Serrano Puig is a member of the National People's Assembly of the Republic of Cuba. She has been President of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) for six years. She has represented Cuba in a number of countries, participating in international conferences and bilateral visits. Kenia was recently a guest speaker at the National Consultation of the Australia & NZ-Cuba Friendship Societies held on June 6-8 in Sydney. Between sessions, she spoke to the *Guardian*.

**Guardian:** December 17 has become a day of historical importance to the Cuban people. Could you please outline why it is so significant?

**Kenia:** It is the day when our president Raul Castro and the US president Obama announced their decision to take steps to resume diplomatic relations with the aim in the long term of normalising Cuba-US relations.

Of course it was a very important announcement because [the remaining three] of the Cuban Five were freed thanks to those talks that had been taking place over the previous 18 months.

So one of the things that as a solidarity movement we consider the world should hear is that the US government has recognised the failure of their policy on Cuba. President Raul also thanked the international solidarity movement with Cuba that all the Five are now free. It is a testament to that support and the result of our strength as a people, our resistance, our unity as a people.

So I think it is a very important moment in the history of Cuba. Of course you cannot see December 17 as the end of a process. I think it is a very important turning point in our history.

You have to see that it is going to be a process, a very long process. It is not going to be solved in a few talks. It is going to be solved step by step, and of course it depends on the real actions the US government takes to reflect on and rectify the failed policy that they have had on Cuba for the past 50 years or more.

**Guardian:** Some people think that the December 17 announcement means the US blockade has been lifted. Have the announcements made any difference to the blockade?

**Kenia:** Well not exactly. The blockade is still there, still in place. In the announcement made by Obama, he said they were going to engage the US Congress in order to lift the US blockade. It is the Congress where the blockade should be lifted; it's codified by law. We expect it to happen, but nothing has happened yet.

So Cuba is suffering the impact of the US



Kenia Serrano Puig addresses the ACFS National Consultation, Sydney June 6.

blockade in economic terms, in financial terms, in trade and in many other social and economic aspects. Of course we ask people around the world to keep struggling and campaigning against the blockade until it is lifted.

**Guardian:** It is the 55th anniversary of ICAP. How important do you feel ICAP has been with its solidarity work?

**Kenia:** Firstly, ICAP was created in 1960, and we are very proud to be one of those pioneer institutions to be created in 1960 following the Revolution.

Fifty-five years after that I believe the Revolution is still very strong. I believe that ICAP has contributed tremendously to that strength.

Fidel created an institution for solidarity and friendship with the peoples. We have many institutions, and there is this one that was specially created in order to give and receive solidarity and to give and receive friendship.

We have a network of more than 2,000 associations in 152 countries of the world, it is a huge network. That network exists because the Revolution is strong, because that Revolution is here.

That every person who is willing to defend Cuba is doing that, because they are inspired

by Cuba and the achievements of the Cuban Revolution. So ICAP feels very proud of our work and ICAP is very committed to the future of the Cuban Revolution because we know that without solidarity we won't go anywhere.

We need solidarity to continue our Revolution.

**Guardian:** I understand that you have visited Canberra during your stay here. What sort of reception did you receive? How do you think Cuba is perceived?

**Kenia:** I had a very good program in Canberra, now I am in Sydney and I am also going to Melbourne for a public event. The reception has been excellent. I have been talking to various members of Parliament.

I was welcomed by the Speaker, by the president of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee, and also by Julie Bishop, the Foreign Affairs Minister. Of course I have met with the Latin American diplomatic corps, with the various friends of Cuba in Canberra.

Here in Sydney I am participating in the National Consultation in Solidarity with Cuba. It has been organised by the Australia & NZ-Cuba Friendship Societies.

I can tell you from my perspective it is

amazing the way that people here, so far from Cuba, understand Cuba. There have been many reports about activities done in Australia. Also Jack Beeton spoke about the experience of the *Yes I Can* program in Australia. A doctor from Timor Leste who graduated in Cuba also came to the Consultation to explain what she has been doing in Timore Leste since she graduated, together with hundreds of other East Timorese.

Believe me, it's days like this that allow us to believe it is worthwhile, that the Cuban Revolution is very strong. We have been able to multiply our solidarity efforts internationally and that's why we are encouraged to continue doing things like this.

I would like to thank all the people here, those from the Latin community in Australia, from many other countries and Cubans living here in Australia. I feel there is a positive perception of Cuba here and I hope that positive perception results in many more important actions and campaigns to continue the struggle against the blockade and for Cuban solidarity. ✪

## Victories out of resilience

### Final Statement of the National Consultation of Australia-Cuba Friendship Societies

**This 2015 national consultation of the Australia Cuba Friendship Societies, held in Sydney on June 6-7, 2015 with delegates from Perth, Adelaide, Tasmania, Melbourne, Albury, Newcastle, Canberra, Sydney and Brisbane, as well as international participants from Auckland, New Zealand and Dili, East Timor, made the following declaration:**

We join with the Cuban people and government in celebrating the great victory of the recent release of Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino and Antonio Guerrero, members of the Cuban Five who were unjustly imprisoned in the United States for 16 years. This coincided with the victory in opening negotiations on the normalising of relations between Washington and Havana on December 17, 2014.

These victories come out of the resilience of the Cuban people in resisting

economic, military and political aggression against their country for over half a century, as well as the great moral standing of Cuba in the world due to its international solidarity, which has won worldwide support for the Cuban revolution.

We were privileged to have a special guest, Kenia Serrano Puig, President of ICAP and member of the National Assembly of Cuba attend our consultation. Also attending his first ACFS national consultation was José Manuel Galego Montano, the new Cuban Ambassador to Australia.

It is encouraging to see the recent steps made to improve diplomatic dialogue between the Australian government and Cuban government over the "Yes, I Can" literacy campaign in rural NSW.

Further, we welcome the formation of Parliamentary Groups on Cuba, nationally and within states, as well as recent steps to

advance Australian governmental and trade relations with Cuba.

We call for the establishment of an Australian Embassy in Havana to further advance these relations.

We strongly condemn the ongoing US blockade of Cuba, which is having damaging effects on the Cuban people and economy. We highlight the continued opposition to the blockade by the overwhelming majority of nations including Australia by resolution at the United Nations. We call on the Australian government to continue to oppose the blockade and to add its voice to those calling for the lifting of the economic blockade.

We also call on the US government to return Guantanamo Bay to Cuba, which rightfully belongs to the Cuban people and represents a legacy of the unjust Platt amendment of 1903. Washington must stop all its

subversive programs aimed at regime change in Cuba.

ACFS reiterates its unconditional support for the Cuban training program for medical students from third world countries, as well as internationalist volunteer doctors from Cuba fanning out around the globe, whether leading the fight against Ebola in West Africa or treating victims of the Nepal earthquake long after the media spotlight has turned elsewhere. This unequalled internationalist record is worthy of a Nobel Peace Prize.

Further, we urge all Australian unions, political parties and community organisations, as well as the Australian government, to fully support these programs.

We have resolved to establish formalised connections with Australian unions under the banner "Unions for Cuba" and will investigate how to best set up those connections in the coming year. ✪



# British pilots used to bomb Syria

Paddy McGuffin

British pilots have secretly bombed Syria under the cover of foreign militaries in direct contravention of Tory promises to give Parliament the decision to wage war, human rights campaigners have revealed.

In a rush to justify military action, Defence Secretary Michael Fallon again attempted to ramp up the war rhetoric, this time by evoking the Battle of Britain, weeks after he claimed that no action would be taken without a parliamentary vote.

But legal action charity Reprieve said that covert action had already

taken place after a freedom of information request to the Ministry of Defence revealed that RAF personnel embedded with US and other forces "operating in Syrian airspace" included pilots flying in "strike missions".

"Documents obtained by Reprieve indicate that UK personnel have already been involved in bombing missions over Syria for some time, making the current debate over whether Britain should carry out such strikes somewhat obsolete," said Reprieve staff attorney Jennifer Gibson.

"It is alarming that Parliament and the public have been kept in the



dark about this for so long." Stop the War Coalition said it made a mockery of Michael Fallon's promise of a full debate and vote in Parliament on the issue.

"Western bombing in Syria will do nothing to halt ISIS (Islamic State). On the contrary it will add fuel to the flames of war engulfing the whole region and it will lead to an increase in terrorist attacks," said a Stop the War spokesman.

"Since the start of the 'war on terror', jihadi organisation has spread from small pockets of central Asia across whole swathes of the globe."

Parliament voted against British involvement in Syria two years ago, apparently forcing a red-faced David Cameron to adhere to the decision. But pressed on the matter, Number 10 admitted that the PM was well aware of the covert strikes and had been for some time.

Mr Cameron's spokeswoman said the policy of embedding British personnel with foreign forces had "been in place since the 1950s." She insisted that the Ministry of Defence had been asked about the issue beforehand.

"Upward of a dozen" Britons were embedded with other nations engaged in the anti-ISIS campaign, she said – although currently none are pilots.

Campaign for Nuclear Disarm-

ament general secretary Kate Hudson said that the government had shown a shocking disregard for the will of Parliament.

"The Ministry of Defence claims that British troops who are embedded with foreign forces operate as if they were troops of those countries, but this is just anti-democratic doublespeak," she said.

"These are British soldiers taking part in an operation which MPs voted against." Tory backbencher John Baron, who opposed air strikes in Iraq, said that ministers must come to the Commons to explain what had happened.

Labour, which recently indicated that it could be prepared to back a fresh vote on extending air strikes into Syria, also said that it would be calling on ministers to make a Commons statement about the role British pilots had played.

Morning Star ☘

## Ohio village takes on frackers

John Milam

**BARNESVILLE, Ohio:** This story of a small village in Ohio came to our attention when Gulfport Energy Corporation [Gulfport], a fracking company, filed suit on March 5 of this year against the tiny Village of Barnesville, Ohio. At first look, this looked like a modern David and Goliath story but, as is often the situation where lawyers and politicians are involved, it had so many twists and turns that it seemed like unravelling a giant ball of yarn.

There are at least four major players involved: The Village of Barnesville (defendant), Gulfport Energy (plaintiff), Antero Resources Corp (another fracking company), and, of course, the residents who live in and around Barnesville. The only thing that was clear was that those residents wanted safe and clean drinking water.

The thing that called public attention to the Barnesville situation was a local, sketchy TV report on the suit following its filing.

The suit sought to stop the Village from allowing another company to extract the same water it had sold Gulfport or from interfering with Gulfport's water rights.

It appears that the politicians running the Village have sold the same water to two fracking companies and it all seems to have happened behind closed doors – without the knowledge of most residents.

It was more than a year ago when the people of Barnesville first heard that fracking was coming to their town. People in the village, led by John and Jill Hunkler, got together and formed the Concerned Barnesville Area Residents (C-BAR), which began meeting regularly as questions about the community's water increased and few answers were forthcoming from either the politicians or governmental agencies.

Jill Hunkler is a fiery activist and organiser who founded C-BAR and has done much of the grunt-work in this struggle to protect the water in Barnesville's reservoirs.

In an interview for *People's World*, she said the purpose of C-BAR was to protect the area's natural resources from the kind of harm that fracking has brought elsewhere. She told us that she co-founded C-BAR (February, 2014) in response to the building of a fracking waste disposal site in Barnesville.

She and C-BAR began with a successful petition drive that forced a town hall meeting to inform the public and village officials of the health and safety hazards of fracking. She has made repeated trips to Columbus, has done TV interviews, sought answers from various government agencies, and even went to see Governor Kasich of Ohio. He not only wouldn't see her but there was no response from him about the Barnesville citizens' concerns.

"Fracking is one of the greatest threats to not only the health and safety of those living near the sites [but also] to those working at the sites," Hunkler said. She added that there are frequent fracking accidents on or near the well pads and revealed that the well-pad workers were not issued protective safety equipment (such as: respirators, hazmat suits, etc.).

She said that they often work 30-hour shifts at a time. Ms Hunkler concluded by telling us that the threat is not only to present residents but that any leakage of the process's poisonous, radioactive pollutants into a community's water supply will also impact the health of future generations.

Today the residents of the Barnesville area are concerned but that patient concern is wearing thin and more militant action has been discussed as possibly the only recourse left to them.

People's World ☘

## Migration rethink vital after death

Paddy McGuffin

**BRITAIN:** Campaigners demanded a "fundamental rethink" of immigration policy last week, following the discovery of a dead teenage boy on the roof of a Eurostar train from Calais to Folkestone.

The young man, thought to have been trying to reach Britain from the French port, was found by police at 4.13am on the loading bay of the vehicle shuttle service.

It is believed he died in France and his body was then carried through the tunnel before being spotted.

A Kent Police spokesman said officers were "called at 4.13am to a report that the body of a male had been discovered on the loading bay of a Eurotunnel train at the Channel tunnel terminal in Folkestone."

"Inquiries are ongoing to establish the circumstances behind his death."

The teenager's death is just the latest in a string of fatal incidents involving desperate immigrants recently.

Just weeks ago, the body of a man was found in west London after he had apparently fallen from a passenger plane, having stowed away on the jet in a desperate bid to enter the country.

Further afield, thousands of

people, including women and children, have drowned in the Mediterranean in recent months while trying to reach Europe, having fled conflict and persecution in their own lands.

Reacting to the latest tragedy, Migrants' Rights Network director Don Flynn said: "The death of yet another migrant – this time apparently a teenager – is a reminder of just how far away the UK and Europe is from a morally defensible immigration policy."

"The denial of a legal route allowing people the opportunity to find a safe haven in countries where they could work and contribute to society is forcing so many to take the sort of risks that led to the death of this young man."

"The time is overdue for a fundamental rethink on how we should be managing immigration and acknowledging the rights of people on the move across borders."

Yet the tragedy did nothing to soften the anti-immigrant bile of the right-wing press, with one paper branding people risking their lives in the tunnel "train squatters."

Weyman Bennett of Unite Against Fascism told the *Star*: "The dehumanisation of asylum-seekers and migrants is a shame on Western policy, which professes to offer refuge to those in need."

Morning Star ☘

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# The imperial designs on Iran

Pepe Escobar

**So what is the Obama administration really up to in Iran? What sort of strategic calculations have led to what for the moment looks like a tactical geopolitical shift?**

President Obama certainly concluded that the 36-year-long Wall of Mistrust against Iran was bound to fail. The real Masters of the Universe in Washington – those who control the deep state – always knew that the “nuclear weapons” hysteria was bogus. That was part of a strategic decision to keep the Islamic Republic isolated from the West as long as possible, and ultimately force regime change.

The “policy” failed – miserably. So Obama’s Plan B was a nuclear deal.

And after striking a deal, why not seduce Tehran into some sort of collaborative effort in policing the Middle East – as in reigning in or, better yet, soundly defeating ISIS/ISIL/Daesh?

That would provide a neat historical echo to the Shah years – the former “gendarme of the Gulf” who, when driven out of power by the Islamic revolution.

Moreover, the Obama administration and some Beltway factions seemed to believe that factional leadership silos in Tehran – and Qom – might be manipulated to serve US strategic interests.

Even before the Lausanne agreement, and in the lead-up towards the Vienna deal, this possibility was practically discussed by US Secretary of State John Kerry, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif, and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. In diplomatic talk, these were “discussions of regional issues”.

In the bigger picture, and evidently oblivious to a slew of technical problems, the real Masters of the Universe shadowed by the Obama administration also entertained a simple equation; Iranian gas should eventually replace Russian gas to supply the EU. Russia must – and will – suffer.

Forget that Gazprom is a commercial juggernaut on two fronts, Europe and Asia. And forget that Gazprom is coordinating crucial energy moves with Tehran.

Yet the energy wars never stop. NATO’s perennial expansion marches in tandem with Washington – successfully – sabotaging South Stream; now Washington will do whatever it takes to sabotage Turk Stream and prevent austerity-devastated Greece from linking to the pipeline. Astonishing as it may seem, Iran is now back in Washington’s favour as the only possible, future Pipelineistan star.

## Listen to the leader

Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif has been extra busy “selling” the deal with the P5+1\* in Vienna to internal public opinion. He never tires to stress that once foreign businesses enter Iran, they will act as a barrier against the reinstatement of sanctions – which is now the Holy Grail of US neo-cons and neo-liberalcons. Iranian planners are busy drafting the pathways for the reconstruction of the country’s core economic sectors. Iranian oil and natural gas projects – many with input from foreign energy majors – may be worth US\$185 billion by 2020.

On July 20, the UN Security Council unanimously (15-0) endorsed the Vienna deal – and the termination of seven UN resolutions imposing sanctions on Iran since 2006. That provoked shrieks of desperation in that nest of corporate paperboys – the US Congress. Someone should have explained to that lot this is an international deal.

The EU, meanwhile, approved the deal on July 21 – as key EU members, itching to restore trade relations, are now on caravan mode, hitting the Persian trail.

There is a 90-day grace period before sanctions can be lifted, following the UNSC vote. Realistically, most UN and EU sanctions, as well as some US third party sanctions, will be lifted only by early 2016.

The bottom line is that sooner rather than later – whatever the campaign by US neo-cons and the Israeli and Saudi lobbies – the whole architecture of sanctions, especially financial and banking, is bound to collapse. Iran will soon be open for business for all Eurasia.

On July 18, even before the UN unanimous vote, Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei re-entered the scene with a bang, clarifying where Iran is heading next, geopolitically. He emphasised the nuclear deal would not change Tehran’s policy toward the “arrogant” US government. John Kerry was mortified; as if he didn’t know, based on his extensive conversations with Zarif.

So there we have it. Washington carrots will buy nothing – as the stick also didn’t. What Iran post-sanctions is aiming at is what’s brewing in the New Great Game in Eurasia; the interlocking integration promoted by the Chinese-led New Silk Roads and the Russia-led Eurasia Economic Union (EEU); the infrastructure financing of the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) and the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB); the prospect of soon joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO);

the Eurasia-wide offensive to bypass the US dollar; and of course the normalisation of trade and commerce with Europe.

## The Three (Eurasian) Amigos

The Pentagon’s new military strategy made it very clear that the number one issue for the Masters of the Universe – irrespective of who’s in the White House – is a concerted push to strategically isolate both Russia and China, and destroy their strategic partnership. As unrealistic as this policy may be, it may even lead to a hot war; the Pentagon does leave the option on the table.

The Masters of the Universe, setting policy way above their paperboys in the Obama administration and already thinking post-2016, are actively engaged in a three-pronged military strategy. The intelligence establishment in Russia, China and Iran – the Top Three Eurasian integration powers – totally knows what is going on.

Failed state Ukraine is just a pretext for NATO’s perpetual expansion. Threatening a huge area from Russia’s southern underbelly to the west of Iran, ISIS/ISIL/Daesh is being instrumentalised, divide and rule-style, to actually end up with Sykes-Picot and pave the way for yet another Pentagon intervention, in Syria, in Iraq, or in “Syrac”.

And in Asia-Pacific, the “pivot to Asia”, as much as it’s just a chimera for the moment, remains in play, centred on interfering with China in the South China Sea.

From Syria to Ukraine all the way to the South China Sea, the trend points to Exceptionalist creating havoc for the Top Three Eurasian powers. This is a frontal shock of two models – what I have previously described as Eurasia integration against the Empire of Chaos.

The Masters of the Universe seem to believe that the “pivot to Asia” won’t work if Iran is not part, as a vassal state, of the imperial design for Southwest Asia. Well, listen to Khamenei; that won’t happen.

The road ahead, for Iran, is a mix of Eurasia integration spearheaded by the China-Russia partnership, and mutually beneficial, extensive trade relations with Europe. It’s a neat echo of the initial motto of the Islamic revolution: “Neither east nor west.”

The empire won’t buy – or bribe – a new vassal. So expect an inevitable, nasty renewal of the Wall of Mistrust even before the architecture of sanctions eventually vanishes.

[globalresearch.ca](http://globalresearch.ca)

\*P5+1 – 5 permanent members of UN plus Germany ☪



## Region Briefs

According to China’s Ministry of Housing, another 7.4 million affordable housing units will be constructed by the end of this year, making the total number 39.7 million (the goal is 36 million) from 2011 to 2015. The country’s Ministry of Finance allocated nearly A\$29 billion to build the units for improving people’s living standards. The money will also be used to subsidise low-income families’ rent for public-housing. The Chinese government approved an affordable housing program in 1999, and with the aim of offering cheaper housing units to low-income families, helping them to live better in cities at a very low cost.

The Embassy of China in Australia recently condemned a violent attack by Tibetan militants on the Chinese Consulate in Sydney. Ten Australian Tibetans attacked the Consulate, pulling down the Chinese national flag and attacking a female worker. The Embassy spokesperson said that “this is a very serious attack on diplomatic and consular institutions, which fully exposes the violent nature of the Tibetan separatists”. He called on the Australian government to follow The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, ensuring safety and dignity of Chinese institutions and personnel in Australia. The attack once again showed the Dalai Lama and his separatist gangs engaging violent and terrorist activities.

Vietnamese President Sang Tan Truong met former Soviet Union cosmonaut Viktor Vasilyevich Gorbatko who took part in a space flight with Vietnamese astronaut Pham Tuan 35 years ago. Pham Tuan expressed the honour of being the first Vietnamese astronaut, while Gorbatko said the trip with Pham Tuan was unforgettable and he always remembered the friendliness and warm welcome from Vietnam and its people.

Vietnam plans to implement 28 infrastructure projects worth over A\$100 million by 2020, building and upgrading public and private social support centres in the city of Hanoi for the elderly, war veterans, people with disabilities and who suffer from mental health problems. The Hanoi municipal government encouraged organisations and individuals to invest in social service, and it will offer supporting policies and allocate land in order to ensure the implementation of the projects.

Two-thirds of Japanese university researchers opposed Prime Minister Abe Shinzo’s decision to increase cooperation between universities and the military: the government reduced funding to universities but increased investment in military research. According to the National Test and Research Institutions, 64 percent of surveyed researchers said they would not get involved in researching projects funded by the Japanese Defence Ministry or sponsored by the Pentagon’s Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency. The survey participants said that the increase in military research contradicted the country’s constitution and that the classified military research would not contribute to scientific progress.

## Meet with Owen Bennett from Melbourne, the instigator of the AUU Australian Unemployment Union, & listen to Victor Quirk\*

give a brief history of the rise and fall of full employment in Australia and arguing that governments can control unemployment levels and that full employment can be re-established with a *Job guarantee*. Victor will look at the demolition of the public employment services (CES) and how unemployment statistics are constructed to understate the extent of the issue, and why vilification of the unemployed is a tactical necessity in preserving labour underutilisation and why this (under-employment and unemployment) is preserved. Nick Southall will speak of the previous Unemployed Workers Union *and* Warren Smith \* on being union.

### AUU Sydney first forum

Saturday the 1st August at 1pm,  
with refreshments for a 1.30 start.

At the National Union of Workers (NUW) building  
3-5 Bridge Street, Granville (next to Granville Railway Station)

\* Victor Quirk is a labour market political sociologist, specialist employment counsellor, and Research Associate with the Centre of Full Employment and Equity (CofFEE), University of Newcastle.

\* Warren Smith is Assistant National Secretary MUA - the Maritime Union of Australia

All welcome e-mail [AUUSydney@hotmail.com](mailto:AUUSydney@hotmail.com) Phone 9421 010 371





Letters to the Editor  
The Guardian  
74 Buckingham Street  
Surry Hills NSW 2010



email: tpearson@cpa.org.au

## On Labor's socialist objective

After reading the article about NSW Labor leader Luke Foley urging his party to abolish its historic commitment to socialism and attachment to state ownership I am left wondering who is outdated and swimming against the tide of history.

In 2008 the whole world experienced a major financial upheaval as

capitalism underwent only the most recent of its many ongoing corrections. As Greece teeters towards its exit from the Eurozone and threatens to bring down the Eurozone itself and China in less than two weeks has undergone a nearly US\$4 trillion correction of its bourse (with its concomitant effect on the Australian economy) that there is still someone bold or naïve enough (apart from the captains of industry whose duty it is to go down with the ship) to embrace competitive markets and individual freedom and opportunity.

Mr Foley needs to reread Karl Marx as capitalism cannot be civilised it can however be transcended by socialism or producing to meet the need values of humans and not the exchange values of capital which time and time again have run away from us through the speculative volatility of its markets.

It would be a mistake for Labor on behalf of the working class which

it has a historic duty to defend, to embrace the ideology of the capital owning class - which is experiencing ever more frequent and deeper crises.

Richard Titelius  
Perth

## China puts heat on Abbott govt on climate

China's ambitious contribution to tackling climate change turns up the heat on Australian government. In one of the most anticipated announcements ahead of the Paris climate negotiations later this year, China has submitted an ambitious plan for curbing its emissions and dealing with climate change impacts.

China, the world's largest investor in renewable energy, has just submitted its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) to the new global climate agreement,

which will be finalised in Paris. Australia is expected to announce its own INDC this month.

China will reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by up to 65 percent by 2030, by which time more than 20 percent of the country's energy will be coming from non-fossil fuel sources. It has committed to ensuring its emissions peak by around 2030 and there are signs it may meet that target sooner.

China is showing that tackling climate change and reducing poverty can, and indeed must, go hand in hand.

China is embarking on a rapid transition away from fossil fuels. Its far-reaching goals are breaking new ground and are vital to global efforts to tackle climate change. Climate change is a major threat in the fight against hunger and poverty. More than half of China's poor live in areas that are particularly vulnerable to climate impacts, and where climate

change is exacerbating existing environmental challenges. Warmer temperatures and shifting rainfall will reduce crop yields in many areas and increase water scarcity.

Like all INDCs, it should be viewed as a floor upon which additional efforts will be built. Importantly, in addition to setting out the country's emissions reduction goals, China's INDC also deals with what will need to be done to help the country adapt to climate change. There is a clear lesson here for Australia: The world's largest economies, including China, are taking ever more serious steps towards reducing emissions and moving towards renewable energy.

All eyes are now on Australia as our government prepares its own contribution to the Paris agreement, due this month.

Dr Simon Bradshaw  
Oxfam Australia

# Culture & Life

by Rob Gowland

## Ukraine, demonic possession and movies



Casablanca – glorious B&W cinematography – so simple, but so effective.

Did you see the reports of the news conference given by the Ukrainian Major-General who defected to the Donetsk People's Republic in Donbas? Hardly surprising if you didn't – as far as I can tell, it was essentially blanked out of the regular news bulletins. But you can be sure that if a Major-General from the breakaway regime in Donetsk had defected to Kiev he would have featured on every news bulletin – and at length.

Unfortunately, Major-General Alexander Kolomiychuk, a former aide to the Ukrainian Defence Minister, chose to side with the anti-fascists in Donetsk rather than the fascists who are doing the USA's bidding in Kiev.

General Kolomiychuk, who spent 19 years serving as military commandant of the Donetsk Region, told the press conference that Ukrainian army morale was very low "with all generals and officers realising the criminal nature of Kiev's actions and refusing to fight any longer."

Alexander Kolomiychuk is not the first senior Ukrainian military officer to have sided with the anti-fascists in Donetsk and Lugansk. Oleh Chernousov, the former head of the Lugansk customs service, as well as two Ukrainian intelligence service operatives stationed in Paris, all moved to Lugansk in opposition to the anti-people policies of the NATO-backed Kiev regime.

And did you see – a month or two earlier – the newspaper reports on the growth of demonic possession in Australia? Apparently the spread of demonic possession, and the

corresponding growth in the number of exorcisms to deal with it, is a symptom of "the great apostasy – [people] turning their backs on God", at least according to Father Gregory Jordan, the former official exorcist for the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

And lest you think that having an "official exorcist" shows how nutty people in Queensland can be, Father Jordan points out that every one of the 28 dioceses in Australia is required to have one by Canon Law. Before he retired, combating demonic possession kept Father Jordan pretty busy. "Sometimes I'd have three [exorcisms] a week, sometimes one a day."

According to an article in Rupert Murdoch's British flagship *The Times*, a British priest claims the growth in pornography and drug addiction are responsible for the increased demand for exorcisms. Claiming your son's enjoyment of porn (or your daughter's drug addiction) is the result of possession by devils or demons, may be balm to your conscience but it does not begin to tackle what are very real problems.

What a sad commentary on the level of education in Australia, that there could be that many people in just one diocese seeking to blame their problems (great and small) on possession by evil spirits. It's as though the Renaissance (let alone the Enlightenment) never happened, as though the ignorance of the Middle Ages just continued on into modern times, unchanged.

There was an article in *The Age* in April which I had better deal with now before it gets

totally out of date! The article was headed "Hollywood enlisted to battle IS appeal" but it wasn't just IS that Hollywood was being enlisted to "battle". No, it was also Russia.

US Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy, Richard Stengel, attempted to rouse the support of Sony Pictures Chief Executive Michael Lynton with this heartfelt plea: "We have plenty of challenges in countering IS narratives in the Middle East and Russian narratives in central and eastern Europe.

"In both cases, there are millions and millions of people in those regions who are getting a skewed version of reality." Now that's a bit of a giggle, isn't it? Globally, there must be a couple of billion people who are getting a skewed version of reality courtesy of the US State Department's disinformation campaigns backed up by Rupert Murdoch and his fellow media barons.

As for the Russians, apparently their perception of US foreign policy is not as favourable to US interests as the US would like it to be. That could be altered if the US stopped trying to overthrow governments it didn't get along with, stopped assassinating people with drone strikes, stopped waging war all over the world. That's probably a bit much to ask, however.

Two great joys of my life were the discovery of foreign films and then the discovery of the wonders of the silent cinema of the 1920s. The first foreign language film I saw was *La Ronde*, but it was not until I saw Sergei Eisenstein's masterpiece *Ivan The Terrible* in a lovely 35mm print that watching a film became

a physical experience for me. This was filmmaking of extraordinary power.

Later still I discovered the amazing power of the great filmmakers of the silent era to tell moving, dynamic stories entirely in visual terms. A revelation, and a welcome corrective to the dialogue-heavy films by filmmakers who have forgotten that the seventh art is supposed to be a visual art.

Cinematography is the creation of mood through the interplay of light and shadow. But if one tries to think of great cinematography, as opposed to just great scenery, I can only think of black and white films, not colour films. How about you?

I watched *Casablanca* again the other night. Glorious B&W cinematography – so simple, but so effective. Such wonderful use of shadows, close-ups, swaying lights. It is also helped by the great acting of its talented cast, of course.

I was manning the box-office one night at the Mandolin Cinema (now the Australian Hall in Elizabeth St in Sydney) when a chap came up and was introduced to me. He seemed almost overawed to meet a "genuine film buff" and diffidently asked me: "I bet you know the name of the piano player in *Casablanca*!"

As it happened I did, so I gave him a "doesn't everyone?" look and said with a rising inflection, "Dooley Wilson?" He was flabbergasted. Thank God he didn't ask me for any other display of such esoteric knowledge, for my ability to remember film credits is notoriously hopeless! But I must say, I enjoyed the moment. ☺





Rob Gowland  
previews  
ABC & SBS  
Public Television

Sunday August 2 –  
Saturday August 8

**The Politician's Husband** (ABC Sundays from August 2 at 8.30pm) is a copy-cat series to a previous 1995 multi-award-winning series *The Politician's Wife*, on the well-known television principle that if it worked before, do it again. In its new incarnation, David Tennant plays Aiden Hoynes, a senior Cabinet Minister who tries to force a spill to get himself into the PM's job, only to be betrayed by his best friend Bruce Babbish (played by Ed Stoppard) and sent to the back benches instead.

Aiden is married to Freya (played by Emily Watson), a junior minister whose political career soars after her husband's goes down the tube. In most dramas set amongst politicians there is surprisingly little real politics and this series is no exception. Even the political allegiance of the protagonists is never made clear, Immigration is mentioned as an issue, but not pursued.

The *New Statesman's* critic put his finger on the problem: "What is *The Politician's Husband* about? Apparently it's about the 'cesspit' of British politics – a stinky world where you can't trust anyone, not even your own wife." In other words it's a soap opera in a parliamentary setting. He summed it up with the words: "Crikey it's weird, this series".

On the other hand, the UK *Guardian's* critic wrote: "There is heaps to enjoy in *The Politician's Husband*. Well, him and her, Tennant and Watson; they're both great, and great together, convincing as a couple. ... We're not just talking about power battles in the corridors of Westminster here; we're (actually mainly) talking about power battles in the hall and on the landing at the top of the stairs of a semi in a salubrious-looking London suburb. Oh and in the bedroom; big shift going on in there too. It's not just careerwise that Freya's on top. And she's enjoying it, a lot."

The series' over-arching attitude appears to be cynicism. In the words

of *The Guardian*, "It's an entertaining, but bleak, picture of politics in this country, a world of bitter competitiveness and ruthless ambition that has very little to do with the interests of the country. Any ideological motivation someone might have once had is soon squeezed out by the pressure of the system. Soon it's only about party politics, power, battles and games. Probably fairly accurate, then."

"*The Politician's Husband* isn't subtle, sometimes to the point of crudeness. ... Oh, what the hell. It's melodrama, and a lot of fun, a big boiling pot of hot, lusty power soup, with crunchy croutons of deceit and a generous sprinkling of revenge."

If that's your idea of political drama, go for it.

Actualities programming receives a boost this week with *The Murder Trial* (SBS Sunday August 2 at 8.35pm). For the first time in history, remotely-operated cameras have been placed inside a British criminal court to capture a murder trial in its entirety, as Nat Fraser is tried for the murder of his wife. Fraser was first brought to trial for her murder in 2003 and was found guilty. But Fraser argued that the trial was a miscarriage of justice and challenged the verdict in the highest courts in the land. Eventually, the conviction was quashed in 2011.

In April 2012, Nat Fraser was sent back to the High Court in Edinburgh for a fresh trial. His wife's body has never been found, there is no weapon, no crime scene and he appears to have a cast iron alibi for the day she disappeared. With over 70 witnesses and 104 pieces of evidence the complex case is dissected first by the Prosecution QC Alex Prentice and then the Defence QC John Scott.

There was a time, long, long ago, when one of the most highly regarded attributes a movie or TV series could have was originality. Film and television production is very expensive, however, and it became much safer – at least in the eyes of the bankers who provide the necessary funding – to remake previous productions or copy successful series from rival studios. The financial returns from remakes or sequels can be predicted with considerable accuracy, making them a safer bet than an original production that breaks new ground.

The consequence of this is a dreary sameness across the TV channels: if one has success with a home renovations program, every channel has to have a home renovations program. And it's not just television: if a European movie is a popular hit at home, it will almost certainly be bought and remade in the USA.



*The Politician's Husband* (ABC Sundays from August 2 at 8.30pm).

Which brings us to *Humans* (ABC Mondays from August 3 at 8.40pm), an English sci-fi series that is "adapted" from an award-winning Swedish science fiction drama called *Real Humans*. The series is not set in the future but in a "parallel present" where the latest must-have gadget for any busy family is a synth – an android robot eerily similar to a human in nearly every respect. This cleverly avoids the necessity to provide futuristic fashions, vehicles, etc.

The series which takes place in suburban London, "explores the emotional impact of the blurring of the lines between humans and machines", which is hardly a new theme in science-fiction, having been posed many years ago by numerous writers, notably by Isaac Asimov in his famous story *Do Androids Dream Of Mechanical Sheep?*

The show was Channel 4's highest rated drama since 1992, but ratings are more a testimony to the way a show is advertised than to its actual quality. Some of the British critics picked up on the fact that it was "conceptually ... old hat" and "wasn't breaking any new ground philosophically" but we can expect a second series anyway.

Another interesting actuality series starting this week is *24 Hours In Police Custody* (SBS from Wednesday August 5 at 8.35pm) which follows the officers of the Bedfordshire Police as they respond to 999 calls and arrest suspects and witness the relentless traffic from the custody cells to the interview rooms. The series captures the police interrogations in minute detail. ☘

## Perth Hiroshima Day Vigil Remembering Hiroshima & Nagasaki 70 years on 6 August 2015

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Humanitarian organisations around the world have advocated for the prohibition of nuclear weapons ever since, yet today, seventy years later, the global community is still struggling to achieve a world free from nuclear weapons.

Around the country, Australians will be lighting candles and lanterns on 6 August to remember the victims of these bombings, and to highlight the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

Join us, and reflect on why achieving the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons is more important than ever before.

**Date & Time:** Thursday, 6 August 2015, 6:45pm – 7:30pm  
**Venue:** Reflection Pond, The University of Western Australia (adjacent to Winthrop Hall)

**Morning Alleluias:** A concert for Hiroshima will follow the vigil at 7:30pm at Winthrop Hall, featuring a combined Wind Orchestra from the UWA School of Music and WAAPA. Tickets are free however bookings are essential: <http://ticketswa.com/event/uwanzacaugust-morning-alleluias>.

For more information, contact Renata Sivacolumndhu at [rsivacolumndhu@redcross.org.au](mailto:rsivacolumndhu@redcross.org.au)



Sydney

## POLITICS IN THE PUB

July 30

### IS DEMOCRATISATION BRINGING AUSTRALIA AND INDONESIA CLOSER? WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

Jaap Timmer, Dr, Macquarie University;  
Cammi Webb-Gannon, Dr, Co-ordinator West Papua Project, University of Sydney and University of Western Sydney;

August 6

### VIOLENCE: THE OUTDATED CENTREPIECE OF DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY

Hannah Middleton, Dr, Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition;  
Stuart Rees, Professor, Chair, Sydney Peace Foundation;

August 13

### THE BARBARISM OF AUSTRALIA'S BI-PARTISAN REFUGEE POLICY

Julian Burnside, QC, Human Rights and Refugee Advocate and author;  
Phil Glendenning, Director, Edmund Rice Centre;

Every Thursday 6:30 pm 'til 8:15 pm

**Harold Park Hotel**

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Editor: Tom Pearson

Published by  
Guardian Publications Australia Ltd  
74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, 2010

Printed by Spotpress  
24-26 Lillian Fowler Pl Marrickville 2204

Responsibility for electoral comment  
is taken by T Pearson,  
74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, 2010



# Standing with the Greek working class

## CP of Ireland statement

**The European Union has exposed its essential class nature in its attitude to the Greek people. After months of arm-twisting, bullying and blackmail it has imposed even more draconian austerity on the working people of Greece.**

The stance taken by the Irish government was only to be expected, as it long ago surrendered all pretence of defending Irish national and political sovereignty and the interests of our people. They have accepted their role as gatekeepers and willing collaborators in defending the interests of the EU above those of the people. They never fought for the interests of the Irish people, so why would one expect them to champion the interests of the Greek people regarding debt and austerity?

Developments within the European Union confirm the stand taken by the Communist Party of Ireland over many decades regarding the various treaties, the EU's essential class nature and whose interests it serves.

The humiliation of the Greek people is designed to send a very clear message to workers throughout Europe: that criticism or alternative economic and social policies will be defeated. This is for the purpose of reinforcing the mantra of "TINA": that "There Is No Alternative" to the dominant interests of the monopolies and big business. It is clear that no matter who working people vote for, or how many referendums they have, there is only one economic, political and social policy allowed within the European Union.

The CPI has consistently challenged the illusions deliberately nurtured and fostered by both the EU and its supporters among the Irish economic and political establishment, also including elements within the trade union leadership, all the main political parties, and, unfortunately, sections of the political left.

The reformist illusions of Syriza have come unstuck on the nature of the European Union and the real,

existing class interests at the heart of the EU. Equally – as we have consistently pointed out – debt was and is being used as the main weapon against the people, creating the pretext for a massive assault on workers' rights and conditions, not only here in Ireland but throughout Europe, to justify a massive transfer of public wealth to both domestic and global monopolies, resulting from the privatisation of public companies and assets.

The dominant elements within Syriza have accepted plans for a high level of domestic economic supervision by the bail-out monitors of the Troika, including the IMF, as well as an "overhaul" of public administration supervised by the EU Commission.

It is clear even at this early stage that the Syriza government has surrendered many of its "red-line" demands and agreed to accept draconian measures in a renewed assault on workers, including attacks on pensions and an increase in VAT as a precondition for starting negotiations over a third bail-out package. And another "red line" has been crossed: contrary to Greek demands, the IMF will be involved in the third bail-out.

In addition, Greece will have to transfer more than €50 billion in public assets to a "trust fund" before they are privatised, including the national electricity service, ports and harbours, and many other vital public assets.

Syriza has also agreed to even more ambitious market "reforms," abandoning its pledge to reverse previous attacks on workers' rights or what the establishment calls "labour market reforms," notably on collective bargaining. This is the culmination of the disarming of the working class.

Half the proceeds of the sale of public companies (€25 billion) will be used for recapitalising banks, and a quarter each (€12½ billion) will go to debt repayments and investment; in other words, the people's wealth is to be squandered in the interests of the rich and powerful.

Reformist parties such as Syriza, the SPD in Germany, the British Labour Party, the French, Spanish and Portuguese "Socialist Parties", the Irish Labour Party and other such political formations throughout Europe have facilitated this continuing assault on workers, siding with their own ruling class, in alliance with the EU, against workers. These reformist parties are the conduit for securing the interests of those same dominant economic and political forces within the workers'



movement. These political groupings have increasingly become essential mechanisms of control over workers and their organisations.

We express our solidarity with the Greek working class and with the Communist Party of Greece, who we are sure will mobilise the class-conscious workers of Greece to resist these new chains of slavery and exploitation. It is the duty of Irish workers – and all workers – to show solidarity and find common cause in the struggle against these renewed attacks on Greek workers, which will soon come to all the workers of Europe.

Many on the left, both in Ireland and elsewhere in Europe, continue to sow the illusion that there is somehow a "pain-free" way out of the crisis, that the straitjacket of the euro and continued membership of the EU itself provide the best or even the only way to prevent the further suffering of the people. In reality the EU is doing precisely what it was designed to do: to protect the interests of European big business and monopolies.

There is clearly a need for an open and honest dialogue among those forces that claim to hold the interests of workers as central to their political ideas and goals. Central to that dialogue is genuine debate about the nature of the European Union.

National democracy and sovereignty are not optional extras but are vital necessities in creating the conditions for radical transformative economic, political and social strategy, a strategy that puts the people first. A strategy that strengthens the power of labour and weakens the power of capital. ✪



Sydney

# 70 YEARS

70th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

**THURSDAY 6 AUGUST 2015**

Candlelight procession 6pm  
Assemble Cnr Elizabeth & Park Streets 6pm  
Walk to public meeting at 33 Mary Street, Surry Hills 7pm

Organised by the Hiroshima Committee  
[www.hiroshimacommittee.org](http://www.hiroshimacommittee.org)



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