



# Corporate dictatorship

## Oppose the TPP trade deal

Anna Pha

After five years of secret talks the “final” Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) ministers’ meeting in Maui (Hawaii) from July 29 to August 1 failed to reach agreement. What was to have been the largest and for the people most dangerous trade and investment agreement so far, lies languishing on the table. The collapse of what proved to be very heated negotiations buys the movement time to defeat this recipe for a corporate state.

Thanks to WikiLeaks, some of the TPP’s contents and dangers it poses have been made public, but much of the document still remains shrouded in secrecy.

If finalised, the TPP would have a far more serious impact on Australia than any of the recent free trade agreements (FTAs) that Australia signed with China, Japan and South Korea. It is as much a political instrument as an economic one, serving the interests of US corporations and US strategic interests.

As Obama stated, “The United States – and not countries like China – is the one writing this century’s rules for the world’s economy.”

He made it clear that he would not sign any agreement that did not put America first. (Whitehouse email 18-02-2015) “That’s why my Administration is currently negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership – so we can benefit from trade that is not just free, but also fair (sic).”

The Age columnist Kenneth Davidson summed up the real aims: “The Abbott government is reluctant to challenge even the most odious provisions of the agreement, which pretends to be a regional trade pact involving the US and 11 other countries. It is in fact a push for US regional dominance with particular relevance to its rivalry with China.” (29-06-2015)

The 12 Pacific Rim negotiating parties are Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, New Zealand, Singapore, the United States and Vietnam. China and Russia are not included.

Together these countries’ economies encompass 40 percent of global GDP and one-third of world trade.

Media reports indicate sticking points include patent protection of a new generation of biotech medicines (biologics) and export rules for dairy, sugar and car components.

Australia’s Trade Minister Andrew Robb who took part in the ministerial meeting last week, tries to sell the TPP as just another trade agreement, promising huge benefits to the economy and higher living standards:

“The TPP will help drive increased trade and investment; help secure the ongoing competitiveness of Australian businesses and make a significant contribution to supporting



Workers need to oppose the job-cutting TPP. (Photo: Linda Knowles)

economic growth, job creation and higher living standards for Australians,” Robb claimed.

Similar promises were made about the US FTA with Australia in 2005. The outcome was another story.

“Not only did the US FTA siphon money from Australian taxpayers and patients to American pharmaceutical companies, it might have destroyed about \$53 billion more trade than it created.” (John Garnaut, *The Age*, “TPP could change the story of a rising China and declining America,” 01-08-2015)

### Opposition to TPP

The underlying reason for the failure to reach agreement is the strong opposition to the proposed treaty in a number of countries, including in Canada, the USA and Japan. In Australia opposition is mounting as more people are becoming aware of the TPP.

Deep divisions are developing within government ranks as National Party members fear losing their seats if the government fails to gain open markets for sugar, dairy and cotton. Japan, the US and Canada have been holding out over their highly protected agricultural products.

### ISDS

The “most odious” provisions, to use Davidson’s term, are those that override Australia’s sovereignty and the democratic rights of Australians.

The most important of these is the

Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism.

Under ISDS provisions a government of one country can be sued by a corporation based in any of the other 11 countries for lost profits or future loss in profits arising out of measures the government takes.

For example, these might be:

- closure of coal fired or nuclear energy plants
- putting a price on carbon
- revocation of licences and permits (eg fracking, construction)
- regulation of energy tariffs
- land zoning decisions
- invalidation of patents.

For instance, if the government brings in legislation to shut coal power stations or puts a price on carbon. Any foreign-based corporation could then sue the government for future loss in profits.

If the government withdraws a mining licence or bans fracking, likewise it could be sued.

The cases are heard by private, international tribunals that are not courts and are not required to act like courts. They take years to be heard and can cost millions of dollars even if the government wins. Fear of being sued by powerful transnational corporations could act as a powerful deterrent to action to protect the environment.

But it is not just environmental measures

that are at stake. Corporations could sue governments over actions to protect health and safety; changes to food labelling; bans on toxic substances; more stringent regulations governing construction; childcare; education; and anything else that might have a detrimental effect on profit-gouging by corporations based in any of the other 11 countries.

### ISDS actions on the rise

Robb fobs off the ISDS mechanism, as though it won’t be used against Australia, but notes that Australian corporations could use it against other countries. But such clauses in other agreements are being used.

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# Guardian

Issue 1696

August 5, 2015

## Abbott's open door to racists

The fascist groups that have recently made themselves known have been emboldened, not to say encouraged, to do so by the current federal government. With its racist, divisive agenda it has not only opened the door to these racist elements, it has sent an invitation and put down a welcome mat.

Take Attorney General George Brandis' statement "I want the right to be a bigot". So, there they are. The bigots. They don't usually publicly push their odious doctrines because they are well aware that the majority of people reject their ideas. They are now encouraged to the point where a Liberal MP, George Christensen, attended and spoke at one of their rallies.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop – who has so much to say about so many things – refused to condemn Christensen, despite warnings from NSW Police about the increasing danger of these groups. She trotted out the Australia has freedom of speech and assembly line.

She continued: "I don't know anything about the organisation. I certainly haven't been briefed on it. I've been briefed intensively and extensively on Islamic extremism and other threats to national security."

Christensen posted a statement on Facebook, saying, "I want to support people who seek to defend our Australian way of life, our culture and our freedoms from the threat of radical Islam."

The likes of Reclaim Australia are this government's real constituency: they embody the values and narrow view of the world espoused by Abbott and his carefully selected Christian fundamentalist Cabinet members.

The racist vilification of AFL footballer Adam Goodes should not be seen in isolation from these developments. The vein of racism perpetuated against Indigenous Australians has been mined almost from the moment of the invasion and occupation by British colonisers.

Race hate groups target individuals and Adam Goodes is a high profile target exposed on the playing field. The booing of Goodes at games is being sparked by a small group starting up and leading a chorus of racist sneers.

After a week of watching this in silence, PM Abbott made a statement: "Yes, we're a robust people and I guess politicians typically get booed at the footy, but Adam Goodes is a good bloke and he's a great player and I hope he gets treated with respect and civility."

This mealy mouthed evasion – essentially endorsing the behaviour by refusing to condemn it – is something people have seen repeatedly from Abbott and his ministers. It is the reactionary's ploy to clothe acts of self-interest and denial in the garb of high moral principles. Empty words. Is there anyone we don't think should be treated with civility and respect?

Goodes is being bullied because he has been an outspoken critic of racism.

As Dennis Egginton, chief executive of the Aboriginal Legal Service of WA, put it: "Imagine being a master craftsman at the top of your game, widely regarded and admired by your workmates and professional colleagues. You are experienced, hard-working and eager to share your skills and knowledge with the younger members of your organisation.

"In your time away from the office, you spend countless hours undertaking community service to help those less fortunate than yourself. Imagine then, as you approach your well-earned retirement, that each time you attend your workplace, random strangers hurl vile abuse and incessantly boo you.

"Imagine being Adam Goodes. We wouldn't accept it in any other workplace, so why is it accepted at the footy? This disgusting sledging, anchored to social Darwinism, is nothing more than blatant racism. To excuse it, to minimise it, to deny it, is to deny the black and white truth."

### PRESS FUND

Backing the Abbott government's campaign against renewable energy, Sydney broadcaster and climate change denier Allan Jones recently claimed electricity from wind farms would cost 19 times as much as from coal-fired power stations. But his figures exaggerated the cost of renewable power by a factor of 10 and ignored the fact that Australia's coal-fired power stations will have to be replaced within 15 years. According to energy experts, power from new wind and solar power stations will actually be cheaper than from new coal-fired power stations. But speaking of figures, we really need to boost the Press Fund, so please send in something for the next issue if you possibly can. Many thanks to this week's contributors, as follows:

S Bulloch \$4, DP Cartwright \$20, Talieh Katouz \$30, Mark Mannion \$5, "Round Figure" \$16, Eddie Seymour \$5, T Sharman \$50, WLS \$8, TB \$12

This week's total: \$150 Progressive total: \$4,530

# ABC retail bombshell another blow to jobs

The ABC management's announcement to close ABC Shops across the country is another blow to the ABC workforce that is still reeling from the 400 job cuts that came out of the Abbott government's funding cuts last year.

Community and Public Sector Union ABC Section secretary Sindy Ealy said: "Without warning, ABC Retail staff have been told that ABC shops will be closed and their jobs are likely to disappear along with them.

"Like most retailers, ABC Shops have been struggling with the impact of online shopping but that's not the only reason ABC Retail is struggling.

"Profit margins for ABC Retail have been falling because most of the products that they are selling are for programs which the ABC does not actually make. The ABC has been outsourcing their internal production for the last decade and now there are more job losses on the table because of that."

The announcement caught staff



completely by surprise and the union says it needs to see a lot more information provided on this decision so that that staff know where they stand.

"The CPSU will be fighting to ensure that whatever replaces ABC Retail is kept in-house and staff keep their jobs," said Ealy.

"The union recognised a few years ago that the retail sector was facing a difficult period and we negotiated a landmark agreement that strengthened redundancy provisions

and protected casual staff in the case that such a decision was taken.

"ABC staff are very concerned that this is just the beginning of more bad news from the ABC. Mark Scott (ABC manager) has told Senate Estimates that there are still 100 back-of-house redundancies for ABC staff planned.

"It's time for the ABC to come clean on what other jobs will be placed on the chopping block." ✪

# Lock down after asylum seeker death

Yongah Hill detention centre is in lockdown, and Serco's riot squad has been mobilised following the death of a 27 year-old Afghan asylum seeker at around 9pm last Friday night.

While the cause of death is still unclear, the man's body was taken from the detention centre by Western Australian police in the early hours of Saturday morning.

The death has highlighted the neglect and lack of medical care in the detention centre. The man had asked for medical help for the last two days, but typically had

only been given Panadol. There is not even a nurse on duty after 5pm weekdays.

Other detainees have complained that Serco guards took too long to call an ambulance; "They watched and let him die," one asylum seeker told the Refugee Action Coalition.

It is believed that the man had slashed himself earlier on Friday and should have been on suicide watch, which would mean regular observations by Serco guards.

A disturbance broke out following the death when one of the Serco

guards was heard to say, "one less for us to look after".

"This is another death in detention that lies at the feet of the Immigration Minister and the neglect that characterises the detention regime. The man should never have been in detention," said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition. "There is no excuse for keeping someone in detention for three years. If he had been in the community, he would more likely still be alive." ✪

## Website and Computers Appeal

The CPA has launched a Special Appeal to buy a few computers and develop its website and social media – the latter now being an important way of reaching younger people. As everything, this costs money and our resources are stretched. We still need to raise more to meet our needs. We urge you to dig deep and support our fund-raiser. If you have just received a tax refund, perhaps you could share it with us. Our warmest thanks to the following for their generous contributions this week:

L Newcombe \$65, SM \$100, S Hale \$50, Dennis White \$50, Mavrantonis Family \$50, DP Cartwright \$50.

This week's Total: \$365.00 Cumulative Total: \$2,440.

### Website and Computers Appeal

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

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Thank you for your support.



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## Oppose the TPP trade deal

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The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) review of ISDS developments (May 2015) notes that in 2014 claimants initiated 42 known treaty-based ISDS cases. The total number of known cases is now 608.

Forty percent of new cases were against governments of developed countries (the historical average was 28 percent). (unctad.org/eng) The principal targets were Argentina and Venezuela. Thirty-five of the 42 new cases were from corporations based in developed countries.

### Australia sued

On October 5, 2012, the High Court delivered a judgement in which it rejected challenges to the validity of the Tobacco Plain Packaging Act 2011. The tobacco industry did not give up.

Philip Morris Asia Ltd, which is based in Hong Kong, acquired a 100 percent shareholding in Philip Morris Australia. This tactic enabled Philip Morris Australia to be transformed into a foreign investor based in Hong Kong.

Using ISDS provisions in a 1993 bilateral investment treaty between Australia and Hon Kong, the tobacco company is now attempting to override the decision of the Australian High Court to gain compensation for millions of dollars of potentially lost profits. This is the first ISDS action to be brought against Australia.

Justice Brian French, Chief Justice of the High Court, warned: "There are therefore two issues of general significance illuminated by this particular case – the use of ISDS to challenge legislative and administrative acts by governments and its use to call into question the decisions of national courts." ("Investor-State Dispute Settlement – A Cut Above the Courts?", Darwin, Supreme and Federal Courts Judges' Conference, July 9, 2014.)

### Above the law

"The possible inclusion of an ISDS provision in the TPP has become an issue of intense debate with some critics seeing it as a Trojan horse for the enhancement of the power of international corporations at the expense of national sovereignty and interests," Justice French said.

He said that it has not been unusual for investors to claim that decisions of courts in a country where they have invested constitute a breach of a provision of the investment treaty. "They have general implications for national sovereignty, democratic governance and the rule of law within domestic legal system."

Justice French points to a number of problems with the private tribunals that hear the cases:

- a relatively small pool of arbitrators – arbitrators appointed to ISDS arbitrations are said to be mostly male (95%) and from Europe and North America
- role-swapping by arbitrators who appear from time to time as counsel in ISDS cases
- the high cost and potentially high awards
- a growing phenomenon of third party funding of claims by banks, hedge funds and insurance companies in exchange for a share of the proceeds ranging from 20% to 50%
- absence of effective review or appeal processes
- inconsistency in decisions on similar provisions.

### Capital flows

It is important that any government has the power to address destabilising flows of capital, heavy speculation, global financial shocks and be able to respond to attacks on their currency, redirect speculation to productive investment and so on.

The introduction of such measures would not be possible under the TPP. In addition, Australia would be required to permit the free flow of capital investments from the other countries. Only certain key sensitive areas such as defence would be excepted. This includes purchase of Australian dollars, government bonds and other forms of capital.

Blocking the flight of capital would be prohibited, an important measure for propping up banks and the economy in times of economic crisis.

Under the ISDS provisions, banks and insurance companies from the other 11 countries could sue the government where the introduction of financial regulation, financial transaction taxes and other measures allegedly hurt their profits.



### Competition & public sector

The Competition Chapter places tight restrictions on governments in how they use and finance state-owned enterprises. They must operate on a purely commercial model. This means, for example, in the provision of services, the interests of the recipients cannot be put first, if at all. Profits come first.

State-owned enterprises cannot receive government support if it adversely affects the interests of a corporation from one of the other member countries. For example, the ABC and SBS receive government funding. It would appear that any other broadcaster based in one of the 11 other TPP countries would be entitled to similar treatment.

The effect would be to speed up the process of the privatisation of the ABC, SBS plus the CSIRO and Australia Post.

### Medicines

The price of a number of medications is kept relatively low in Australia because of the PBS (Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme) and its

ability to bulk bill and government subsidies. The use of generic alternatives, which kick in when patents expire also plays a big role.

The TPP contains measures for extending the life of patents and allowing companies to secure patents for "diagnostic, therapeutic, and surgical methods for the treatment of humans or animals." This is nothing short of criminal. It would deny people access to diagnostic tests and life-saving surgery and other medical treatment. If a new use is found for a medication, then its patent could be extended.

If agreement is eventually reached on the TPP, it will be presented to Parliament as a package that cannot be amended. All that the elected Parliament has the power to do is block legislation that is required to bring Australian law into line with its provisions. Some of these, such as PBS listings do not require legislation.

There is a certain irony that the TPP is stalled over trade in goods which is not really what it was meant to be about.

"... above all it was about injecting balance into Barack Obama's

'rebalancing' to Asia, so the US President could reassure partners and allies that he had an economic and diplomatic agenda to match his military one," John Garnaut said.

"If we don't write the rules, China will write the rules out in that region," Obama said in an interview with *The Wall Street Journal*. "We will be shut out." (Interview with Jerry Seib, 27-04-2015)

That statement goes to the heart of the aims of the TPP, to shut out China and ensure US economic domination of the region. That is why the Abbott government is prepared to sell out the Australian people, Australian industry and the Australian economy – all to serve the US's global hegemony and shut China out.

The government should withdraw now and if it does not then at least release the text so that the public can express their views on all of its contents.

See page 4 for draft letter to send to Trade Minister Andrew Robb, Prime Minister Tony Abbott, your local MP and Independent Senators. ✪

### Pete's Corner



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# Union busting through automation

## MUA takes on port operator Hutchinson

Len Waster

**International ports operator, Hong Kong based Hutchinson Ports Holdings, is preparing to use automation and “forced redundancies” – sackings – to destroy nearly half the jobs at its Port Botany (Sydney) and Brisbane ports. Ninety-seven of 224 workers face the sack.**

The company is citing “competition” with other port operators – as its driver to “effectively reduce the size of the Australian workforce” so it can deliver “a better and more efficient offering” to businesses importing and exporting through Australian ports.

Hutchinson has been “assessing” workers for their “commitment to health and safety initiatives, ability to work in a team environment, skills and productivity”, with a view to choosing which workers to retain and who will be in a reserve pool so the company will also have “access to a trained casual workforce” some time in the future, if “business conditions improved”, according to a July 24 company memo obtained by the *Australian Financial Review*.

Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) assistant secretary Warren Smith, compared this process to “ranking animals at a fair” (to determine the ones most fit for slaughter) and expressed the MUA’s concerns that Hutchinson management is walking around with a ‘hatchet list’ – picking off delegates and activists in a bid to bust union influence.

Hutchinson “is basically sneaking automated equipment in under the noses of the MUA, so there is no

requirement to have negotiated manning levels or coverage,” Mr Smith said.

The MUA has an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement with Hutchinson that is current until February 2016, that obliges the company to work with the union in a cooperative and collaborative manner in implementing changes on the waterfront.

“Our EBA deals with situations like this and the company must discuss with us to avert and mitigate job losses. The company has not met with the union to discuss any of this yet,” said Mr Smith.

No automation without negotiation! No automation to bust unions!

“We won’t accept automation without negotiation and we won’t accept automation as union busting. We will make sure this company adheres to its moral obligations and commitments,” he said, and the “MUA is prepared to accept job cuts if the company could justify them,” but Hutchinson “needs to put the facts on the table and talk through solutions in a non-litigious environment.”

“If they’re genuine, we are prepared to come back with a range of creative solutions to get through whatever difficult times the company is confronting,” Mr Smith said, but the MUA will “unleash every tool available – legal, political and industrial – to stop Hutchinson Ports unfairly sacking almost half its waterfront workforce.”

The MUA workers in Sydney and Brisbane are being supported by the MUA nationally.

They also have the support of the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF).



Hutchinson is in the sights of the ITF because it is not only using automation and sackings to get rid of union members in Australia, but is taking on a port concession in Indonesia that is suspected of having “secret” clauses that disadvantage port workers and Indonesian national and local interests more generally.

Union members at Port Botany and Brisbane have responded to Hutchinson’s unilateral moves by stopping work for half a day on July 30 and on Monday August 3 a rally was held at Port Botany, signalling MUA workers’ intent to fight back against Hutchinson’s threat of unfair sackings.

If Hutchinson does not soon make a commitment to come to the table with the MUA this dispute can only escalate. ✪

## Unemployment in Australian 2015 Two million (plus) too many

Graham Drew

**Last Saturday (August 1) at 1.30pm at Granville the Sydney Branch of the newly formed Australian Unemployment Union invited Nick Southall, Warren Smith and Victor Quirk to address an open meeting.**

Outlining how statistics selectively inform a 6.8% (835,000) official unemployment rate in the face of a demonstrable 2 million plus Australians wanting work today, Victor from CoffEE at Newcastle University, pointed to the public sector cuts of the 1970s, the 1986 “recession we had to have”, and the casualisation of much of the labour market to make Australia today second only to the US in wealth concentration in the world.

Noting that capitalist accumulation occurs only because of the

existence of a pool of unemployed, Warren from the Maritime Union of Australia welcomed an independent union of unemployed people to the class struggle.

The tale of the Wollongong Out of Work (WOW) was critically presented by a long term activist of the 1980s and early 1990s, Nick Southall. Nick described a democratically active union educating its members to be activists in a shared struggle for financial survival; one which whenever possible was an on-the-ground, in person, expression of solidarity with members of other unions.

The Sydney Australian Unemployment Union will meet again this Saturday at NUW Building (11am) to consider the immense amount of information and possible action the forum presented. ✪

## Say NO to TPP

### Draft Letter to Trade Minister on TPP

**The Hon Andrew Robb AO MP  
Minister for Trade and Investment  
Parliament House  
Canberra**

Dear Minister Robb,

I am gravely concerned about the ongoing Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations, which failed to meet the deadline for completion in 2014 because governments have responded to community opposition in many negotiating countries. The TPP is not just a trade agreement and could impact on many important areas of Australian public policy.

The TPP could mean higher prices for medicines

Please reject US proposals for stronger patents and data protection for medicines, which would delay cheaper generic medicines and mean higher prices for new medicines for longer both in Australia and our region. Please also reject proposals for changes to our Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, which would allow pharmaceutical companies more say over medicine prices, increasing costs to government and leading to pressure for higher prices at the chemist. The TPP could allow foreign investors to sue Australian governments

Investor-state dispute settlement proposals (ISDS) allow foreign corporations to sue governments in international tribunals if a change in policy or regulation is seen to “harm” their investment. The US Philip Morris tobacco company is using ISDS in an Australia-Hong-Kong investment agreement to sue the government over our plain packaging law, despite the decision of the Australian High Court that they were not entitled to damages under Australian law. If ISDS is included in the TPP, corporations based in any TPP country, including the US, would be able to sue our governments for millions of dollars.

Attempts to “safeguard” health and environmental legislation from ISDS clauses have not been effective in other agreements and do not attempt to safeguard other areas such as industrial relations and tax policy. Recent Senate Inquiry reports, European studies and Australian High Court Chief Justice French have revealed additional evidence that ISDS is a threat to democratic legislation and national court decisions, undermining democracy and sovereignty.

I ask that you do not agree to any

ISDS provisions in the TPP or any other agreement.

The TPP process is secret and undemocratic

The level of secrecy in the TPP negotiations means that the public and the Parliament must rely largely on leaks for detailed information about the agreement.

The TPP text will only become public after it is signed, and cannot be changed. Parliament will only vote on the implementing legislation. Any changes which do not require implementing legislation, such as ISDS clauses or administrative changes to the PBS, do not require legislative change and will not be debated by Parliament.

This process is undemocratic. I ask you to release the text of the TPP and other agreements for full public and Parliamentary discussion before Cabinet authorises it to be signed.

Yours sincerely

Name \*

email \*

Postal Address\*

Enter your postal address for a personal response.

Write or phone your local federal MP and Senators. ✪



Warren Smith, Nick Southall and Victor Quirk.

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# Police watch hate group

Natalie Cromb

**Alice Springs police are monitoring a hate group of vigilantes that call themselves Alice Spring Volunteer Force (AVF), which is made up of 14 heavily armed “volunteers” and led by Gary Hall, an Irishman who claims to have a link with a paramilitary group.**

A Facebook post on the wall of closed group “Alice Springs Community Forum” by Hall called for people to join the group.

“Ex or current military welcome. Those experienced in communications, logistics and firearms and willing to teach others. Be a part

of something to be proud of,” Hall wrote.

Hall is originally from Bangor, Ireland, and moved to Australia seven years ago and now lives in Alice Springs. He claims to have been associated with the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), a paramilitary group formed in 1966 that claimed responsibility for the lives of 33 people in bomb attacks in Dublin and Monaghan.

Hall has been vocal in his condemnation of the Aboriginal people that reside in Alice Springs, including in an interview with Irish newspaper the *Belfast Telegraph*. “There are basically two communities where I

live – the whites and the Aborigines who are stuck in the 1700s,” he said.

Referring to claims that he is a racist, Hall stated, “The fact is that race plays no part in who the organisation targets. The Aborigines carry out their own form of punishment beatings by spearing the kneecap of someone who has wronged them. I don’t see what the big fuss is about the AVF doing similar.”

Hall has said that the group was heavily armed and prepared to use their weapons on Aboriginal people, in addition to carrying out punishment beatings. He considers that the police are not addressing the crime allegedly perpetrated by

the Aboriginal community and he intends to rectify it with the use of violent force.

Not only do Aboriginal residents of Alice Springs need to be concerned of this vigilante group’s existence, but the numerous violently anti-Aboriginal posts in response to Hall’s drive for new recruits indicate that the potential for racial violence is a real threat to the community.

Supporters of Hall were encouraging attacks upon the Aboriginal community, one even going as far as encouraging an “open season” and payment of bounties; others were engaging in racial attacks on the character of Aboriginal residents and

indicating that they aren’t concerned if violence is perpetrated against the Aboriginal community.

A Northern Territory police spokesperson said, “Upholding of the law is always best left to professional law enforcement officers,” and confirmed officers are “monitoring” Hall’s group.

Alice Springs police were contacted for comment amid fears of racial attacks.

“Alice Springs police have not received any reports of unlawful activity by this group. We will continue to monitor the group’s activities.”

*Koori Mail* ✪

## Vale Kevin Cook (Cookie) 1939-2015

**It is with great sadness that the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) reports the passing of Kevin Cook (Cookie as he was affectionately known), who passed away peacefully at the nursing home in Summer Hill where he has lived since the passing of his partner Judy a couple of years ago.**

Cookie was a proud and much admired member of the Wandandian mob from the South Coast of NSW, and was one of the giants of the Australian and international labour movement and Indigenous movement. His brother Ron, a seafarer is a longstanding member of our union from the WA Branch.

Cookie is probably best known in more recent times as the long time leader of Tranby Aboriginal Cooperative College in Glebe in Sydney, but he had a long history as an Indigenous activist spanning many of the great pioneering struggles of the late 20th century including land rights, legal services and Indigenous education and training as the basis of Indigenous self-determination for which he had a great passion.

Cookie was one of the leaders of the NSW Builders Labourers’ Federation, along with Joe Owens, Jack Mundy and Bobby Pringle, at a time when it was at the cutting edge of innovation in trade union organising. They led many of the great social struggles of the 1970s and ‘80s that have shaped Australian society and the left since that time – the urban environmental movement, trade union democracy and workers’ control, support for the culture of the working class, the peace movement, the anti-uranium mining movement, women in non-traditional work and a host of other progressive and radical initiatives.

Cookie had a long association with the MUA and its leaders in the Waterside Workers’ Federation and the Seamen’s Union of Australia, particularly through the Reverend Alf Clint going back to Elliot V Elliot, Pat Geraghty and Jim Healy. A number of MUA leaders have served as directors on the Tranby College Board, including Taffy Sweetenson, Laurie Steen, Paddy Crumlin and Robert Coombes. Cookie had a close personal relationship with many MUA

officials, officers and members, and he loved the MUA, just as we loved him.

Cookie’s life story and his relationship with all the people, movements and causes he was associated with is contained in the book that Cookie and Heather Goodall wrote called *Making Change Happen*, published in 2013. The book contains interviews with MUA leaders and its production and launch was supported by the union. The book is essentially a manual for organising and networking for which there was no better participant and advocate than Cookie.

Cookie was a compassionate and much respected elder who attracted, encouraged and inspired so many people in his Indigenous and trade union work in Australia and in the international movement for self-determination and liberation of Indigenous people. He will greatly be missed by his family, his clan, his friends and all those whose life he has touched.

We will never forget you Cookie. We will miss you comrade. Rest in peace after a wonderful life of humanity and humility. The world is a better place for your presence. ✪



## Labor’s path to cruelty and harm

**Bill Shorten and Richard Marles’ support for turn-backs and ongoing commitment to detention camps on Manus and Nauru will further embed into our immigration system a culture of government-sanctioned harm to people seeking protection in our region.**

The plan to increase the number of people we take in to 27,000 over ten years is unacceptable.

Mr Shorten acknowledged that 60 million people have been forced out of their homes by war, conflict and persecution. If Australia wants to be taken seriously as a “good global citizen”, then we can and should do better when it comes to taking in people in need of protection.

“Independent oversight” of detention camps on Nauru and Manus will do nothing to improve the terrible and unsafe living conditions for people stuck in these centres of institutional abuse.

References to “resettlement” on Manus and Nauru are disingenuous – not one person has been settled on Manus so far and there are numerous instances of people settled on Nauru being physically and sexually assaulted.

The Asylum Seekers Resource Centre welcomes the financial commitment to support the UNHCR to improve conditions for people seeking asylum in our region – but this

commitment will be meaningless without giving people safe pathways to protection and an effective regional system for processing and settling people. This is what will ultimately stop people getting on boats.

We welcome the commitment to abolish TPVs and to restore references to the Refugee Convention in our migration laws, but Labor’s policy is a policy of half-measures that runs the risk of continuing to send Australia down a path of cruelty and harm to people seeking protection in our region.

The ASRC again calls on the Australian Labor Party to turn back to its values, reject turn backs, close offshore detention camps and commit to:

**Providing more people protection through our Humanitarian Program:** Immediately increasing our humanitarian intake to 27,000 places, with incremental increases each year recognising that Australia has a role to play in responding to the growing global refugee crisis.

**Helping to build a regional protection framework, supported by foreign aid:** Australia should contribute financial aid and expertise to an efficient, orderly processing regime in the region, working with the UNHCR and key transit countries such as Indonesia and



Malaysia. This should include clear timeframes for refugee assessments, with asylum seekers given access to housing and basic government services, including education and health, so they’re more likely to remain where they are while their claim is processed.

**Supporting regional intake increases:** Working with other countries to increase their humanitarian intake, including New Zealand,

Japan and Korea, so there is greater capacity throughout the region to resettle refugees.

**Undertaking diplomatic action to prevent human rights abuses:** Actively working for improvements in human rights conditions in the countries people are fleeing from. So, rather than unilateral action to prevent people movement, the focus is on preventing the persecution and abuses which prompt people to move.

**Eliminating human trafficking in our region:** Supporting mutual cooperation efforts to eliminate human trafficking in the region, particularly in Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. Alongside other measures, this will help to ensure refugees have safe passage options, certainty around refugee status assessment and safe living arrangements while they wait for their claim to be processed. ✪

# Israel's plan to loot Golan's oil

Paul Fallon

**The Afek oil and gas exploration company has almost completed its second drilling test in the Golan Heights, a part of Syria which Israel has occupied since 1967 and annexed in violation of international law.**

The test is part of a three-year program to see if hydrocarbons in the area could lead to oil or gas for Israel.

Israel is fuel-poor and its domestic energy woes could be eased in the interim if the government progresses on deals in relation to the Tamar and Leviathan gas fields in the Mediterranean Sea.

In addition, Israel is now taking advantage of the chaos in Syria to look for precious resources to extract from the occupied Golan Heights.

Israel relies heavily on imports to meet its energy consumption, and with frequent vicissitudes with its neighbours, its need for energy resources continues to shape the nature of its occupation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, as well as the Golan Heights.

With the Syrian government in disarray, Israeli authorities gave the go-ahead to Afek, a subsidiary of Genie Oil and Gas, to conduct drilling in 10 wells in the occupied Golan Heights in their search for fossil fuels.

According to Howard Jonas, chairman and CEO of Genie Energy Limited, the parent company of Genie Oil and Gas, the company's team of experts believes that what lies under the Golan Heights could make Israel energy independent and "contribute to the diversification of the free world's energy supply away from a crippling dependence on unfriendly sources" (see the Genie Energy annual report for 2014).

## "Kill them all"

Genie Oil and Gas has some high profile investors and advisors: Media baron Rupert Murdoch, former US Vice President Dick Cheney, American hedge fund manager Michael Steinhardt and British investment banker Jacob Rothschild are all members of the company's "Strategic Advisory Board."

Murdoch stated in 2013 that "Israel is the greatest ally of democracy in a region beset with turmoil and radicalism." This was an audacious statement given his investment in

a company breaking the basic tenets of international law.

The chairman of Genie Israel, Effie Eitam, who lives in the Golan Heights settlement of Nov, is a former military commander and member of the National Religious Party. He once referred to Palestinian citizens of Israel as a "ticking bomb" causing a "cancer" in Israel. He also told *The New Yorker* in 2004, that Palestinians were "creatures who came out of the depths of darkness" adding that "we will have to kill them all" before backpeddling slightly: "I know it's not very diplomatic. I don't mean all the Palestinians, but the ones with evil in their heads."

Afek claims on its website that Syria's occupied Golan Heights is part of the "State of Israel." The company was granted a petroleum exploration license by the northern regional planning and building committee, in direct violation of international law by completely ignoring the Annex to the Fourth Geneva Convention – which applies to the occupied territory.

In February, an Afek subsidiary started drilling its first exploratory well and drilled to a depth of 1,000 metres. The samples extracted are now undergoing analysis and drilling continues. In the event that the company finds oil, it will request the required licenses to begin the production stage.

There are grave breaches of international law as well as environmental concerns at play here. Firstly, the type of oil expected in the area may not be in liquid form and could require fracking – a process that involves injecting large amounts of scarce water and toxic chemicals into the ground in order to force the hydrocarbons to the surface.

Whether it is conventional oil or shale oil, fracking or drilling could lead to oil seepage into the underground water table, polluting Lake Tiberias – the biblical Sea of Galilee – potentially rendering local water supplies undrinkable and destroying the ecosystem for generations to come.

## Looting Syria's resources

The Golan plateau was occupied by Israel during the 1967 War. UN Security Council resolution 242 and several other resolutions since have called for Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territory and condemned Israel's actions there.



Oil drilling site on the Golan Heights.

**Murdoch stated in 2013 that "Israel is the greatest ally of democracy in a region beset with turmoil and radicalism."**

These have included: annexation and imposition of Israeli law in 1981, an action the UN Security Council declared "null and void." Israel has also transferred its own population into the area for the purpose of colonisation and the use of the territory's resources for its own economic interests.

The Golan's fertile land and water resources have been a strategic interest for Israel and now its energy potential may bring huge financial rewards.

Despite international criticism, Israel's inherently discriminatory and exploitative policies inside the Golan continue without sanction. Israeli ministers have voiced their desire to capitalise on the destabilisation of Syria as an excuse to cement Israel's illegal hold on the territory.

Whilst Israel continues to exploit the

natural resources of the territories it occupies, the international community continues to do nothing to enforce its decisions as the occupation of the Golan verges on reaching the 50-year milestone.

The Syrian government had planned to build a pipeline across the Middle East into Lebanon and the Mediterranean for the European markets. It had signed agreements with Iran and Iraq towards this end.

With Syrian oil reserves in decline and the country in chaos, the government has no capacity to challenge the current Israeli exploitation of the country's Golan resources.

It seems likely therefore that Israel will have a free hand to loot Syrian oil from the Golan, backed by the West.

*The Electronic Intifada* ✪

# Migrant dreams clash with European

David Hewitt

**Though less than 10 minutes on foot from the splendour of Madrid's Plaza Mayor or Puerta Del Sol, the working-class district of Lavapies feels a million miles away. While steadily emerging as the next 'hipster neighbourhood' of the Spanish capital, it is still clearly an immigrant barrio, home to large populations of South Americans, Bangladeshis and Senegalese.**

Mamadou Dia moved back to his native Senegal two years ago but visits Europe often. Lavapies is where he returns when he is in Spain, which, in 2006, took him in after he made the treacherous boat journey along the west coast of Africa in search of a better life. Rather than looking for work, these days Mamadou comes to Spain to raise awareness of what drives people to risk everything to make the increasingly dangerous trip from across Africa to Europe.

Through his book *3052: Pursuing a Dream*, a best-seller in Spain, and through regular media appearances, Mamadou works to counter widespread myths about migration from Africa to Europe. His NGO Hahatay works to dispel many of the

misconceptions his compatriots may have about what awaits them in Europe.

In between several talks that Mamadou is delivering at Madrid's universities, we meet in the Dakar Café in Lavapies, a popular meeting point for the Senegalese expat community.

You left Senegal for Europe in 2006. Why did you decide to leave your home, and was it a hard decision to make?

My family was never poor. We were what you would call middle-class, economically. We owned several boats and made a living from the sea, fishing, and we got enough from the sea to not just survive but to live a comfortable life.

At the end of the 1990s things started to change. European fishing boats arrived off the west coast of Africa. In most cases these boats had permits from our government allowing them to enter our waters. But many times, instead of using nets like this [spreads his arms shoulder-width] as they were supposed to, they used nets that were this wide [extends his arms to their full length]! Within a few years the waters we had been fishing had no fish and there was no way for us to make a living.

So, with 83 people, including two of my

brothers, we decided to take one of our boats and try and get to Europe. We believed we would be able to find jobs and work long enough to return and set ourselves up without having to be fishers. It was a hard choice. In Senegal, like most of Africa, we are very close to our families, our communities, so leaving was very painful. But what else could we do?

Was your journey as we would imagine a typical migrant journey from Africa to Europe to be?

Yes. Most of us, for sure, were used to being on the sea. But this journey was far longer than any of us were ever used to. I remember we left on 11 May and finally arrived on European land on May 18. The journey was not smooth and keeping a straight course on the ocean is not easy, so it took longer than we expected. But nobody died on our crossing.

But I have something to make clear. In Europe, they say every time, "they are taken by the mafia. People pay to be taken across the sea". For us, this was just not true. We were all fisherfolk with good backgrounds but all forced to take desperate measures after our livelihood was ruined at the end of the 1990s. Nobody trafficked us, we made the conscious

decision to work together to try and improve our futures.

When you arrived, how were you received in Spain?

At the beginning the Spanish people welcomed us! This may seem hard to believe these days, but you have to remember I arrived before the crisis hit Spain and the rest of Europe. They needed lots of workers to work on construction sites, right at the bottom of the work ladder. This was the kind of job native Spanish people don't want to do. "This is the kind of job for immigrants", they said. So they were happy for us to take the boats and come and live in misery here in Europe. What's more, the government even helped us. They would give us access to healthcare and even help us build a social life here in our new country.

Now they have the economic crisis. They say "this situation has happened because we have so many immigrants! Now it's time to keep them out!" We are blamed for everything that has gone bad, not just in Spain but in lots of other places. This means that life in Europe for immigrants has got much harder. When they needed us there were social programs and health initiatives. Now everything for immigrants has been cut. Before, we were

# Israel's wall to divide Christian community

Ryan Rocktick Beiler

The Israeli high court ruled last month that the military can begin construction on a segment of Israel's wall in the West Bank that will divide land belonging to the town of Beit Jala.

The news shocked residents who believed that a high court ruling in April this year blocked construction in that area while the army was ordered to find a less disruptive route.

If built as originally planned, the wall would have cut off the Cremisan Salesian monastery and convent from the rest of the Beit Jala community.

With this latest ruling, construction will proceed with only minor changes – still dividing the land while carving out a small enclave to keep the religious sites accessible.

## Battles

Residents have fought legal battles against construction of the wall on their land for nearly a decade. In 2011, local Catholic leaders began holding public vigils every Friday, garnering international diplomatic and media attention.

Appeals were made to Pope Francis during his trip to Bethlehem last year and during a visit to the Vatican by Bethlehem Mayor Vera Baboun last February.

According to the Society of St Yves, a Catholic centre for human rights that has represented the convent, the court's April ruling declared that the military's original route "greatly harms and violates the rights of both the local community and the monasteries."

The military was therefore ordered to put forward an alternative route that would reduce the damage to the local community and maintain its geographical integrity.

## Siding with military

The military's alternative route interpreted that ruling in the narrowest manner possible, maintaining access to the convent and monastery by carving out a small section around them, but still confiscating and dividing lands that are privately owned by Palestinian residents of Beit Jala.

"They [the military] claim that the previous supreme court order to stop building the

*Every day, tens of thousands of Palestinian workers lacking hard-to-get permits pass through the wall's remaining gaps.*



The West Bank town of Beit Jala.

wall months ago was not final and only prevented the army from coming near the property of the convents," said Raed Abed Rabbo of the Applied Research Institute Jerusalem, a Palestinian group which has been active in the struggle against the wall.

"We months ago reminded the authorities, the church and the municipality, after analysing the court order, that it is not final so don't be optimistic. Sooner or later they will start again," he added.

International media had also trumpeted the April decision as a triumph for Beit Jala's residents. Coming just days before Easter, it was particularly poignant news in the historically Christian village perched on the hill overlooking Bethlehem from the west.

The BBC quoted the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Fuad Twal, as saying at the time, "This is a victory for everyone."

After the army submitted its alternative route, an application for an injunction to prevent construction was filed by lawyers representing residents. In this month's ruling, the high court essentially sided with the military, giving the green light for construction to commence.

## Setback

Two thirds of the wall's planned route has been built. Gaps in the wall, like the one in Cremisan, debunk the Israeli claim that the wall has stopped suicide bombings.

Every day, tens of thousands of Palestinian workers lacking hard-to-get permits pass through the wall's remaining gaps, indicating that, as former Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens told the Israeli newspaper *Maariv*, "It's clear there is no connection between the wall and the cessation of attacks."

The International Court of Justice ruled in 2004 that the construction of the wall in the occupied West Bank is contrary to international law. Some 85 percent of the wall's path lies not on the internationally recognised boundary, or green line, with present-day Israel, but instead further divides land in the West Bank.

Father Ibrahim Shomali is a local Catholic priest who has led the weekly vigils. In Beit Jala, Shomali said, "the wall is being used to link the settlements of Gilo and Har Gilo, consolidating the Israeli annexation of our land."

These two settlements already occupy 872 acres of Beit Jala land, according to the Beit Jala Municipality. Covering the hilltops on either side of the monastery, like all settlements in East Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank, they too are considered illegal under international law.

With this latest setback, local activists are looking elsewhere for justice.

According to Beit Jala resident George Abu Eid, the high court's ruling "is not surprising at all for those who have been living under this brutal military regime for a very long time. Obviously, Israel will never halt its colonial projects in the West Bank until there's a real pressure and cost put on it."

Abu Eid explained that the Palestinian-led boycott, divestment and sanctions movement today "should be the only response to Israel's illegal policies. That's how you stop it, that's how you end its illegal military occupation of the Palestinians."

*The Electronic Intifada* ✪

# an reality

almost left alone so long as we worked hard and stayed out of trouble. Now, police harassment is very common.

This summer alone, hundreds of people have died trying to cross the Mediterranean to Europe. When you see the news, what do you think?

This is, of course, very sad. Tragic. And I always get asked: "is it worth the risk?" You have to remember that, although things are not as good as they used to be in Europe, at least there is hope. Europe doesn't have war! People are not dying of hunger!

In many parts of Africa, people are dying every single day, so why should they be afraid of crossing the water? Many are just not afraid to die, so however bad the economy gets in Europe, however much the authorities try to stop it, and however risky the journey might be, people will still try. Why would they be afraid of being caught and imprisoned? That is not such a scary thought for people who are escaping violence or poverty. Unless things change many miles away, Europe will carry on seeing African people attempt to enter Spain, or Italy; it's only a question of how they are treated when they arrive.

As I say through my NGO: "My brothers

will continue to be cut by the barbed wire of the border fences, will continue to be food for the sharks of the Atlantic and the vultures of the desert while we do not have our dignity."

Through your NGO, Hahatay, you work closely with people who are considering risking everything to travel to Europe. How does your own experience influence this work?

All I want is that, if people are going to risk their lives to get to Europe, they at least have a good idea of what life is really like here. I have lived in both Africa and Europe and I know for a fact that the media in both places paints an inaccurate picture of the other. In Europe, people read nothing but bad news about Africa or see nothing but pictures and films of poverty, hunger and war, when in many places this is not the case. In the same way, the young people in Senegal and many other places grow up believing Europe to be some golden land. Again, this is not the case.

I came to Spain thinking everyone was happy, with their own good job, house and car. After all, in our schools we are taught all about how wonderful France and the rest of Europe is. We are taught the language and shown pictures of happy people, grand buildings and monuments and lives of comfort.

Then I come here; I learn there is so much stress. What I saw in Spain is that few people have real freedom. Many are trapped by the system. They need to work to pay for their car, and their home is really owned by big banks. And, while in Africa it's true that people die from violence and disease, in Europe, stress and suicide is much higher.

So, I'm not trying to tell people they shouldn't travel to Europe, but only make sure that they have an accurate idea of where they are going and what is waiting for them. I want to show that instead of travelling thousands of miles away from home maybe it would be better to stay and work to improve things. In Senegal we have peace, good infrastructure and, increasingly, good broadband internet, so there are more and more opportunities here.

Now you're back in Senegal, what brings you back to Spain so regularly?

I have seen how inaccurate our views of different cultures and places are. So, I like to work with Senegalese to show them that what they think about Europe isn't always true. I want to encourage dialogue with the Spanish and counter the negative way many Africans, both migrants and the ones who stay, are shown in the popular media. I read from my

book and try and explain what drives people to leave their homes in search of a better life, and I try my best to show that. Just like the fish I used to catch, the developed world has been taking, taking, taking from Africa for many decades. So is it really so surprising many people migrate to try and support themselves and their families?

Also, through Hahatay, we welcome Spanish students and workers to our part of Senegal so that they can see that what they watch on the TV or read in their newspapers is not the reality. We can show that, if there is peace and stability and we have the chance to make a living here without people coming and taking our resources or our fish, very few people would try to migrate to Europe.

It's a very Occidental mind-set that we're all migrating as we want to make more money or get free benefits. Community is so important to most Africans (I can't even eat on my own!) and so it's simply desperation that forces people to take that giant, dangerous step. Hopefully by going around the big media and bringing Europeans and Africans together in person, we can encourage more understanding and, hopefully, more empathy and compassion.

*New Internationalist* ✪

# 60,000 call for justice for Tamir Rice

Rick Nagin

**CLEVELAND:** In an unprecedented action, the Tamir Rice Justice Committee and allied groups delivered petitions with nearly 60,000 signatures to the office of Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Timothy McGinty on July 23, demanding that he charge the Cleveland police officers responsible for the shooting death of the 12-year-old black child last November.

Before delivering the petitions, approximately 150 supporters marched several blocks from a park next to Cleveland City Hall with signs and banners demanding “Justice for Tamir” and chanting, “What do we want – justice! When do we want it – now!”

“We’re here eight months later and there’s still no justice,” LaTonya Goldsby, Tamir’s cousin and the committee’s coordinator, told a rally and press conference on the steps of the Cleveland Justice Centre before entering the building with a delegation to deliver the box of petitions.

Standing with Eugene Rice, Tamir’s grandfather, Goldsby said the family was suffering greatly because of her cousin’s death and the fact that no action has been taken to prosecute the police involved.

The delegation to McGinty’s office also included Mark Milko, a member of the Executive Committee of the North Shore AFL-CIO Federation of Labour and president of Workers United Local 10. Milko told the rally that organised labour is mobilising in response to the repeated incidents of deadly force used by white police against unarmed African Americans, and is urging unions to

get active in the Black Lives Matter movement.

“These are cases involving members of police unions and victims who are members of union families,” Milko said, adding that national AFL-CIO leaders plan to hold meetings in Cleveland in the near future on the issue of racial and economic justice.

Community frustration over inaction in the Tamir Rice case increased last month when Cleveland Municipal Court Judge Ronald Adrine ruled that there was probable cause to charge the officers with murder, manslaughter and other crimes, but declined to issue arrest warrants and, instead, referred the matter to McGinty. McGinty already had the report of the incident issued by the county sheriff, after a prolonged investigation. McGinty said he would conduct his own additional investigation, which, he said, could take months, before turning the matter over to a grand jury.

Joe Frolik, a spokesman for McGinty, who received the petitions, said the prosecutor was aware the case is “important to many people in the community,” and reiterated that the investigation is ongoing and the case would be presented to the grand jury.

Accompanying the petitions was a letter from the committee together with the names of 110 well known public officials, clergy, labour leaders, cultural figures, community activists and business people sponsoring the effort.

Angela Woodson, one of the sponsors as well as a co-convenor of the committee, read the letter at the rally. It called the shooting “a premeditated, summary execution” and said, “The principle must be firmly



Tomiko Shine holds up a picture of Tamir Rice, the 12 year old boy fatally shot by a rookie police officer.

established that police who use deadly force when other options are available must defend their actions in court. Otherwise police will have ... a power characteristic of police states .... Our community deserves its day in court. Otherwise, there is no doubt that tragedies like this will continue to happen.”

She called delivery of the petitions “historic,” saying that no county prosecutor had ever been given a petition of this magnitude.

The shooting was recorded on a park surveillance video that has been broadcast worldwide by television news and online media. It shows that the 12-year-old Tamir had been walking in the park outside Cudell Recreation Centre in his neighbourhood waving what turned out

to be a toy gun. He sat down alone in a picnic pavilion and suddenly a police squad car drove up a few feet away. Rookie officer Timothy Loehmann, who had previously lost his job in a suburban police department on grounds of emotional instability, jumped from the vehicle, gun in hand, and less than one second later shot the child in the stomach. Neither he nor his partner, Frank Garback, the driver, offered Tamir first aid, but instead occupied themselves with tackling Tamir’s 14-year-old sister, Tajai, who had rushed from the recreation centre to reach her stricken brother. The officers handcuffed her face down in the snow and forced her into the squad car and then restrained Tamir’s mother, Samaria. Eventually an EMS ambulance arrived and took

Tamir to the county hospital where he died nine hours later.

*New York Times* columnist Charles Blow commented on January 11 that the video exposed “an unconscionable level of human depravity” by the police. Blow concluded: “In the demand for justice, timorousness must be the enemy, tirelessness must be the motto and righteousness must be the compass. The world must be made to acknowledge that Tamir Rice’s life mattered.”

Woodson said she hoped McGinty would respond to the committee’s call for action within a month. “If he doesn’t,” she added, “we will take this to a higher level.” **The petition drive continues and can be accessed at [change.org](http://change.org).** *People’s World* ☺

## Sandra Bland’s offence “driving while black”

Jesse Jackson

**On July 9, Sandra Bland drove to Prairie View, Texas from Chicago, eager for a job interview at Prairie View A&M, the historically black college that was her alma mater. The 28-year-old woman, described as smart and generous, had expressed solidarity with BlackLivesMatter and the growing movement against mass incarceration and racially biased policing. Then she took a big risk: she was driving while black. Four days later, she was found dead in a county jail cell.**

She was pulled over on July 10 by a white police officer, officially for failing to signal a lane change. She asked why he had pulled her over. He told her to put out her cigarette.

When she questioned why, he demanded she get out of the car, threatened her with a stun gun, reached in to pull her out of the car and handcuffed her, pushing her down to the ground when she resisted and complained. She was driven to the county jail in Hempstead, a jail run by Sheriff R Glenn Smith.

A decade ago, the *New York*

*Times* reports, Smith was sued by the only full-time black officer on the force for dismissing him after he complained about his supervisor’s racial slurs. He was suspended in 2007 for pushing a black man he said had spit on him. He was fired in 2008 after complaints about intrusive searches of African Americans in public. He was elected sheriff months later.

Pulled over for not signalling a lane change, Bland was charged with a felony for assaulting a police officer and hit with a \$5,000 bond. She spent three days in jail, finally arranging the money needed for a bondsman. She was found dead in her cell. Her death was ruled a suicide, a finding that her family disputes. How could a young woman, excited by the prospect of a new job, finally arranging to get out of that cell, choose to hang herself?

Waller County, an hour out of Houston, has an infamous history of racism. The *Times* reports on a study by the Equal Justice Initiative that found blacks were lynched after Reconstruction more frequently than in almost any other county in the state.

No official is defending the

trooper’s behaviour when he pulled Sandra Bland over. He has been placed on administrative leave with pay while an inquiry goes forth. The Hempstead mayor says he was “very, very upset” with what he saw on the videotape of the incident that was captured by a camera in the trooper’s car.

US Attorney General Loretta E Lynch noted that Sandra Bland’s death highlights the fears of African Americans when they come into contact with the police. “Many minority communities,” she said, “for so long have felt that law enforcement was coming in to essentially enforce laws against them, not to protect them.”

Over 300,000 have signed a national petition calling on an independent Justice Department investigation of Sandra Bland’s death.

The fears Lynch alluded to are well founded. Sandra Bland’s is only the latest death. Across the country, more than two dozen others have died in police custody this year. As of July 26, police have killed, according to the UK *Guardian*, 657 people this year in the US. Nearly six of 10 (58 percent) were people of colour.



As William Boardman notes, US police killed 59 people in the first 24 days of 2015, compared to the police of England and Wales, who killed 55 people in the last 24 years. Texas trails only California for the number of police killings.

We don’t simply need new cameras on police; we need a fundamental change of culture. Police forces should look like the communities they patrol. Police officers should live in those communities. Training must not only instruct police in the use of firearms, but in the mores of the community. And

police cannot be put in the position of an occupying force in desperately impoverished neighbourhoods with massive unemployment and little hope.

Sandra Bland changed lanes without signalling. But that wasn’t her crime. Her crime was driving while black. The institutionalised prejudices and distorted practices that led to her death are unacceptable in a nation of equal justice under the law. Unacceptable and unaccepted.

*People’s World* ☺



# Greece – and the horror of Europe

Peter Koenig

**Hellas, Greece: According to the UNHCR about 50 million refugees are on the move every day on our globe. This is most likely an understatement, as this figure doesn't take into account what takes place in the almost hermetically closed-off Central Africa, Congo, Zaïre, where western corporations are exploiting for a pittance and with millions of slaves, precious metals, uranium, hydrocarbons and rare earths – and where millions have died over the past ten years, by butcher regimes supported and armed by the west – and where millions are on the run.**

The real figure of refugees on the run is easily 60 to 65 million; forced migrants in temporary camps, in transit to nowhere and under the most horrible human and abject hygienic conditions, no running water, hardly any medical attention, sparse food if any. At least a quarter of them originate in the Middle East.

And most, if not all of these tens of millions, are fleeing countries destroyed directly or by proxy by the US empire and its European vassals. They try to escape as their homes have been burned to the ground, their families in many cases decimated. They are under constant threat of being bombed, by the ISIS and sorts, all fully funded by Washington, the EU, Turkey, the Saudis, Qatar – and militarily supported and trained by the CIA, Pentagon and NATO. This is not new. It has been known for years. But known to whom? The truth does still not penetrate the brain of most people. – Why? – Because the west is totally brainwashed with lies and distortions by its own corporate pressstitute media.

I fully subscribe to Andre Vltchek's plea to the world – we must demand that at least public places like airports, railway stations, hotel lobbies switch channels from the bought rightwing, CNNs and BBCs of this world – to TeleSUR, CCTV, PressTV, RT and other emerging truth news channels. People must wake up. A growth swell of truth must engulf our western society – if we have any chance to be salvaged from ourselves.

When people are confused and ask in desperation – how to stop this flow of refugees? – The answer is simple: stop the wars and conflicts, stop NATO; and for those who are NATO members like Greece and Turkey – quit NATO! – Stop the eternal war machine; stop the western business of killing – launch truth news against the propaganda lies, destroy them economically...

Yes you can! – boycott western

economies. Join the peaceful eastern economies – the alliances of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation), consisting of Russia, China and most of the Central Asian States, as well as the EEU (Eurasian Economic Union) with their new financial development institutions, the AIIB (the new Chinese-funded Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank), as well as the NDB (the BRICS' New Development Bank).

Today TeleSUR reports that Javier Couso, a member of the European Parliament from the Spanish United Left, was threatened with death for admonishing the EU for slandering Venezuela, for defending the truth about Venezuela! At the same time it is reported that Greece's PM Tsipras, traitor not only of the Greek people, but of all Europeans who strive to be free, is poised to sell the elite of the so-called "creditors" – the troika – 1,200 of the Greek islands, as a fraction for paying off illegal debt! Yes, totally illegal, as all contracts concluded under duress and corruption, as is the case with almost all of Greece's debt – are void, null, illegal; and would be declared as such by any *just* international Court of Justice – if there is still something left like a *just* court of justice – that has not been corrupted by the west, or worse, whose judges are not yet coerced and threatened with their life if they deviate from the western norms and wants, irrespective of whether the law would stand behind them.

People, please wake up. Stop these crimes. NOW. How? By taking to the streets, by disobedience, by unlimited strikes, by staying home instead of going to work, by no more travelling, flying, no more consuming. Do whatever it takes to suffocate this killing system.

Greece is perhaps number one in receiving involuntary migrants, so called paperless refugees. At best (or worst) Greece and Italy compete for number one.

Greece and the refugees – most of them come from Turkey; many through Bodrum to the Greek Islands of Kos, Lesbos and Samos. Turkey is a hub – a sad hub – for about two million refugees, most of them, from Syria. Turkey has spent about US\$6 billion for building and maintaining refugee camps. But, at the same time Turkey is in full connivance with Washington and the Saudis in funding the Jihadists, ISIS and whatever other pseudonyms they are given – to destroy Syria – to cause the flood of misery. Turkey is a shame.

Kos island hosts some 500-700 paperless migrants, in transit – in



Immigrants wait outside a police station to receive temporary traveling papers at Kos island, Greece, May 27, 2015.

transit to where? Some to Athens to refugee camps, some dream of going to Germany, France, Italy – they have no clue how unwelcome they are in those countries that helped destroy their homelands. In Kos, some 500 refugees from Syria, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Sudan – live in an abandoned hotel, "Captain Elias".

It is the epitome of misery; lack of hygiene, food, medical services – some volunteers come three times a week to help them clean the place, distribute food – a medical doctor shows up maybe once a week. The Greeks do what they can with their strangled economy.

Yesterday morning a little Iraqi boy of three years, let's call him Tariq, was found in a park in Kos, with his father. The boy has cancer – what doctors diagnose may be "terminal". With the help of volunteer Georgia, the boy was immediately delivered to the only local public hospital, where adequate treatment for his case could not be obtained.

If there is the slightest chance to save him, he will be airlifted to a northern European city, where all will be done to save him. Georgia and her friend Hara are accompanying this boy with all their heart and attention. May this be a sign of solidarity – a cry to open the eyes of Europe, that there is more to our human civilisation than war, greed and destruction. There is a little human life to be saved – a symbol of our own fragile lives.

Information Clearing House ✪



## Region Briefs

Vietnam's President Sang Tan Truong called on the nation to accelerate development and become an industrialised nation through pushing comprehensive reform and innovation. He expressed the view in an article prepared for the 12th National Party Congress. The president said that the 30 year on-going reform had successfully converted the country from a central-planned and subsidy-based economy to a socialist-orientated market one. He continued, the reform had gradually industrialised and modernised Vietnam, making its people more wealthy and society more just. The Communist Party of Vietnam's upcoming 12th Congress would be significant, pushing reforms, promoting national defence, and maintaining a peaceful and stable environment for national development.

The Japanese Communist Party (JCP) recently celebrated its 93rd founding anniversary at the JCP headquarters. JCP Chair Shii Kazuo delivered a speech at the celebration, calling for abolishing Prime Minister Abe Shinzo's unconstitutional war bills and getting rid of the Abe government. JCP delegates crowded the main hall and a sub-hall to attend the celebration. It was broadcast online and was viewed 22,722 times on the day; 674 local JCP committees across Japan also gathered members to watch the event.

The 4th National Conference of War Veterans was held in Pyongyang, the capital of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The conference was held two days ahead the 62nd anniversary of the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement that shattered the US's invasion in the DPRK. The country's leader Kim Jong Un said that "I extend noble respect to the martyrs of the Korean People's Army (KPA) and the Chinese People's Volunteer Army (CPVA) who sacrificed their lives for "the freedom and independence of the Korean people and peace in East Asia". Tens of thousands CPVA soldiers died with their KPA comrades in the fighting against the US and its allies, including Australia.

China's vice Premier Wang Yang urged strong measures to be taken for alleviating poverty, ensuring no area and no people were left behind. He said that the central government would evaluate local governments' work on poverty relief. He also said that the country would increase investment in infrastructure building and public services in impoverished areas and help poor people to find jobs or start a business. According to China's National Bureau of Statistics, there were 70.17 million impoverished people in the countryside in 2014, which was a decrease of 12.32 million compared to 2013.

### The Vietnam of Friendship Organizations (VUFO) & The Cuban Institute of Friendship With The People (ICAP)

#### VII Asia-Pacific Regional Conference of Solidarity with Cuba

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam will be the venue of the VII Asia-Pacific Regional Conference of Solidarity with Cuba from September 8th to 9th, 2015, in the capital city of Hanoi. Its celebration constitutes another action aimed at strengthening the friendship and solidarity among our respective nations.

The event will take place in the year of the 55th anniversary of the creation of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples and the 70th anniversary of the Proclamation of Vietnam Independence. Undoubtedly, the Conference will be a further example of the excellent and fraternal relations between Cuba and Vietnam.

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



email: tpearson@cpa.org.au

## A rename

Wouldn't the name Reclaim Australia be a more appropriate name for an Aboriginal movement, rather than a group of later arrivals to this country who think that immigration should have ceased just after they or their forebears came here?

Steven Katsineris,  
Vic

## Whose democracy?

The US Committee on Appropriations approved a program worth

US\$30 million to promote democracy and strengthen civil society in Cuba. At least US\$8 million of the amount will be allocated for NED, a report from the committee said.

The NED (the National Endowment for Democracy) is a fund that the US uses to undermine left-wing and socialist governments and support opposition groups by supposedly promoting "democracy."

"The Committee directs that funds shall only be used for programs and activities pursuant to section 109(a) of the Cuban Liberty and Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 and section 1705 of the Cuban Democracy Act (CDA) of 1992, and shall not be used for business promotion, economic reform, entrepreneurship or any other assistance that is not democracy-building," the report states.

The committee also stipulated that any locally awarded grants of over US\$1 million should be to groups in Cuba that have "experience promoting democracy" there.

If the project for 2016 funding

is approved by congress, it will be in addition to US\$20 million already assigned for this year.

The measure comes as the US said that it wanted to "normalise" relations with Cuba, and of course the two countries have since held a number of talks. Last month the US removed Cuba from its list of so-called terrorist countries, but it has not yet put an end to its decades-long economic blockade on the island.

Further, the Appropriations Committee also did not approve funding for opening a US embassy in Cuba.

T Southern  
Brisbane

## A Tweet

After two interesting train trips last night now on Collins Street to Southern Cross to the train to Geelong to visit S Henderson MP.

Malcolm Turnbull  
Communications Minister

Sydney

Invitation

Sunday August 9

4:00 pm

Come along for a BBQ (Kondosoufli) at the Greek Cultural Association Hut, 142 Addison Rd Marrickville.

Delicious food and drinks.

5.30 pm

Following the BBQ, enjoy the screening of the Concert at Petra Theatre, Athens to honour Mikis Theodorakis on his 90th birthday. See Mikis making his speech and accepting a bouquet. Experience the music that made Mikis Theodorakis the most famous Greek composer of all time. Join in the singing – words will be provided.



# Culture & Life

by  
Rob Gowland

## For Southern rights, hurrah?

The recent racist attacks in the USA's South have focused attention on the promotion of racist symbols and "traditions" linked to America's racist, slave-owning past (like the flying of the Confederate flag over the State capital of Alabama). Slave labour had been the basis of the economies of all the colonial empires, whether British, French, Portuguese, Spanish or Dutch.

When Britain's American colonies revolted and declared their independence in 1776, they no longer received slave labour from Britain, in the form of white convicts, but they did continue to receive slaves trafficked from Africa by British slave-traders.

Capitalism had been establishing itself in Europe in the previous century, especially in Britain, supported by the developing industrial revolution. The ruling class in the northern part of the newly independent USA was also striving to establish an economy based on industry and the investment of capital. They were held back however by the fierce determination of the southern part of the country to adhere to a rural economy based on slave labour.

The northern capitalists needed to build up their available workforce, but slavery (which existed in parts of the North as well as the South) withheld large segments of the workforce from the labour market, thus driving up the cost of labour in the north. There was also a powerful moral argument gaining ground against the use of slaves. Capitalists who thought nothing of ruthlessly exploiting the labour of women or children, could take the moral high ground on the question of slave labour.

Over the century and a half since the American Civil War, a great many myths were allowed to develop about it, helped in no small measure by the many Hollywood films extolling the virtues and romanticism of a gallant, united South valiantly fighting for a lost cause.

In the South of the USA, that cause has been assiduously presented as being not slavery, but "states' rights". True, Lincoln did not proclaim the abolition of slavery until the war had been raging for two years, but the crushing of the slave economy of the Confederacy was always the more industrialised Union's goal. It was as essential to the continued development of capitalism in the USA as the expansion of the country to the west and the dispossession of the indigenous population.

As for the myth that the South was united in the defence of its "rights" (principally its "right" to use slave labour and to buy and sell human beings for that purpose), that has been debunked by numerous writers, most recently William C. Anderson writing in *Truthout*. Anderson's article *Confederate Deserters: The Rebels You Rarely Hear About*, dealt with Southerners who chose not to fight for "Southern rights".

"The official interpretations of Southern history – the ones that are generally passed along to schoolchildren – have flooded the media in the weeks following the Charleston massacre, without much nuance. ... The rebel states' list of causes for immediate secession, Alexander H Stephens' 'Cornerstone Speech,' and the words of Jefferson Davis confirm that the Confederate Army's primary role was the defence of slavery. Engraved in that defence

was white supremacy in its purest forms: an agitator, enslaver and destroyer of all things not white.

"In addition to glossing over the blatant and destructive white supremacy that governed the Confederacy, official histories disappear, examples of internal resistance. There were some Confederate soldiers who thought differently than their leadership. ... One of the most famous instances of defector resistance within the Confederate Army was the 'Free State of Jones' within Mississippi. Years into the conflict that divided the nation, many people in Mississippi were opposed to the war. Arguably the most famous was a farmer by the name of Newton Knight, who lived in Jones County. ... He led a guerrilla unit known as the 'Knight Company,' which actively fought against the Confederacy.

"As one can imagine, the presence of a secession within a secession was not the united front the Confederacy wanted for its image. They worked effectively to stamp out Knight's Jones rebellion via Colonel Robert Lowry, whose troops and bloodhounds ran Knight's men out of the swamps without ever actually catching Knight himself.

"Next door to Mississippi, in the 'Heart of Dixie,' the 'Republic of Winston' also rose up in opposition. ... By the war's end, Winston had provided twice as many soldiers to the Union as it did to the Confederacy." West Virginia's citizens also refused to join the Confederacy, successfully seceded from the rest of Virginia, and became a separate state. Many Union soldiers came from there.

It was not only in the South that slavery had

its defenders, however. In fact a case can be made that defence of slavery was a significant part of why the white colonialists rebelled in 1776 against England: they viewed Africans as property and England sought to tax them for every slave they had.

For all the post-Civil War myths of the Confederacy as a place of honour, the reality is that support for Lincoln and the Union was ruthlessly suppressed there through what was effectively state-sponsored terrorism. "The Confederate Home Guard functioned like the Gestapo, summarily executing dissidents and deserters, torturing and murdering their family members to disclose their whereabouts, manning the polling stations to prevent pro-union votes. Half a million white southerners – one in eight – eventually fled the police state that was the Southern Confederacy."

In time, two-thirds of the rebel army would desert, compared with one third of all US soldiers. Reconstruction (much-maligned by Southern apologists) was a very ambitious project by abolitionists and Radical Republicans and Unionists in Congress and from around the North to bring the freed people into the fabric of the nation. The British by contrast never did a thing for the West Indian blacks but recompensed their white masters most handsomely.

What undermined Reconstruction (and so much after) was the ferocious intransigence of the Southern whites and their "Lost Cause" ideology that wore the Northerner whites down after a dozen years. The white Southern Lost Cause may only now be facing complete discrediting and defeat. ☘



# Movie Review by Blake Deppe

## Ant-Man

Marvel has started the summer in typical superhero fashion, introducing the latest instalment in its rapidly expanding universe. *Ant-Man*, based on the 1960s character who exists in the same world as the Avengers, sees the film studio trying more of a minimalist, stand-alone story on for size, with mixed results. While you won't quite need a magnifying glass to catch all of the movie's good points, it is riddled with narrative misfires and, overall, leaves something to be desired. At the very least, it calls into dispute the old adage that "less is more."

Genre-wise, *Ant-Man* is equal parts action, heist, and comedy, and is refreshingly free of decimated cities and apocalyptic threats. True to its name, it's a smaller and more character-driven affair, and the most family-oriented that Marvel has done so far, to boot. The story features main character Scott Lang (Paul Rudd), who agrees to do one last heist to redeem himself for his past crimes and to earn the right to reunite with his estranged daughter.

That heist involves taking a dangerous "Yellowjacket" combat suit from corporate enemy Darren Cross (Corey Stoll) before its ability to shrink a human being can be used to fundamentally shift the paradigm for military combat and the world – for the worse, according to Lang's employer, Hank Pym (Michael Douglas).

Pym, the original Ant-Man, is trying to make his own amends, after Cross shut him out of his own company and stole the very technology he invented to build the Yellowjacket suit. With the help of his daughter Hope (Evangeline Lilly), Pym trains Lang to become the new

Ant-Man and use the shrinking technology to stop Cross. What follows is a humour-tinged caper involving CGI-achieved fights on toy train sets, on the tops of gun barrels, and other places where only ant-sized characters can go.

These action pieces are innovative, but – I think – fall short of their full potential. It's unfortunate that the imagination here was the smallest facet of all, because so much more could have been done with this concept. And while our hero riding on the back of a flying ant, leading an army of insects into battle, is riotously cool, it only scratches the surface, cinematographically speaking, of what could have been achieved.

The narrative weaknesses don't help matters. Because *Ant-Man*'s plot, which grapples with corporate subterfuge and weapons/technology being used for the wrong purposes, while sociopolitically poignant, positively reeks of repetition. In fact, we've seen this exact same story outline before, in the first *Iron Man* film, and sadly, the lackluster supporting cast of this film does not match up with that of its predecessor. Aside from Rudd and Douglas, the other actors aren't working much chemistry or doing much to tether the character-driven elements (which the film so desperately wants to pull off) to the action.

The humour is hit or miss – the latter more often than the former. To its credit, *Ant-Man* does its utmost to be as light-hearted as this sort of story should be, and as self-deprecating as it ought to be in consideration for the audience's waning suspension of disbelief. But more often than not, its offbeat jokes land with all the efficacy of a shredded paper airplane.

Ultimately, the movie fits the



definition of a popcorn flick, taking viewers on an amusing ride and wrapping everything up in, more or less, a neat little bow at the end. And of course, it's a Marvel film, so there are little tidbits here or there for us comic fans, including a cameo by Avengers character the Falcon and a mid-credits scene that's supposed to get us all geared up for the sequel. Furthermore, a post-credits scene teases the upcoming *Captain America: Civil War* that we'll see next year.

But those offerings are arguably more exciting than the rest of the film. Fun but forgettable, *Ant-Man* makes us feel like we're just watching filler until Marvel brings out the big guns next summer. **People's World** Worth Watching will return next week.

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All classes 5:30 pm  
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Enquiries: Hannah 0418 668 098

Sydney

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IN THE PUB

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;

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# Hiroshima Day

## Historical struggle for peace

Even as WW2 ended in 1945 the then President of the US, Harry Truman declared, "Victory has placed upon the American people the continuing burden of responsibility for world leadership." The aim of establishing world domination and subjugating all other countries is the chief motive of the policies of successive American Presidents whether Republican or Democrat.

At the final conference of WW2 allied powers held at Potsdam near Berlin, President Truman laid the threat of the atomic bomb on the table in an attempt to browbeat and threaten the Soviet Union.

The US at the time had a monopoly of nuclear weapons but its attempt to intimidate the Soviet Union failed. Shortly after the end of the war, Winston Churchill delivered a sabre-rattling speech at Fulton in the US in which he declared that an "iron curtain" had descended over Europe. He called upon the US to use its A-bomb monopoly to drop nuclear weapons on the cities of the Soviet Union. This was the start of the Cold War.

The next step was the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) which had the avowed aim of waging the struggle to destroy communism and socialism, just as Hitler had attempted, but failed to do.

NATO brought together the leading capitalist states of Europe plus the US and Canada. As the principal capitalist power, the US began to establish military bases around the world. Today, the US commands a

and prevent them from enmeshing the people in a web of lies..." Peace organisations grew in every country of the world demanding an end to nuclear weapon testing and the scrapping of all nuclear weapons. Five hundred million people signed the "Stockholm Appeal" in the 1950s demanding an end to A-bomb tests.

The Soviet Union, China and many other countries also supported these calls and never missed an opportunity to call for disarmament and negotiations to settle international differences. Demonstrations were held around the world. As the nuclear clock moved closer and closer to midnight the demonstrations grew in size. America's aggressive wars in Korea and Vietnam also brought forward intense opposition.

But the arms drive was not halted, even though some treaties were entered into limiting weapons and banning nuclear tests in the atmosphere and underground. It was these treaties that the Bush administration in the US systematically tore up.

Then in the 1990s, came the catastrophic dismantling of the Soviet Union that had been the main barrier to NATO's war plans. The Warsaw Pact was dismantled too and the socialist peace governments of Eastern Europe were overthrown and replaced with governments that have become puppets of the US and NATO.

Not only did this open the door to the present savage attacks on the working people and the trade union movements of all countries, it also freed the hands of the war-



for an aggression against China, the US is continuing its relentless drive for world domination which was launched when it dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

The US hopes that by using its technological advantage it will be able to threaten every nation with nuclear destruction while preserving its own territory intact. President Truman put the first nuclear weapon on the table in 1945 at Potsdam to force the Soviet Union to accept US world domination. Today, by proceeding with its National Missile Defence (NMD) the US again hopes to force China, Russia and all other countries to bend the knee to American dictatorship.

When demonstrators today commemorate the American bombing of Hiroshima in August 1945 and say: "Hiroshima, never again", they are continuing the long struggle to bring peace to the world.

It is a call to end the senseless arms race and respect the right of all countries to independence and sovereignty and the right of all people to choose whatever social and economic system they prefer. The first atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima incinerated 140,000 men, women and children. Three days later another 74,000 were incinerated in Nagasaki by a second atomic bomb.

If the plans of the madmen who at present rule some countries have their way the incineration of the whole of humanity is possible. The Abbott government is pulling Australia into the American plans, making Australian territory available for whatever use the US leaders require.

Their plans guarantee that Australia would become a nuclear target in the event of a wider war. They also make Australia an enemy of all Asian countries – a course for which Australia will pay a heavy price in the future. ✪

**As the nuclear clock moved closer and closer to midnight the demonstrations grew in size.**

network of bases in many countries including Australia, together with satellites, listening posts and other facilities that it uses to pursue world domination.

But the aims of the US were understood and resisted by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. In 1952, the then leadership of the Soviet Union stated: "Today, American imperialism is acting not only as an aggressor, but also as the world gendarme, striving to strangle freedom wherever it can ...".

The statement continued, "The task now is to enhance the activity of the popular masses, to strengthen the organisations of the peace supporters, to expose the warmongers

and the arms manufacturers. This was the background to the war against Iraq and the savage war against Yugoslavia and the military occupation of the Balkans.

NATO has steadily moved closer to the former borders of the Soviet Union drawing east European countries into its aggressive web. A de facto Pacific NATO has been formed, drawing in Japan, South Korea and Australia as principal participants together with the US as the bandmaster in the US "Asian pivot". Its target is China although sweet words are being mouthed to try and enmesh people in a web of lies.

By tearing up previously negotiated treaties and launching its plans

**70 YEARS**  
70th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki



### Adelaide

Thursday August 6  
5:00pm - 7:00pm  
Northern end of Victoria Square – Tarnanyangga  
Contact: Petra Ball at [pbball@redcross.org.au](mailto:pbball@redcross.org.au) or phone 08 81004695  
Electronic candles, lanterns & peace messaging materials supplied.

### Perth

Thursday August 6  
6:45pm - 7:30pm  
Reflection Pond, 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.  
Contact Renata Sivacolundhu at [rsivacolundhu@redcross.org.au](mailto:rsivacolundhu@redcross.org.au)

### Sydney

Thursday August 6  
Candlelight procession: 6:00pm cnr Elizabeth and Park Streets, City.  
Public meeting: 7pm Heritage Room, 33 Mary Street, Surry Hills.  
Speakers: Dr Marty Branagan (Lecturer in Peace Studies, University of New England); Gary Zadkovich (Acting President, NSW Teachers Federation).  
Readings: Rebecca Gilling. Cultural items: Japanese drummers and dancers and the Trade Union Choir. Mr Koichi Tsuchida, the Political Consul from the Japanese Consulate General in Sydney, has accepted an invitation to attend the meeting.



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