



Supermarket monopoly and farm ruin

Bob Briton

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has launched legal action against Coles alleging unconscionable conduct in dealings with five suppliers. For a long time, the ACCC wouldn't hear a word against supermarket giants Coles and Woolworths as they flexed their monopoly muscle in the grocery market. Over the past 12 months, however, the Commission has felt compelled to act on six occasions when the retailers' actions simply couldn't be defended any longer.

The ACCC took action against Coles, Woolworths and three other retailers for using a subscription-only website to set petrol prices. It had previously forced Coles to apologise to customers for misleading them that frozen pre-baked bread from Ireland was "baked fresh" in their stores. It got Coles to admit that farm gate milk prices had actually fallen following the introduction of its \$1 a litre milk while claiming prices to producers had risen. And last December the Commission took action again to prevent excessive fuel discounts, limiting supermarket discount vouchers to 4¢ a litre.

The latest action involves Coles pursuit of "perfect profit days" during which suppliers were pressured to pay for the cost of wastage and markdowns in stores, even when the suppliers had no control over the process. Profits for Oates cleaning products fell short of expectations by \$326,590 in 2011 and Coles insisted the supplier make up the gap. The supplier resisted but then offered a lower payment of \$246,000 to be paid over six weeks. Coles deducted the full amount straight away. Oates objected and Coles agreed to repay it "from time to time". Coles then asked Oates to pay an ongoing rebate but the supplier refused. Coles then said the decision concerning the rebate might adversely affect the cleaning company's supply. Oates agreed to pay \$365,200 in monthly instalments – \$70,000 worth of rebate and \$295,200 for the profit gap.

The federal government is loathe to intervene in this or any other monopoly controlled market. In fact, the draft of the Harper Review on competition policy points to even



South Australian farmers protest against low milk prices.

greater domination. Trading hours would be totally deregulated and restrictions preventing the sale of liquor from supermarkets would be scrapped if the draft report's recommendations are embraced. Supermarkets would be able to sell medications as pharmacy ownership and location rules are removed.

Bucking the Coalition consensus is Agriculture Minister Barnaby Joyce. He has to answer to a rural electorate reeling under the effects of "free" market dictatorship. He commissioned a report on agricultural competitiveness and the green paper is at odds with the Harper Review on a host of fundamental issues. Joyce's review recommends an ombudsman with penalty powers and a code of conduct for supermarkets. The powers would include divestiture enabling courts to break up businesses that repeatedly

breach the law. Encouragement would be given to farmer cooperatives to collectively bargain with monopoly buyers.

The Agriculture Minister is under pressure from struggling family farmers who have seen the share of total selling cost plummet from 80-90 percent in 1900 to 10 percent or less today. Rural debt now stands at \$65 billion. Incomes have stagnated or gone backwards and there has been a wave of bank foreclosures of family farms. Supermarket practices have combined with bad investment advice, reckless lending, devastating floods and droughts and the high value of the dollar to produce a bleak outlook on Australia's farms. Hype about Australia becoming the "food bowl" of Asia is a sad joke.

There's little doubt the Harper Review's agenda will trump Joyce's preferred options. An

indication of the abandonment of rural Australia is the refusal of the federal government to guarantee funding to the National Centre for Farmer Health based in Hamilton, Victoria. Its award-winning Sustainable Farm Families program focuses on improving the mental and physical health, well-being and safety of farm families. Rates of suicide in rural and regional Australia are at alarming levels. State government funding dried up in 2012.

The situation screams out for an alliance of family farmers and organised labour. They are abused by the same monopolies – the farmers as producers and the workers as employees and consumers. Their combined action is crucial for the breaking up the market manipulating power of massive corporations and reversing the current economic agenda. ✪

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Guardian

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Edward Gough Whitlam

On Monday October 20, one of Australia's greatest reforming Prime Ministers, Edward Gough Whitlam QC passed away at the age of 98. He was PM for three years until being sacked by Governor General John Kerr in a CIA-backed coup on November 11, 1975. Whitlam was no "leftie", but an enlightened and educated lawyer and humanist, who passionately believed in peace, social justice and equality of opportunity. During those three years he led a team on an all-embracing program of social, economic, cultural, environmental and political reform that served the needs and interests of the Australian people and Australia's independence and sovereignty.

PM Tony Abbott moved a condolence motion in the House of Representatives on Tuesday October 21, which was followed by tributes from MPs on both sides of the House. Coalition MPs spoke fine sounding words, through gritted teeth. Whitlam "might not be one of our greatest Prime Ministers, but he was certainly one of the greatest personalities that our country has ever produced," Abbott grudgingly said.

Labor MPs recalled a few of the achievements including the introduction of free university education, Medibank and expansion of welfare as well as paying tribute to his wit, passion and vision for Australia. Both Houses suspended business for the day after making their tributes in his honour.

The Gurindji people held a ceremony for him at Daguragu, about 460 kilometres south-west of Katherine, the site where in 1975 Whitlam poured sand into the hand of Vincent Lingiari. The Wave Hill hand back – as the event became known – finalised the first significant recognition of land rights by an Australian government. It was part of broader reforms introduced by the Whitlam government that led to the passing of the Land Rights Act and official recognition of traditional ownership in Australia.

Not all of the reforms were progressive. For example, the introduction of direct "state aid" (funding) for non-government schools which saved the poorer Catholic parish schools which were under considerable financial pressure. The government made a serious mistake in accepting advice from the Reserve Bank and Treasury for a credit squeeze. The Whitlam government stood by and watched Indonesia's invasion and occupation of East Timor.

Whitlam's Labor government made important changes to Australia's relationship with Asia, seeking to engage and deepen relations with Asia. In his 1969 policy speech Whitlam said that Australia is not "the policeman on the beat", we are not "the sheriff", we are not "part of the posse". We see Australia as a good neighbour. Words the US would not find pleasing. He started by establishing diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. He also initiated a dialogue with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), pledging financial assistance to its development program.

Its boldest action was the raid on ASIO in 1973, instigated by Attorney General Lionel Murphy who believed (with good reason) that ASIO was withholding information from Labor. The Whitlam government also established the Hope Royal Commission in 1974 to investigate ASIO's past practices and the extent it was prepared to deal honestly with the Labor government.

Labor frontbencher Anthony Albanese told Parliament that all of Whitlam's changes had stood the test of time. "Our legacy in terms of political contribution can be judged by the permanency of it," he said.

Today, what remains of those reforms is under savage attack by the Coalition government, Labor Opposition, big business and the Murdoch media. The erosion of those gains, which reflected the strength of the left and progressive social forces of the 1960s and '70s began under the Fraser government and has continued ever since. A quick comparison of the many fine achievements (see opposite) and what remains or is under attack right now, shows just how much has been wound back to the detriment of working people, the planet and Australia's security interests. Post-Whitlam Labor has contributed to this process.

The ASIO-backed coup that saw the very popular Whitlam government sacked on November 11, 1975, lifted the lid on the façade of bourgeois democracy. The people can elect governments, as long as they remain "safe". Whitlam's Labor government was the last with a progressive program that met people's needs. It is no coincidence that the coup was the day before Whitlam was due to make an important statement on the US's top secret spy and communications base, Pine Gap.

PRESS FUND

For many people the most memorable point in the Whitlam era was not the election triumph or the dismissal. It was after the epic nine-year strike against the Vesty company, when the government returned Wave Hill cattle station to the Guringi people. In a sudden symbolic gesture Whitlam scooped up a handful of soil and poured it into the outstretched hand of tribal elder Vincent Lingiari, who smiled at him and said: "We all friendly now, we all mates". But while you're remembering that, how about remembering the Press Fund with a contribution for the next edition? Many thanks to this week's supporters, as follows:

Maria H \$25.60, Don Humphries \$30, Mark Mannion \$5, Roberto \$50, "Round Figure" \$19.40, Bill Wansa \$20, MT White \$20

This week's total: \$170 Progressive total: \$7,110

Whitlam legacy

Many important progressive, pro-people reforms were made during the three Whitlam years – 1972-1975. They include:

Foreign Policy – withdrew troops from Vietnam (also ended conscription; freed imprisoned draft resisters, dropped charges against others); recognition of China; Palestinian rights; granted independence to Papua New Guinea

Peace and Security – opposed nuclear weapons proliferation and testing; supported disarmament (nuclear and conventional weapons); increased foreign aid spending; abolished what remained of the White Australia Policy; took a strong stand against Apartheid; strengthened relations with Asian region

Security – raid on ASIO by Attorney-General Lionel Murphy suspecting ASIO was withholding information from the Labor government

Sovereignty and independence – opposed to foreign military bases, stations and installations in Australia; against extension or prolongation of existing ones (see page 5); replaced British honours system with Order of Australia

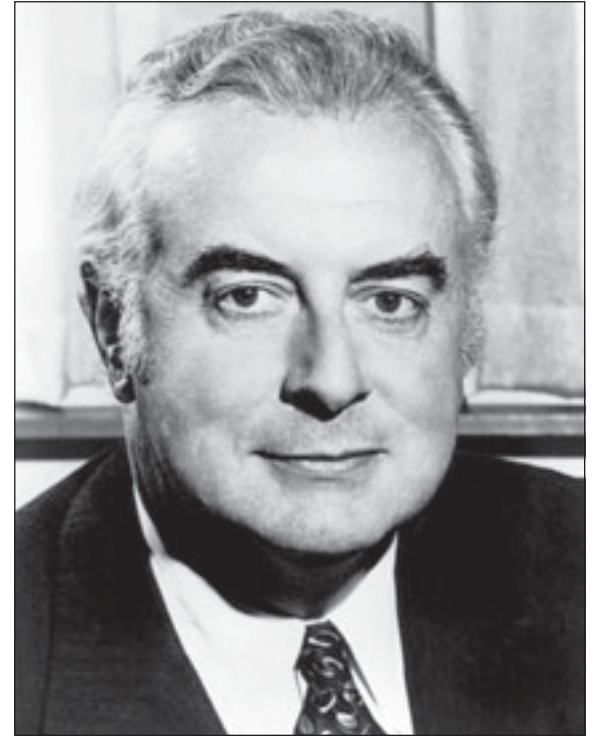
Democratic and Human Rights – Racial Discrimination Act; introduced official policy of multiculturalism; special services for immigrants; ratification or enactment of important UN Conventions and Protocols; abolished death penalty; lowered voting age from 21 to 18; one-vote one-value electoral reforms; established Law Reform Commission

Health Care and Social Security – introduced universal health care system, Medibank (maximum gap between refund and fee \$5); funded construction of new hospitals and community health centres and services; introduced single mother's benefit (later expanded to include all single parents); raised social security payments across the board; means test abolished for those over 70 for age pension; created Social Security Appeals Tribunal; increased subsidies for non-profit aged care providers; improved funding for services for homeless people; funded grass roots social welfare organisations; invested in construction of new public housing

Education – established Australian Schools Commission; increased school funding for construction of new buildings and on basis of need (state school funding increased by 677%, non-government by 117%); abolished university and technical college fees; provided means tested assistance for tertiary students; Commonwealth took full responsibility for funding universities; Kangan report and development of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges; bridging and other programs giving access to the disadvantaged, Indigenous people, migrants and women; concept of life-long learning; education being much more than vocational training

Workers – a fourth week of annual leave; a 17.5 per cent annual leave loading; ratification or enactment of important International Labour Organisation conventions; introduced maternity leave for Commonwealth employees (52 weeks, 12 on full pay); outlawed discrimination on basis of pregnancy; removed sales tax on oral contraceptives and added them to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

Women – advances with equal pay (re-opened equal pay case); increased access to childcare; established



Family Law Court and introduction of no-fault divorce; specialist health and welfare services for women; funding for women's health centres, rape crisis centres and refuges; support for victims of domestic violence; appointed a Women's Adviser to PM (first ever in world); women's learning centres

Indigenous Rights – return of land to Gurindji people in the Northern Territory; created Aboriginal Land Fund to be able to buy back traditional lands and Aboriginal Loans Commission; established National Aboriginal Consultative Committee (an elected body to advise the Minister); drafted Aboriginal Land Act (later passed by Fraser government); outlawed discrimination against Indigenous people; funded legal services for Indigenous people; and other measures to support the independence of Indigenous Australians

Environment and heritage – created Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (prevented oil drilling on the Reef); ratified World Heritage Convention, passed Environmental Protection Act; negotiated treaties to protect vulnerable species and ecosystems; funded heritage conservation projects; established Australian Heritage Commission

Culture – created and funded Australia Council for the Arts; established National Gallery of Australia; increased support for Australian film industry including establishment Australian Film Commission and increase in local content on TV; increased funding to ABC; establishment of Australian Film and Television School; minimum Australian music content on radio; introduced Triple J; community radio stations given licences

Cities – protected and renewed inner suburbs of cities; connected outer suburb homes to sewerage

Regional development – planning of decentralisation; provision of regional infrastructure and services. ✪

Time to fight for women's services

Maria Hilario

I am very angry about the closure of 90% of independent Women's refuges in NSW at a time when around 50% of the calls for help to the Domestic Violence line couldn't find beds for women and children (see "Action to save women's services" *Guardian* #1661). As a worker in one of the Inner West refuges and now unemployed I used to love arriving to work at this beautiful old house in the suburbs and be greeted by mums and children in the front garden and to see them safer after some horrendous ordeals. I was able to give them lots of empathy and support.

Before the announcements of the tendering process I knew we were not going to continue to operate because this government's

agenda wants to cut services for DV victims, the poor and the disadvantaged. Business is what the government has in mind: everything run for profit, wars are profitable enterprises; they grab resources from other countries. The Women's Refuge Movement was a collective of strong women in operation for over 20 years empowering women. The independent refuges used to organise state conferences where discussions and resolutions would take place and it was a very inclusive and secular organisation.

Many times last year during the destruction of the organisation I felt intimidated because we were not allowed to speak to the media or to conduct public demonstrations before the announcements otherwise our entitlements would

not have been paid as most refuges work places have less than 15 workers and they could do as they wanted.

These new changes will bring more divisions and segregation. I asked some women with children escaping domestic violence if they would have gone to homeless service sharing with men and their issues of drug and alcohol and women told me they wanted to escape from all that at home. Places with other men will be the last place they will take their kids. Unfortunately the changes are a return to the past with charities taking over the needs of families for the charities' own benefit. The destruction of services is taking us back to our grandmothers' times. It's time to fight for women's rights and services. ✪

Battles rage over inner city and Harbour developments

Peter Mac

Battles are now raging over controversial developments around Sydney Harbour. Private investors, mostly from overseas, have now bought up much of the inner city property, and are joining a corporate campaign for major new developments around Sydney Harbour.

That campaign is currently focused on the Western Harbour Precinct, the city's old industrial and residential waterfront area west of the Harbour Bridge.

A recently released report by development accounting firm PwC claims that a massive redevelopment of the area "could boost the city's economy more than \$100 million annually, ... grow the western precinct into NSW's second largest economy after the central business district ... [and] boost the area's economic potential by 3 percent to 4 percent, equalling an additional \$1 billion in returns over the next ten years".

Development lobby groups want high-rise towers to dominate in any redevelopment of the area. Chris Johnson, CEO of developer organisation Urban Taskforce told a Fairfax journalist people should stop "wimping out" about high rise towers west of the Bridge.

A representative of one major architectural practice has stated that towers up to 450 metres should be built around stations on a new metro rail system in future redevelopment.

Arguing that going ever higher is the only way to deal with urban sprawl, he said "Sydney has a 235 metre height cap – the underside of Centrepoint Tower. Do we really want a 1970s icon to be the most visible point in the city? Sydney's population is growing ... We need to cap sprawl. It is not sustainable."

Who pays the piper?

The competition for accommodation around the harbour and in inner Sydney is pushing up real estate prices, while the government is simultaneously abandoning inner-city public housing.

At Millers Point the government is proceeding so rapidly with its plan to sell off its historic houses that

many dwellings formerly occupied by aged, long-term public housing residents are now unoccupied.

The government is also cancelling an arrangement under which the Department of Community Services has rented out about 1,200 buildings for a peppercorn rent to non-profit organisations for decades. The government now wants to charge all their occupants market rental.

As a result Darling House in Millers Point will close next March, forcing its aged residents into a desperate struggle to find other accommodation. The NSW Council of Social Services and the Glebe Youth Service will also be ejected. Greens MP Jamie Parker described the government's move as "a cruel ideological attack that will inevitably see these critical services close".

The federal government also has a stake in the future development of Sydney Harbour. Its organisation, the Federation Trust, has custodianship over a number of former military sites dotted around the Harbour.

One of the most spectacular is at Middle Head, right opposite the harbour entrance. The area retains much of its natural bushland, but a group of unoccupied former military buildings is now the subject of a commercial proposal to convert them to a commercial aged care centre.

The local council, the National Trust, the Headland Preservation Group, and local residents (including Tony Abbott's sister) oppose the proposal because it would involve demolition of heritage buildings, contravene the previous plan for a public park on the headland, and set a precedent for commercial exploitation of all the former harbour defence sites.

The proposal requires approval by the Trust and federal environment minister Greg Hunt. However, the Trust's chief executive Geoff Bailey has already advised the Council to drop its opposition, because, he says, the proposed institution's residents would appreciate the "soothing quality of the natural setting".

A Trust board member also appears to have a conflict of interest, being the chairperson of Retirement Living Today, a digital company that advises businesses which target elderly citizens.



The Lands Department building, 23-33 Bridge Street, designed by James Barnet was built in two stages in 1876-1880 and 1888-1893.

Nevertheless, the federal Minister and the Trust are virtually certain to give the proposal the nod.

History's not junk, it's a commodity

The Abbott government is also considering residential development of one of Sydney's beachside national parks at Malabar Beach headland, as well as the nearby Anzac Rifle Range, although it has promised the NSW Rifle Association it won't have to leave the range until the government provides another site. History is repeating itself. In 2012 after vigorous objections by the Association the Labor government abandoned plans to incorporate the range into the national park.

Earlier, in the 1970s a geological survey by the state and federal governments found that deposits of the excruciatingly expensive prime "yellow block" sandstone needed for maintenance of historic government

buildings existed below the rifle range.

However, a scheme to quarry the stone was dumped after very active lobbying by the users of the rifle range, and by NSW sandstone quarrying firms, who argued that it would drastically affect levels of employment in their areas.

Speaking of sandstone, last week the state government called for expressions of interest in the long term lease of two of the city's most impressive late 19th-century sandstone structures, the Lands Department and Education Department buildings, and in their conversion to boutique hotels.

The project would strip the city of two landmarks that have historic associations with both these critical government functions. It would also involve a massive cost in relocating the two departments to new rented premises.

However, the government is now treating its assets as commodities

which should be sold off if that would benefit the private sector. State Finance Minister, Dominic Perrotet, declared: "It makes no sense to waste those sandstone buildings housing bureaucrats in prime CBD real estate. This decision means they will be open to the public and open to tourism across the world".

Carrying the minister's argument to its logical conclusion, the two departments would presumably be relocated to an area where rents are cheapest, outside the CBD. That says everything about the approach of the Coalition, which has little respect for public education, the public service in general, or the public itself, for that matter.

Unless the coalition is removed from office, the monstrosity of Barangaroo is likely to be repeated around the harbour and throughout the inner city, and that would be a disaster for the entire nation. ☹

Pete's Corner



Sydney

PUBLIC MEETING – ALL WELCOME

COMMUNITIES UNITED AGAINST RACISM



Join a community meeting on why we should reject the campaign of fear against Muslims and unite against racist attacks.

Speakers:

Chair: Mehreen Faruqi, NSW MLC

Arab Council of Australia

Lydia Shelly, Islamophobia Register

Prof Wendy Bacon, Australian Centre for Independent Journalism, UTS

Stuart Rees, Founder of Sydney Peace Foundation

Stephen Blanks, President of NSW Council of Civil Liberties

Sunday 9 November 3pm-5pm

UTS Tower Building Broadway

Survivors returning to Kinchela

Mez Fisher

Manuel Ebsworth remembers the day he entered Kinchela Boys Home in 1955 as a five-year-old. "The day I walked in, they took me at the gates – all the boys stripped you off, they took all your clothes, shaved all your head, covered you with flea powder then gave you a uniform with a number on it," Ebsworth said.

Former inmates of the home now call those gates "the gates of hell."

"It was just a brutal home and we were all too frightened to do anything," Ebsworth said. "The rewards you got were not what you expected as a child. We scrubbed the footpaths with a toothbrush and the staff put the hose over you while you were scrubbing the footpath naked."

Not only that, they were scrubbing children as young as three from one until five in the morning. "They didn't need a reason; they didn't explain anything to you. They were child molesters, paedophiles, who got satisfaction from causing hurt," Ebsworth said.

Although it will be difficult to walk back through those gates almost

60 years since his first traumatic time, Ebsworth will join other survivors and their descendants at a 90th anniversary commemoration to honour the memory of the Stolen Generations children who passed through the home since its opening in 1924.

The three-day event is being organised by the Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation, of which Ebsworth is chairman.

From Friday, October 24, until Sunday, October 26, the event is open to not only local Aboriginal people but also the broader community of Kempsey and surrounding towns of the NSW mid north coast.

The weekend will allow Kinchela men to tell their stories of sorrow, sadness and despair of what life was like in the home, but it is also hoped it will bring about a journey of reflection, growth, survival and – most importantly – healing.

"I think going back to Kinchela is going to be a heart-wrenching time for all of us, but we've got to face our demons," Ebsworth said. "We can face our demons now and we've got to tell what really happened behind closed doors, and the truth will hurt – it's got to hurt because it hurt us."

NSW Aboriginal Affairs Minister Victor Dominello will attend the commemoration, to which the NSW government contributed \$10,000 as well as \$28,000 for the KBH Survivor Recording Project being screened on the weekend and telling the stories of 25 men who lived at home.

Yet for many survivors of Kinchela, the government response has fallen short of being enough to alleviate their pain and suffering.

"In general there has not been an adequate response by either the federal or state governments to meet the needs of the Stolen Generations and our families," a statement from Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation said. "Not enough resources are provided to organisations such as ours – organisations that we have developed and that we and our families play a central role in."

"Healing models"

"We are not the same as organisations providing services to members of the Stolen Generations and which view us as clients. Our healing models work for us and our families and we need to be supported to



Painful past: Elders Michael Welsh, Willie Leslie, Richard Campbell, Manuel Ebsworth, Ian Lowe, Vincent Wenberg, Cecil Bowden and Harold 'Bluey' Smith with part of the gate from the Kinchela Boys' Home, where they spent much of their childhood.

develop and sustain them," the statement said.

The corporation said the 90th anniversary highlights the need for government to talk to members of the Stolen Generations so it can address their exclusion from current Aboriginal policy discussions.

The Kinchela home was built by the Aborigines Protection Board to train older boys who had been removed from their families under the Protection Board's policy of apprenticing Aboriginal youths as farm labourers. Later it became a home for younger boys removed from their families by the Aborigines Protection Board, the Aborigines Welfare Board or the Child Welfare Department.

Up to 500 Aboriginal children were held at the home until it closed in 1970, with 30 to 50 housed there at any given time.

Ebsworth said his records reveal

he was sent there because a Catholic priest didn't want him growing up to be a Protestant like the aunt who was raising him. He spent 10 years in the home, where he said you were taught that nobody wanted you and all you learned was "hate and prejudice".

Ebsworth is hoping the 90th anniversary event will help former Kinchela inmates come to terms with their brutal childhoods and help them cope better.

"I don't think it can ever heal, but hopefully it will ease a lot of the pain we went through," he said.

"Kinchela Boys Home was the Devil's playground to the children there. There's a lot of our blood, sweat and tears there. We met the Devil and we defeated him. Kinchela is him."

More details on Kinchela at www.kinchelaboyshome.org.au or [facebook page www.facebook.com/kinchelaboyshome](https://www.facebook.com/kinchelaboyshome) *Koori Mail* ☺

Maules Creek case continues

The proceedings that were scheduled for Friday October 11 in the Land and Environment Court have been held over to October 29 to set a hearing date.

The case was brought by local community group the Maules Creek Community Council in relation to consultation and planning approval processes associated with changes to Biodiversity Management Plans for the controversial Whitehaven Coal Mine in Leard State Forest near Narrabri in northwest NSW.

The disputed Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) was submitted by Whitehaven Coal to clear large sections of the Leard State Forest outside previously approved clearing times threatening endangered fauna species that were hibernating or breeding in the forest.

"There is no need for these changes," said Maules Creek Community Council spokesperson Phil Laird.

"Whitehaven Coal have indicated that their open cut coal project is on schedule and we have no idea why they have sought these changes as the public is getting mixed messages.

"We believe media statements made by the company completely contradict its need for the revised plan and we are calling on Planning Minister Prue Goward to reject the new clearing timetable put before her department.

"The community and the environment must rely on these

approvals and so should the company.

"The corrosive effect of this mine on politics and public administration in NSW has added up to numerous corruption allegations, inquiries and court convictions. In the end someone needs to hold the line and it shouldn't be up to everyday people to enforce planning approvals to protect the environment when a company changes its mind."

Meanwhile, the Lock the Gate Alliance has welcomed the sensible decision by the Planning and Assessment Commission to refuse consent for the Drayton South open cut coal mine in the Upper Hunter, as reported in the *Daily Telegraph*.

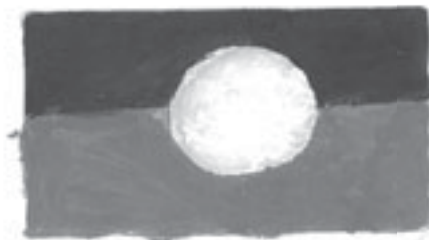
Lock the Gate NSW Coordinator, Georgina Woods, said, "Lock the Gate congratulates the Upper Hunter thoroughbred horse studs, industry and communities for their determination to protect their industry from this and other coal mines. It has been clear for some time that the horse studs could not co-exist with the Drayton South mine, and so we welcome the PAC's sensible decision that the project was not, on balance, in the public interest.

"This decision is a welcome relief for the businesses and communities that were directly threatened by this mine, but the anguish of this protracted battle could have been avoided by upfront protection for areas that should always have been off-limits to coal mining." ☺

Perth

Save our Communities UNITY RALLY

Stand with us at Parliament House at 12 noon on 12 November 2014 to speak out against genocide and human rights violations in WA.



Oombulgurri, Swan Valley Nyungah Community and Kennedy Hill have been bulldozed. What is next?

The Abbott Government is withdrawing funding from 180 communities in Western Australia. The State Government is letting it happen, which means they will lose basic services and be shut down.

"Barnett's plan will inflict more suffering and death on us the First People".

By closing down Communities this State government is denying us as First People our right live on our Land the way we want to live, as a community of people, protecting our Families, our Culture and our Sacredness in the Land.

Bulldozing our Communities is forced assimilation, forced displacement and homelessness, forced sickness and death. The damage will be felt for generations to come.

Article 8 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples says "Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture".

"Our rights as the First People are not being respected".

Speakers

Elders from Oombulgurri, Western Desert, Yindjibarndi People, Wongi Country and Nyungah Country.

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For more information contact Bella Bropho 0467 329 047 or 0411240296,
Herbert Bropho 0475 080 523
or email svnc@nyungah.org.au (office phone number 92791636)

Whitlam on foreign policy

Dear Mr. Symon,

I refer to your letter of 12 May 1975, concerning Australia's foreign policy. I have given close attention to your Party's policy proposals and you may be interested in my comments below on each of them.

1. Detente

The Australian Government welcomes and is firmly committed to the concept of detente and actively seeks to encourage the Great Powers to work to achieve this. It would, however, be shortsighted to base foreign policy on one single tenet. Foreign policy must embrace a number of ideals, expectations and hopes, including of course, support for detente.

The Government is also firmly committed to the objective of a reduction of armaments, both conventional and nuclear, and has sought to promote this in a number of ways. It has welcomed the talks on the limitation of strategic armaments between the United States and the Soviet Union, and has impressed upon the two Superpowers the need to strive for more rapid progress towards nuclear disarmament.

2. World Disarmament Conference

The Australian Government supports in principle the concept of a World Disarmament Conference. As you are no doubt aware, in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 3183 (XXVIII), which was supported by Australia, a preparatory committee has been established to consider the question. So far the work of this committee has been rather disappointing, particularly as two of the nuclear powers have declined to participate.

In view of the protracted debates and discussions on disarmament which have gone on in various bodies of the United Nations over the years, it is essential that a great deal of preliminary work be done before a World Disarmament Conference is held. The active participation of all the nuclear powers in such a conference is also an essential prerequisite to its success.

On the question of the withdrawal of military bases from Australian soil as part of the disarmament program, I have stated the Government's position a number of times. On April 3 1974, in answer to a question in the House of Representatives, I said:

"The Australian Government takes the attitude that there should not be foreign military bases, stations, installations in Australia. We honour agreements covering existing stations. We do not favour the extension or prolongation of any of those existing ones".

3. Aid to Indo-China

The Australian Government has pledged itself to give generous aid to Indo-China, and is in the process of consultations which would enable it to draw up a program. In the financial year 1974-75, as an initial response to immediate needs, Government aid to inter-

national organisations for humanitarian aid in Indo-China totalled \$3,400,000.

4. Nuclear Free Peace Zones

In my address to the United Nations General Assembly last year I expressed the Government's view that the concept of nuclear-free zones was one that deserved the most serious exploration. As you will be aware, Australia has supported the concept of a Zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean as a long-term objective, and is an active participant in the 18-nation United Nations *ad hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean. At the recent meeting of the South Pacific Forum, Australia joined its South Pacific neighbours in commending the idea of establishing a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific.



PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM

So that all concerned may have a greater understanding of the problems associated with such zones, and to see how they might effectively supplement efforts to stem the proliferation of nuclear weapons, a 21-nation study group, of which Australia is a member, has been established under the auspices of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) to examine the concept of nuclear-free zones in all its aspects. This group's deliberations will be relevant to the further consideration of nuclear-free zone proposals for the Indian Ocean and the South Pacific.

5. SEATO and ANZUS

The present Government has always been conscious of the deficiencies of the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (*now disbanded...Ed.*), and soon after coming to office played a leading part in having its structure modified. The Government is continuing to examine the need for further changes. On the other hand, it is not contemplating withdrawal from the ANZUS Treaty.

The Government is naturally prepared at any time to examine any proposal for any form of international co-operation between countries in the Asian region which might serve a practical purpose in promoting peace and progress in the region. The Government has itself taken

initiatives designed to assist fulfilling this purpose.

6. Socialist Countries and Third World

The Government believes in the universality of international relationships, regardless of ideological differences, and has actively pursued this course by, for example, establishing diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, the German Democratic Republic, and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. It was also among the first countries to recognise the new government in Cambodia.

The Government is already actively pursuing a course of developing and expanding links in the political, trade, scientific and cultural fields with all countries. For example, during my visit to the Soviet Union in January this year, the first by an Australian Prime Minister, I signed two new agreements, one on Science and Technology, and one on Cultural Exchanges. I also discussed with President Tito of Yugoslavia, and Mrs. Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka, Australia's interest in the Third World, and expressed the Government's desire to attend future meetings of the non-aligned group of countries, either as a guest or as an observer.

7. The Middle East

The Australian Government supports all peaceful moves, whether through a reconvened Geneva Conference, further bilateral negotiations, or other avenues, to bring about the earliest possible solution to the Middle East dispute. It supports implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967 which, among other things, calls for an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. It also supports the realisation of the national rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people, including their right to establish a State alongside Israel if they so choose.

8. European Security Conference

The Australian Government welcomes detente and any moves such as the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), which support international negotiation, conciliation, co-operation and peaceful development.

9. Nuclear Non-Proliferation

Australia has taken and continues to take a strong stand against the testing of nuclear weapons in all environments, and in this regard you will recall the action that the Government took against the Government of France in the International Court of Justice over the atmospheric testing of nuclear devices. At the 28th and 29th session of the United Nations General Assembly the Australian delegations played an active role in drafting resolutions condemning nuclear weapons testing and stressing the dangers associated with the proliferation of all nuclear explosive devices. The Government has firmly and

In a letter to PM Gough Whitlam, the Socialist Party of Australia (now the CPA) posed ten questions on the government's foreign policy. The response which was received just weeks prior to Whitlam's dismissal is republished here along with the Party's letter.

(First published in *The Socialist* 22-10-1975.)

THE SPA LETTER

Dear Sir,

Recognising that the end of the war in Indochina was a defeat for the policy of foreign intervention and that this development is the occasion for a substantial review of Australia's foreign policy, I wish to submit the following views to yourself and your Parliamentary colleagues.

We believe Australia's foreign policy should be based on a declaration that our country will seek a peaceful world and will respect the right of all people to political and economic freedom and independence.

In practical terms we propose the following policies be adopted:

1. A declaration that detente is the basis of Australia's foreign policy and that Australia's representatives will promote this policy in all ways possible, seeking to consolidate it and extend it to military disarmament.

2. That the Australian Government renew support for a world disarmament conference which will provide for withdrawal of all military bases from Australian soil as part of a disarmament program.

3. Development of a full program of aid to assist in the rebuilding of Indochina with immediate provision of food, medical supplies, clothing and building materials.

4. Australia to initiate proposals for, and agreement between, all nations of the Pacific-Indian Ocean area to make the whole area a nuclear-free peace zone.

5. Withdrawal from the SEATO and ANZUS Pacts (SEATO has been disbanded since the letter was sent...Ed.) and their replacement by non-aggression or collective security pacts between all countries (excluding none) in the Asian region.

6. The further extension of contacts (political, trade, cultural) with the socialist nations and the countries of the Third World.

7. The Australian Government to make a call for the early reconvening of the Geneva Conference on the Middle East and that a settlement be sought on the basis of the full implementation of the UNO decisions of 1967 and 1973 which call for an Israeli withdrawal from all lands occupied in the 1967 war, respect for the right to existence of all States in the Middle East and restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people.

8. A declaration of support for a meeting of the Heads of State of Europe to conclude the proposed European Collective Security Conference (since concluded...Ed.).

9. A call for all nations to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, ban all nuclear weapons and destroy all existing nuclear weapons stocks.

We believe that the adoption of these policies would open a new era of peace and progress for Australia, whereas, a policy based upon the preparation of a new war of intervention in Asia can only fail and lead to even greater disaster for all the peoples in our region.

Yours sincerely,
Peter Symon
General Secretary,
Socialist Party of Australia

consistently supported the achievement of a comprehensive test ban.

One of the first acts of the present Government on coming to power was to ratify the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This is the most important international instrument in existence to control nuclear proliferation and the Government believes that support for the principles of the

Treaty should be the cornerstone of all international endeavour towards this objective.

Australia's contribution to the successful outcome of the recent NPT Review Conference was recognised by all depositary powers and other participants as significant, responsible and constructive.

Yours sincerely,
E.G. Whitlam

India: Forests and tigers vs coal mines

Steven Katsineris

The Indian government's approval of new coal mines in Central India has led to a lot of debate and much opposition in India and elsewhere. Permission has already been given for a three kilometre wide underground mine, which the Indian government maintains will cause less adverse environmental impacts than an open cut mine. But this type of mining will still cause plenty of deforestation and fragmentation of Bengal Tiger and other wildlife habitat in the region. And Coal India wants to establish several more new coal mines in Central India next to forest habitat that is crucial for sustaining endangered Bengal Tigers.

A hundred years ago there were hundreds of thousands of Bengal Tigers in the world, but now there are less than 2,000 left. The Bengal Tiger population has been reduced mainly due to hunting and destruction of their natural habitat. And now India is the Bengal Tiger's stronghold. According to the International Union Conservation Network's Red List, the Bengal Tiger is an endangered species. It is also India's national animal and an important part of the country's eco-tourism appeal. Some of India's most famous Bengal Tiger reserves like Kanha, Bandhavgarh, and Tadoba-Andhari lie in these Central Indian forests.

Thirteen new coal mines and numerous coal-fired power plants are planned to be constructed in Central India. These proposed coal mines therefore pose a real threat to India's precious Royal Bengal Tigers, with the forests turned into coal mines, further displacing forest communities and destroying vital habitat. About 1.1 million hectares of tropical rainforest and at least ten Tiger sanctuaries are at stake.

India has been one of the bright spots in the global effort to save Tigers from extinction. The country has over half the world's remaining population of wild Tigers. Although India's Bengal Tiger population is unfortunately declining there have been some population increases in parts of the country that give great encouragement that the situation could be turned around.

India is a signatory to an ambitious conservation plan to double wild Tiger populations worldwide by 2022, a plan which was endorsed by all the 13 countries with Tigers in 2010. Worldwide, Tigers have been decimated by habitat loss, prey depletion and hunting, now largely to feed the Chinese medicine trade. These great cats have been left with only about seven percent of their historical range and already three Tiger subspecies have vanished forever.

Impacts on other wildlife

Wildlife is severely affected by coal mining operations. When coal companies start digging for coal, they cause a drastic decline of wildlife populations that inhabit the forests. As well as Bengal Tigers these forest habitats support populations of other rare wildlife species, which are also on the IUCN Red List, including Leopards, which are listed as Near Threatened, Asian Elephants, listed as Endangered and Sloth Bears and Sambar Deer, as Vulnerable. The region also has other deer and antelope species.

New coal mines will also destroy important corridors between the forests that the threatened Bengal Tiger and other wildlife need to survive and thrive. The Indian government says it wants to save the Tigers, but it also wants to profit from coal. But the Indian government can't have both. So far, it's coal that is winning over the preservation of the Bengal Tigers.

The problems with coal

The problems with coal production are well-known; it fuels climate change and spreads toxic pollution. Climate change is largely driven by burning of fossil fuels like coal, which is already wreaking havoc across the planet, so if these new coal mines go ahead they will make things worse.



Bengal Tiger.

Deutsche Bank is providing finance to Coal India to assist the construction of these new coal mines. Coal India is not only the largest company in the world in terms of coal production; it is also one of the worst. It has in the past forcibly displaced forest communities, destroyed critical Tiger habitat and used child labour. It is hoped the bank's support for Coal India can be stopped by public protests. Environmentalist groups, tribal peoples and other locals strongly oppose the project due to its negative impact on forests.

Greenpeace report

"Unfortunately, for the Tiger, its largest contiguous habitat – Central India – is also where most of India's coal lies," Ashish Fernandes, author of a Greenpeace report.

Greenpeace India has researched the effects of these proposed coal mines and construction projects on the wildlife and people of the region. Almost half of the forest-dependent communities in the country depend on the forests of Central India for their livelihood and way of life.

In a report published in 2012, Greenpeace analysed the effects of the proposed coal mines on the region. It said, "Analysing 13 Central Indian coal mines, in various stages of exploitation, the report finds that full open pit mining in these areas would destroy over a million hectares of forest." According to official data, 18 percent of these forests are known to be used by Tigers, 27 percent by Leopards and 5.5 percent by Asian Elephants. In all, eight of India's well-known Tiger reserves will be impacted, potentially adversely affecting the estimated 230 Bengal Tigers in the region (13 percent of India's Tiger population).

"Several of India's largest coalfields ... include forest areas adjoining Tiger Reserves where Tigers are found. Coal mines are already eating into these areas and with the ongoing expansion, this will worsen," Fernandes says.

India's Protected Areas/Tiger Reserves are small by global standards, with fewer larger than 500 square kilometres. As such, if isolated their Bengal Tiger populations are not viable in the long term. "Tigers, males in particular, roam large areas in search of mates, and this ensures genetic vibrancy. As young Tigers mature, they also need to establish their own territories, or face conflict with dominant males. Corridors help aid this dispersal and ensure a healthy gene flow between different 'source' tiger populations," explains Fernandes.

Coal mining in Central India also raises broader issues beyond wildlife and the effort to save the Bengal Tiger. India's natural forests continue to disappear at a fast rate. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), only around 19 percent of India is covered in natural forests, excluding monoculture plantations and many of the remaining forests are degraded and fragmented. Last year the federal government announced a US\$10.14 billion plan to expand its forests by five million hectares, while improving forest quality on another five million hectares. But the state of India's forests remains generally one of ongoing decline.

"India is losing natural forests at a rate of between 1.5 to 2.7% a year – alarming when you consider that the country has already lost 70% of its native forest cover. Plantations however are growing – usually with fast growing monoculture species such as acacia. Plantations are no substitute for natural forests. The Indian government is using its aggressive plantation program to hide the ongoing destruction of natural forest – primarily for mining, dams and other large infrastructure projects," states Fernandes.

Impact on forest communities

"We are totally dependent on these forests," says Kanti Kumar, a local tribal member. "Our source of livelihood is mahua and tendu leaf (a minor forest produce used in India) which we collect and sell for survival. If you take away our forest from us then how shall we live?"

The loss of these forests will drastically impact the livelihoods of local communities, their wood for fuel, building material, animal fodder, food supplies and water are all found in the forests.

According to Fernandes, "India's forest communities rely on a variety of forest produce for their own domestic use and for sale in local markets – honey, fruits, flowers, seeds, bamboo products, firewood. In many areas, the forest doesn't just supplement other incomes, it is the main income." Fernandes added that "forest loss in one area may result in ongoing pressure elsewhere. When a forest is lost to a coal mine, the community that depended on it is forced to migrate in search of other options – usually casual labour, if available, or move closer to another forest area, increasing the human pressure on remnant forests."

Renewable resources

The environmental impact of cutting down forests and the burning of coal that lies beneath will release large quantities of CO₂ into the atmosphere, perpetuating the destructive effects of climate change. In its report, Greenpeace argues that it's time for India to make a rapid transition to renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar.

"In some parts of India, wind energy is already on par with grid power," Fernandes says. Such a transition would also relieve the nation's dependence on a grid system full of problems, since solar and wind can provide power without connecting to the grid. And sometimes the system breaks down; not long ago India's grid failed twice, leaving 700 million people without power.

"For thousands of [remote] villages, the cost per unit of most forms of renewable energy at current rates is considerably less than the cost of grid-connected electricity," reads the report.

Despite the climate, social and wildlife hazards of India's coal boom, the country has no plans to slow coal production. According to the report, the government plans to increase domestic coal production 41 percent by 2017 from last year's levels.

"This game has only losers – there are sound domestic reasons why India needs to get off coal. The financial, social and environmental costs of coal on the Indian people are too high," Fernandes states.

More effort must be made to prevent more habitat loss, in order to preserve the endangered Bengal Tiger population and save them from extinction. Bengal Tigers deserve a right to live in peace with sufficient habitat to ensure their survival. Hopefully public pressure can force the Indian government to change course on the new coal mines program and stop the cutting down of these precious forests that Tigers depend on for survival. The National Parks and surrounding habitat zones that have been set aside must be protected to help Bengal Tigers breed, so the diminishing Tiger population can recover.

What can be done:

Please publicise this situation, support Greenpeace and other organisations that oppose the new coal mines and write or sign petitions urging the Indian government to stop the destruction of more forests in Central India and protect the remaining Bengal Tigers. ✪

US responsible for Ebola outbreak – Liberian scientist

Timothy Alexander Guzman

Dr Cyril Broderick, a Liberian scientist and a former professor of Plant Pathology at the University of Liberia's College of Agriculture and Forestry, says the West, particularly the US, is responsible for the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Dr Broderick claims the following in an exclusive article published in the *Daily Observer* based in Monrovia, Liberia. He wrote the following:

"The US Department of Defence (DoD) is funding Ebola trials on humans, trials which started just weeks before the Ebola outbreak in Guinea and Sierra Leone. The reports continue and state that the DoD gave a contract worth US\$140 million to Tekmira, a Canadian pharmaceutical company, to conduct Ebola research. This research work involved injecting and infusing healthy humans with the deadly Ebola virus. Hence, the DoD is listed as a collaborator in a 'First in Human' Ebola clinical trial (NCT02041715), which started in January 2014 shortly before an Ebola epidemic was declared in West Africa in March."

Is it possible that the DoD and other Western countries are directly responsible for infecting Africans with the Ebola virus? Dr Broderick claims that the US government has a research laboratory located in a town called Kenema in Sierra Leone that studies what he calls "viral fever bioterrorism". It is also the town he acknowledges is the "epicentre of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa". Is it a fact? Is Dr Broderick a conspiracy theorist? He says that "there is urgent need for affirmative action in protecting the less affluent of poorer countries, especially African citizens, whose countries are not as scientifically and industrially endowed as the United States and most Western countries, sources of most viral or bacterial GMOs that are strategically designed as biological weapons". He also asks an important question when he says, "It is most disturbing that the US government has been operating a viral hemorrhagic fever bioterrorism research laboratory in Sierra Leone. Are there others?"

Experimenting

Well, Mr Broderick's claims seem to be true. After all, the US government has been

experimenting with deadly diseases on human beings for a long time, history tells us so. One example is Guatemala. Between 1946 and 1948, the United States government under President Harry S Truman in collaboration with Guatemalan President Juan José Arévalo and his health officials deliberately infected more than 1,500 soldiers, prostitutes, prisoners and even mental patients with syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases such as gonorrhoea and chancroid (a bacterial sexual infection) out of more than 5,500 Guatemalan people who participated in the experiments.

The worst part of it is that none of the test subjects infected with the diseases ever gave informed consent. The *Boston Globe* published the discovery made by medical historian and professor at Wellesley College, Susan M Reverby in 2010 in an article called "Wellesley professor unearths a horror: Syphilis experiments in Guatemala" stated how she came across her discovery:

"Picking through musty files in a Pennsylvania archive, a Wellesley College professor made a heart-stopping discovery: US government scientists in the 1940s deliberately infected hundreds of Guatemalans with syphilis and gonorrhoea in experiments conducted without the subjects' permission. Reverby happened upon the documents four or five years ago while researching the infamous Tuskegee syphilis study and later shared her findings with US government officials."

The unethical research was not publicly disclosed until this year, when President Obama and two Cabinet secretaries apologised to Guatemala's government and people and pledged to never repeat the mistakes of the past – an era when it was not uncommon for doctors to experiment on patients without their consent.

The study in Guatemala was led by John Cutler, a US health service physician who also took part in the controversial Tuskegee Syphilis experiments which began in the 1930s. Researchers wanted to study the effects of a group of antibiotics called penicillin on affected individuals. The prevention and treatment of syphilis and other venereal diseases were also included in the experimentation. Although they were treated with antibiotics, more than 83 people had died according to BBC news in



2011 following a statement issued by Dr Amy Gutmann, head of the Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues.

Farce

Washington's reaction to the report is a farce. The apology made to Guatemala's government was for the sake of public relations. Washington knows about its human experiments in the past with deadly diseases conducted by government-funded laboratories that are known to be harmful to the public. The US government is guilty in conducting numerous medical experiments on people not only in Guatemala but in other countries and on its own territory.

As the *Boston Globe* report mentioned, the Tuskegee Syphilis Study occurred between 1932 and 1972 by the US Public Health Service to study the "natural progression" of untreated syphilis in the African American population. The US Public Health Service and the Tuskegee Institute collaborated in 1932 and enrolled 600 poor sharecroppers from Macon County, Alabama, to study the syphilis infection. However, it was documented that at least 400 of those had the disease (they were never informed that they actually had syphilis) while the remaining 200 did not.

They received food and even free burial insurance for participating in the study. Documents revealed that they were told that they had "bad blood" which meant that they had various medical conditions besides syphilis. The Tuskegee scientists continued to study the participants without treating their illnesses and they also withheld much-needed information from the participants about penicillin, which proved to be effective in treating syphilis and other venereal diseases.

The test subjects were under the impression that they were receiving free health care from the US government while they were deliberately being lied to by the same administrators who were conducting the tests. Washington is fully aware of its human experiments with deadly diseases. The government of Guatemala also knew about the syphilis experiments according to the *Boston Globe*:

"A representative of the Guatemalan government said his nation will investigate, too – looking in part at the culpability of officials in that country. The records of the experiment suggest that Guatemalan government officials were fully aware of the tests, sanctioned them, and may have done so in exchange for stockpiles of penicillin."

However, the US Department of Health and Human Services published the study Fact Sheet on the 1946-1948 US Public Health Service Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) Inoculation Study and was forced to admit what happened in Guatemala during the syphilis experiments. Dr Broderick summarised what average people can do to prevent governments, especially those from the West from creating and exposing populations from diseases they experiment with in laboratories:

"The challenge is global, and we request assistance from everywhere, including China, Japan, Australia, India, Germany, Italy, and even kind-hearted people in the US, France, the UK, Russia, Korea, Saudi Arabia, and anywhere else whose desire is to help."

"The situation is bleaker than we on the outside can imagine, and we must provide assistance however we can. To ensure a future that has less of this kind of drama, it is important that we now demand that our leaders and governments be honest, transparent, fair, and productively engaged. They must answer to the people. Please stand up to stop Ebola testing and the spread of this dastardly disease."

After Guatemala's ordeal with the US government, West African nations should be extremely sceptical about the US government's actions combating Ebola. Professor Francis Boyle of the University of Illinois, College of Law questions the Obama administration's actions in West Africa. *RIA Novosti* recently interviewed Boyle and he said the following:

"US government agencies have a long history of carrying out allegedly defensive biological warfare research at labs in Liberia and Sierra Leone. This includes the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which is now the point agency for managing the Ebola spill-over into the US," Professor Francis Boyle said.

"Why has the Obama administration dispatched troops to Liberia when they have no training to provide medical treatment to dying Africans? How did Zaire/Ebola get to West Africa from about 3,500 kilometres away from where it was first identified in 1976?"

That's a good question for Washington, but would the public get any answers? Not anytime soon, since it took more than 62 years for the Guatemala syphilis experiments to be exposed to the public, not by the US government, by a medical historian.

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Canada, at war for 13 years, shocked at "terrorist" attack

Glenn Greenwald

TORONTO: In Quebec on October 20 two Canadian soldiers were hit by a car driven by Martin Couture-Rouleau, a 25-year-old Canadian who, as *The Globe and Mail* reported, "converted to Islam recently and called himself Ahmad Rouleau". One of the soldiers died, as did Couture-Rouleau when he was shot by police upon apprehension after allegedly brandishing a large knife. Police speculated that the incident was deliberate, alleging the driver waited for two hours before hitting the soldiers, one of whom was wearing a uniform.

The incident took place in the parking lot of a shopping mall 65 kilometres southeast of Montreal, "a few kilometres from the Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean, the military academy operated by the Department of National Defence."

The right-wing Canadian government wasted no time in seizing on the incident to promote its fear-mongering agenda over terrorism, which includes pending legislation to vest its intelligence agency, CSIS, with more spying and secrecy powers in the name of fighting ISIS. A government spokesperson asserted "clear indications" that the driver "had become radicalised."

In a "clearly prearranged exchange", a conservative MP, during parliamentary "question time," asked Prime Minister Stephen Harper whether this was considered a "terrorist attack"; in reply, the prime minister gravely opined that the incident was "obviously extremely troubling". Canada's Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney pronounced the incident "clearly linked to terrorist ideology," while newspapers predictably followed suit, calling it a "suspected terrorist attack" and "homegrown terrorism". CSIS spokesperson Tahera Mufti said "the event was the violent expression of an extremist ideology promoted by terrorist groups with global followings" and added: "That something

like this would happen in a peaceable Canadian community like Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu shows the long reach of these ideologies."

In sum, the national mood and discourse in Canada is virtually identical to what prevails in every Western country whenever an incident like this happens: shock and bewilderment that someone would want to bring violence to such a good and innocent country ("a peaceable Canadian community like Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu"), followed by claims that the incident shows how primitive and savage is the "terrorist ideology" of extremist Muslims, followed by rage and demand for still more actions of militarism and freedom-deprivation. There are two points worth making about this:

First, Canada has spent the last 13 years proclaiming itself a nation at war. It actively participated in the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and was an enthusiastic partner in some of the most extremist War on Terror abuses perpetrated by the US. Earlier this month, the Prime Minister revealed, with the support of a large majority of Canadians, that "Canada is poised to go to war in Iraq, as [he] announced plans in Parliament to send CF-18 fighter jets for up to six months to battle Islamic extremists." Last week, Canadian Defence Minister Rob Nicholson flamboyantly appeared at the airfield in Alberta from which the fighter jets left for Iraq and stood tall as he issued the standard Churchillian war rhetoric about the noble fight against evil.

It is always stunning when a country that has brought violence and military force to numerous countries acts shocked and bewildered when someone brings a tiny fraction of that violence back to that country. Regardless of one's views on the justifiability of Canada's lengthy military actions, it's not the slightest bit surprising or difficult to understand why people who identify with those on the other end of Canadian bombs and bullets would decide to attack the military responsible for that violence.



Rouleau's attack ended as he lost control of his vehicle, rolling over several times. Police shot him as he exited the car. Martin Couture-Rouleau (insert).

That's the nature of war. A country doesn't get to run around for years wallowing in war glory, invading, rendering and bombing others, without the risk of having violence brought back to it. Rather than being baffling or shocking, that reaction is completely natural and predictable. The only surprising thing about any of it is that it doesn't happen more often.

The issue here is not justification (very few people would view attacks on soldiers in a shopping mall parking lot to be justified). The issue is causation. Every time one of these attacks occurs – from 9/11 on down – Western governments pretend that it was just some sort of unprovoked, utterly "senseless" act of violence caused by primitive, irrational, savage religious extremism inexplicably aimed at a country innocently minding its own business. They even invent fairy tales to feed to the population to explain why it happens: they hate us for our freedoms.

Those fairy tales are pure deceit. Except in the rarest of cases, the violence has clearly identifiable and easy-to-understand causes: namely, anger over the violence that the country's government has spent years directing at others. The statements of those accused by the west of terrorism, and even the Pentagon's own commissioned research, have made conclusively clear what motivates these acts: namely, anger over the violence, abuse and interference by Western countries in that part of the world, with the world's Muslims overwhelmingly the targets and victims. The very policies of militarism and civil liberties erosions justified in the name of stopping terrorism are actually what fuels terrorism and ensures its endless continuation.

If you want to be a country that spends more than a decade proclaiming itself at war and bringing violence to others, then one should expect that violence will sometimes be directed at you as well. Far from being the by-product of primitive and inscrutable religions, that behaviour is the natural reaction of human beings targeted with violence. Anyone who doubts

that should review the 13-year orgy of violence the US has unleashed on the world since the 9/11 attack, as well as the decades of violence and interference from the US in that region prior to that.

Second, in what conceivable sense can this incident be called a "terrorist" attack? As I have written many times over the last several years, and as some of the best scholarship proves, "terrorism" is a word utterly devoid of objective or consistent meaning. It is little more than a totally malleable, propagandistic fear-mongering term used by Western governments (and non-Western ones) to justify whatever actions they undertake. As Professor Tomis Kapitan wrote in a brilliant essay in *The New York Times*: "Part of the success of this rhetoric traces to the fact that there is no consensus about the meaning of 'terrorism.'"

But to the extent the term has any common understanding, it includes the deliberate (or wholly reckless) targeting of civilians with violence for political ends. But in this case in Canada, it wasn't civilians who were targeted. If one believes the government's accounts of the incident, the driver waited two hours until he saw a soldier in uniform. In other words, he seems to have deliberately avoided attacking civilians, and targeted a soldier instead – a member of a military that is currently fighting a war.

Again, the point isn't justifiability. There is a compelling argument to make that undeployed soldiers engaged in normal civilian activities at home are not valid targets under the laws of war (although the US and its closest allies use extremely broad and permissive standards for what constitutes legitimate military targets when it comes to their own violence). The point is that targeting soldiers who are part of a military fighting an active war is completely inconsistent with the common usage of the word "terrorism," and yet it is reflexively applied by government officials and media outlets to this incident in Canada (and others like it in the UK and the US).

That's because the most common

functional definition of "terrorism" in Western discourse is quite clear. At this point, it means little more than: "violence directed at Westerners by Muslims" (when not used to mean "violence by Muslims," it usually just means: violence the state dislikes). The term "terrorism" has become nothing more than a rhetorical weapon for legitimising all violence by Western countries, and delegitimising all violence against them, even when the violence called "terrorism" is clearly intended as retaliation for Western violence.

This is about far more than semantics. It is central to how the west propagandises its citizenries; the manipulative use of the "terrorism" term lies at the heart of that. As Professor Kapitan wrote in *The New York Times*:

"Even when a definition is agreed upon, the rhetoric of 'terror' is applied both selectively and inconsistently. In the mainstream American media, the 'terrorist' label is usually reserved for those opposed to the policies of the US and its allies.

"By contrast, some acts of violence that constitute terrorism under most definitions are not identified as such – for instance, the massacre of over 2,000 Palestinian civilians in the Beirut refugee camps in 1982 or the killings of more than 3,000 civilians in Nicaragua by 'contra' rebels during the 1980s, or the genocide that took the lives of at least a half million Rwandans in 1994. At the opposite end of the spectrum, some actions that do not qualify as terrorism are labelled as such – that would include attacks by Hamas, Hezbollah or ISIS, for instance, against uniformed soldiers on duty."

Historically, the rhetoric of terror has been used by those in power not only to sway public opinion, but to direct attention away from their own acts of terror.

At this point, "terrorism" is the term that means nothing, but justifies everything. It is long past time that media outlets begin sceptically questioning its usage by political officials rather than mindlessly parroting it.

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Neo-liberal EU reality

BRITAIN: Labour Party leader Ed Miliband is disingenuous in promising “clear, credible and concrete changes” to immigration laws while remaining committed to Britain’s membership of the European Union. His promise is no more credible or achievable than David Cameron’s pledge to reduce the annual figure for immigration to 100,000.

Both men are totally wedded to EU membership – whatever Cameron may say about a Tory in-out referendum – and free movement of labour within the bloc is an EU cornerstone.

Newly elected European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker is as clear on this issue as his predecessor Jose Manuel Barroso was. “As far as the freedom of movement is concerned ... I do think this is a basic principle of the EU since the very beginning and I am not prepared to change this because if we are destroying the freedom of movement other freedoms will fall in a later cause,” said Juncker after his appointment last week.

The four EU “freedoms” to which he refers are the free movement of people, goods, services and capital.

They form the basis of the Single European Act, the first major revision of the founding Treaty of Rome that was piloted through Parliament by

Margaret Thatcher. The *Morning Star* campaigned against – and still opposes – both the Treaty of Rome and the Single European Act because they enshrine the untrammelled power of market forces to direct economic priorities.

Socialists and trade unionists have always rejected the idea of workers as just pawns in capitalists’ schemes to drive up the rate of profit.

That’s why the Labour Party and TUC once shared a common position with the Communist Party that this country should withdraw from the capitalist club that is the EU.

This would entail trading freely with EU member states, as well as with the rest of the world, while retaining the right to set economic priorities at variance with the dominant ethos of the EU.

Labour and the Trade Union Congress ditched this principled position in the 1980s after French Eurocentrist diplomat Jacques Delors addressed TUC congress during the dark days of Thatcher.

Union leaders lapped up his tales of a European social-democratic paradise that could supplant neo-liberalism in Britain. The reality is the opposite scenario. The EU political elite, whether nominally conservative, liberal or social-democratic, has adopted Thatcherism overwhelmingly.

The unelected and unaccountable

EU commission and the European Central Bank are currently imposing an austerity agenda on a bloc that has swollen to 28 states, including some of the continent’s poorest.

Calls, even from a country as powerful as France, for the EU central authorities to boost investment, economic activity and jobs, are dismissed, with the approval of regional powerhouse Germany, because the rules are the rules.

Mass unemployment and impoverishment are driving people from the poorest EU states to Britain in search of work in a relatively unregulated economy.

Britain’s bosses are happy to employ cheap casual labour in farming, hotels and hospitality sectors because it’s good for profits.

Rates of pay are too low to keep a family. They pile pressure on workers to accept the current low-wage regime that afflicts Britain.

Miliband is playing the Tory-Ukip game of pledging unmanageable curbs on immigration, but he should be starting at the other end of the problem.

That means boosting pay, pensions and benefits substantially, raising taxation on the rich, including companies, increasing the scale of public ownership, restoring workplace rights and rejecting the EU corporate superstate.

Morning Star ✪



Britain’s Labour Party leader Ed Miliband.

Brown autopsy spun to favour police

A leaked autopsy report on Michael Brown’s death points to gunshot wounds on the victim’s hands and marijuana in his system. Brown was killed at point blank range by a Ferguson police officer after being stopped for walking in the street.

The official report obtained by the *St Louis Post Dispatch* suggests a struggle inside the police car prior to Brown’s being gunned down by multiple gunshot wounds to the head and chest. It is being spun as corroborating officer Darren Wilson’s story.

Protesters have been demanding in over 70-days of continuous demonstrations that a grand jury return an indictment against the officer.

The timing of the report along with the emphasis on powder burns on Brown’s hands and marijuana use may suggest local officials’ tactics designed to undermine

the grand jury’s work prior to its completion.

The *Washington Post* reported that its sources said the levels [of marijuana] “in Brown’s body may have been high enough to trigger hallucinations.”

Marijuana however would have to be ingested in large amounts for hallucinations to occur. A study of medical marijuana by the American Academy of Neurology found that hallucinations are rare: “The risk of serious psychopathologic effects (hallucinations, etc) was cited to be about one percent.”

A study by Colombia University found hallucinations might occur in one in seven people who smoked daily.

The Justice Department took strong issue with the release of coroner’s report: “The department considers the selective release of information in this investigation to

be irresponsible and highly troubling. Since the release of the convenience store footage there seems to be an inappropriate effort to influence public opinion about this case.”

A former FBI agent said as much to CNN: “It could be really for, in part, a beneficial purpose, to start leading those community leaders and those leading the protests to believe that there won’t be an indictment,” said Ron Hosko, former assistant director of the FBI Criminal Division.

That a struggle occurred in the patrol car however was not in much dispute. The shots fired after Brown began running away in addition must be accounted for. A federal autopsy is also underway.

The case is under investigation by both the local grand jury and by the Justice Department. The grand jury’s report is due in November.

People’s World ✪

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Region Briefs

On October 20, Vietnam’s 13th National Assembly’s (NA) 8th session started in Hanoi. This 35-day long session adopted 18 laws and three resolutions, discussed 12 drafts of laws, reported on the 2014 state budget and the result of fighting corruption, voted in key state officials and laid out future plans. NA Chairman Nguyen Sinh Hung speaking at the session, said that Vietnam now was facing a complex economic, social and political situation. He called on the Party, the people and the army, together to overcome challenges and achieve its social and economic development as planned. According to a report released at the session regarding socio-economic development, the country is expected to reach a 5.8 percent economic growth in 2014 (higher than the same period last year) and an inflation decline to 2.25 percent (the lowest in ten years). The report urged the NA to set up the 2015 socio-economic plan, including reaching 6.2 percent GDP growth, reduced inflation rate to five percent, and create 1.6 million new jobs.

The fourth plenary session of the Communist Party of China’s 18th Central Committee opened in Beijing on October 20. The main theme of the four-day long session is the “rule of law”. It intends to “lay a powerful legal basis and a better environment” in helping the Party to achieve its reforms with the goal of “building an all-around well-off society by the year 2020”. For the modernising of China’s socialism, the Party had started to “build a socialist country under the rule of law” in 1997. In 2010, China announced that it had established a more transparent and fairer socialist law system.

In a phone call with UN General Secretary Ban Ki-moon, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang called for increasing coordination among countries to fight the Ebola epidemic. He stressed that China would continually actualise its commitment to fight Ebola in West Africa. He said that Ebola posed a threat to global public health, and the priority now was to provide more funds, medical workers and supplies to affected countries. Since the outbreak of Ebola in February this year, China had sent approximately A\$507 million (by October 25, 2014 in humanitarian aid to Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, the World Health Organisation (WTO) and the African Union. It had sent 200 medical experts and workers to the affected region to help in preventing and controlling the spread of Ebola, providing medical and technical support, organising lectures on biosecurity, disinfection and personal protection.

A total number of 2,500 Cambodian children and young people participated in the Violence Against Children Survey 2013, conducted by Ministry of Women’s Affairs, UNICEF and the United States Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. According to the survey, more than 53 percent of Cambodian children experienced physical violence at least once. The UN General Secretary on Violence against Children, Maria Santos Pais said that “The elimination of all forms of violence against children must be a core indicator of national social improvement”.

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



email: tpearson@cpa.org.au

Are military being trained to commit war crimes?: Open letter to the Prime Minister Tony Abbott and the Defence Department

Minister sDavid Johnstone
The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN) bring together over 50 community based peace and justice organisations across Australia. We wish to express our objection to the alleged actions of SAS troops, towards a small group of peaceful protesters at Swan Island military

base on October 2 (see *Guardian* Oct 15).

It is our understanding the Swan Island Peace Convergence group has protested Australian involvement in foreign wars over the past five years with protestors treated lawfully and peacefully by the ADF and the Victorian Police Force.

We in the IPAN are concerned that the tactics used this time, which include hooding, stripping of clothing, physical and verbal violence from ADF personnel reflect the Australian government's current policies which restrict civil liberties on the basis of the threat of terrorism to Australian citizens.

The actions of the ADF personnel are reminiscent of the treatment of prisoners in the Abu Grahیب prison in 2004 by US troops, and indeed correlate with a number of inquiries into treatment of civilians by ADF personnel during Australian military engagement in Afghanistan.

We ask, are our young men and women in the ADF being trained to commit war crimes?

When viewed in the context of the government's decision to send

Australian forces into Iraq for the third time we express our concern that the people of our country are being constrained in their democratic rights to protest this engagement as it potentially grows into a major war.

The members of IPAN request that findings of the investigation by the Department of Defence into the actions of members of the ADF at Swan Island be made public.

Annette Brownlie
Just Peace Qld/ IPAN

Work together against draconian laws

Attorney-General George Brandis wants to introduce new laws that create unprecedented restrictions on the freedoms of Australians, and he's hiding behind a "national security" scare campaign to do it.

He wants to create international no-go zones to restrict your right to travel, he wants to extend preventative detention orders so that police and other agencies can detain you for longer without any charge and he wants to collect your biometric data

at airports any time you travel overseas or return home.

The Greens will try to delay debate on these "terror laws" to allow time for further scrutiny. It seems even the government itself does not fully understand the extent of the powers they are creating.

To rush the bills through parliament without the chance for proper scrutiny is irresponsible and anti-democratic.

These laws are draconian and

will have long-term impacts on how everyday Australians go about their lives. They are the most significant counter-terrorism changes in our lifetime.

The Greens have plans to remove the no-go zones, the extension of preventative detention orders and biometric data being collected at the airport, but we need your help to do it.

Senator Penny Wright
Australian Greens

SUPPORT THE CUBAN 5

Support event outside
US Consulate

Martin Place, Sydney
Wednesday November 5, 5pm

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Further info Maria 0431 275 434



Culture & Life

by Rob Gowland

Lies and conspiracies



President Obama meeting with Ron Klain (US "Ebola Czar"), then chief of staff to the vice president, at the White House.

The second-most pathetic sight of recent times has to have been Tony Abbott telling everyone how he would "shirtfront" Vladimir Putin at the G20 summit in Brisbane. The most pathetic sight was Labor leader Bill Shorten trying to outdo Abbott by being even more fiercely anti-Russian. These two strutting game-cocks posturing for the Australian media as though they were the leaders of a Great Power while they spouted anti-Russian rhetoric of a type not seen since the 1950s and the height of the Cold War was downright embarrassing.

Everyone knows that Australia's foreign policy is conducted to a score written in Washington, so the sight of these two Lilliputians being outrageously rude and offensive towards the President of an actual Great Power merely confirmed our status as a loyal US lapdog. The transparently obvious nature of their posturing was enhanced by the fact that the topic on which they chose to pontificate (the downing of flight MH17 over Ukraine) had already been convincingly shown to be a US/EU beat-up, the physical evidence indicating that the plane was shot down by an air-to-air missile which could only be from a Ukrainian fighter plane.

Nevertheless, the name of the game at the moment is to promote the new Cold War while conducting numerous hot wars for control of the world's resources. Propaganda, beat-ups, lies and conspiracies are all part of the paraphernalia of this endeavour. Of course, imperialism is an old hand at using lies and hatching conspiracies, so much so that many thinking people no longer trust anything

imperialist governments say, especially the US government.

A case in point is the Ebola crisis. President Obama has appointed what the US media is calling an "Ebola Czar", a single official to oversee the USA's defence against and response to this deadly infection. But, as Paul Craig Roberts points out, "America's new Ebola Czar is not a medical person but an insider lawyer who served as chief of staff to Vice President Biden." Not exactly impressive credentials for waging a meaningful fight against a disease.

Roberts himself was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy and associate editor of the *Wall Street Journal*. So he's no Lefty. Nevertheless, Roberts makes the pertinent comment: "Little wonder Ebola conspiracy theories are spreading faster than Ebola. And as far as any of us know, the conspiracies could be true."

He then adds a much more worrying comment: "University of Illinois law professor Francis Boyle, an expert of the perfidies of the US government, reminds us that Sierra Leone and Liberia, the countries most affected by the Ebola outbreak, are two West African countries that host US biological warfare laboratories." How's that again? Biological warfare labs? Why are they in Africa and not the USA?

The US has not only spent more (much more) on researching biological or "germ" warfare than any other country, it is the only country to have actually used biological weapons (in Korea). There may be people who think that sort of research is purely for defensive

purposes, but based on past and present US practice, I certainly don't believe it. Do you?

Roberts also notes that "Washington's response is itself peculiar. The Obama regime sent 4,000 US soldiers to West Africa to fight Ebola. Soldiers don't have training or equipment with which to combat Ebola. Why expose 4,000 Americans to an epidemic? This seemingly pointless decision has raised suspicions that Washington is exposing troops to Ebola so that vaccines or treatments can be tested on the troops."

He then brings up a much more sinister suggestion: "Other commentators have noticed that West Africa is an area of Chinese investments. They wonder if Washington is using the cover of Ebola to occupy the countries or even set the disease loose in order to drive out the Chinese. The new US Africa Command was formed to counteract Chinese economic penetration in Africa."

The bourgeois media make great efforts to consistently belittle and dismiss "conspiracy theories" as so much nonsense. But the sad truth is that capitalism indulges in and foments conspiracies all the time. Some are small, others are profound and complex. All are aimed at the working people. So don't move to dismiss Roberts' suggestions too quickly.

However, Canadian science writer Leigh Phillips has a less controversial take on why Ebola has erupted in West Africa. In an interview for *Democracy Now*, he noted that the Ebola outbreak is affecting some of the poorest countries in the world and that it "really demonstrates the moral bankruptcy of capitalism, not just on the one hand in terms of

research, but [in Liberia and Sierra Leone] in West Africa as well, and in Spain.

"We see that the same processes, the same free-market-driven ideology that has reduced these countries to real dire poverty. These three countries that are some of the poorest countries in the world. ... I mean really right at the bottom of the global league tables. And their public healthcare infrastructure has been utterly decimated, not merely by civil war but by a series of processes that are imposed by Western countries, [by] international financial organisations like the International Monetary Fund.

"The sort of structural adjustment that has been imposed in these countries, and many other countries, as well, is what is responsible for the decimation of the healthcare infrastructure in these countries.

"And we're seeing this exact same process in Spain. The European Union has imposed, you know, since the economic crisis, since the eurozone crisis, a series of absolutely brutal austerity programs in the southern flank – in Spain, Italy, Greece, Portugal – and in Ireland, as well.

"The result of this has been, again, a real deterioration of public health infrastructure. Spain has seen basically a quarter of its spending on healthcare cut for the last few years annually. The hospital where we've seen the cases [of Ebola] in Spain, their isolation ward was shut down directly as a result of the imposition of austerity by Brussels.

"I think we need to begin to ask whether capitalism itself is not pathogenic, whether neo-liberalism is not pathogenic." ✪



Sunday November 2 –
Saturday November 8

Ian Fleming, the writer who created James Bond, worked in British Intelligence during the War. Undisciplined, and contemptuous of the distinctions of rank, he nevertheless had a certain flair which kept him from being canned. His experiences gave him the basis for his very successful Bond novels, updated to the Cold War and aided enormously by the inclusion of exotic locations, ingenious if not ludicrous plots and plentiful numbers of buxom, lustful young women.

Far from being true to life, James Bond is the very antithesis of a secret agent. His cover is usually blown from the moment he appears, using his own name of course, and it is only by the application of copious amounts of old-fashioned derring-do that he ever manages to achieve anything. Which makes the new series *Fleming: The Man Who Would Be Bond* (ABC1 Sunday November 2 at 8.30pm) rather suspect, for it posits the view that Bond is somehow based on Fleming's own exploits.

While he probably had an exciting career in Naval Intelligence and possibly elsewhere, Bond is clearly wish-fulfilment. Fleming is played by Dominic Cooper and his main squeeze by Lara Pulver. The sex is fairly graphic for an ABC drama series, an obvious nod to one of Fleming's principal concerns.

James Bond is a fictional Cold War hero. This program appears to be trying to set up Fleming as a real life

one. Considering how many British agents turned out to be working for Moscow, they probably need to build up someone like Fleming.

The Internet's Own Boy: The Story Of Aaron Swartz (ABC2 Sunday November 2 at 9.10pm) is one of those documentaries that constantly bring you up short with their revelations of the depths of perfidy that US imperialism is willing to go to in order to protect the profits of its corporate mates.

Here, the target of the FBI and other Federal agencies and local police is computer hackers. Now some hackers target the big banks and other instruments of capitalism as a way of striking back at the forces that control and adversely affect our lives. Others just steal, from large and small indiscriminately. Aaron Swartz did not steal. He was an activist against internet censorship, and his major "crime" was downloading thousands of legal judgements that are part of the public record in the US but which the public cannot access except on payment of a huge fee to private companies that "control" them.

He was not intending to sell them but he was a high-profile hacker so the FBI and the US government set out to make an example of him, to deter other hackers from exposing embarrassing documents and practices.

FBI agents drove up and down his family's driveway, trying to peer in windows. He was charged with 13 felony offences and threatened with 35 years in jail. His friends were coerced in attempts to get them to stitch him up, his girlfriend was threatened. After a year or more of this pressure, he killed himself.

Written and Directed by Brian Knappenberger, this is a sober but chilling account of how the capitalist state goes about silencing its critics in a "democracy". Swartz was not just a computer whiz. He was an activist. He was largely responsible for the movement that forced the US Congress to vote down a bill that would have eliminated free access to the Internet (spitting it up into separate corporate-controlled units – Rupert



Twilight on ABC2 Wednesday November 5 at 8.30pm repeated on Saturday November 8 at 8.30pm.

Murdoch would have been all for that!).

Aaron Swartz was persecuted for defending basic freedoms of expression and access to legally available information. He was a good speaker and an energetic activist. He was also just a kid. He would make an excellent example, especially for a prosecutor with political ambitions.

A number of individuals and companies declined to be interviewed for the program, but those who agreed speak with a generally progressive voice. In fact, a notable feature of the program is the familiar way these American academics etc speak (usually disparagingly) about capitalism. It puts to shame most Australian academics, afraid of being labelled "left wing".

The ABC has pulled off something of a coup, securing the rights to screen the complete *Twilight*

saga over five weeks on ABC2 starting with the first film in the series, ***Twilight* on Wednesday November 5 at 8.30pm repeated on Saturday November 8 at 8.30pm.**

The *Twilight* saga is a series of four vampire-themed fantasy romance novels by American author Stephenie Meyer. They were not by any means the first such novels but they certainly gave the genre a hell of a boost. They are in fact a damn good read, if you are at all partial to "young adult" fiction. There is romance, adventure, even comedy, mostly told from the point of view of 18-year-old Bella Swann. Meyer has her young vampire hero Edward dismiss many of the usual conventions in the vampire genre with a curt "myth!", but then she adds a few of her own.

Her sci-fi novel *The Host* is also a good read, but was made into a very

disappointing film. The first *Twilight* film however did not disappoint at all. Directed with care by Catherine Hardwicke, it is remarkably faithful to the book, and successfully set the tone for the whole series. Significantly, the first film used very little cgi (making do with old fashioned stunt work). The desire of the production company to use a lot more cgi as well as a hastier production schedule made Hardwicke turn down the rest of the series, which was eventually directed by four other people.

Like most movies it is best seen in a cinema, but at least on the ABC it won't be broken up with ads. I have seen it several times and have it on DVD, so probably won't watch it again. If however you have not seen the romance of Bella and her 18-year-old boyfriend who has been around for 104 years, then enjoy. ☘

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POLITICS IN THE PUB

October 30

THE POLITICS OF MARRIAGE EQUALITY – WHY ARE OUR POLITICIANS APPEASING THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT?

Cat Rose, Convenor, Community Action Against Homophobia (CAAH);

Mehreen Faruqi, Dr, Greens MLC, NSW Parliament;

November 6

WHERE IS THE ALP LEFT & WHAT DOES IT STAND FOR?

John Graham, Assistant General Secretary, NSW Branch, ALP;

Steven Jones, Federal Member for Throsby, and Shadow Assistant Health Minister;

Sally McManus, Secretary Australian Services Union (NSW & ACT);

November 13

THE ONGOING DISGRACE OF HOMELESSNESS:

WHY NEITHER LABOR NOR THE COALITION GETS IT?

Michael Moore, CEO Homelessness NSW;

Sister Anne Jordan, President, Cana Communities;

November 20

REGULATING THE REGULATORS AND WORKPLACE BULLYING – WHEN THE BULLYING REGULATOR FAILS TO TAKE CARE OF ITS OWN

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Anne Gardner, General Secretary Public Service Association;

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The globalisation of war

Michel Chossudovsky*

Central to an understanding of war, is the media campaign which grants it legitimacy in the eyes of public opinion. War has been provided with a humanitarian mandate under NATO's "Responsibility to Protect" (R2P). The victims of US-led wars are presented as the perpetrators of war. Civilians in Ukraine, Syria and Iraq are responsible for their own deaths.

Meanwhile, the Commander in Chief of the largest military force on planet earth is presented as a global peace-maker. The granting of the Nobel "peace prize" in 2009 to President Barack Obama has become an integral part of the Pentagon's propaganda machine. It provides a human face to the invaders, it demonises those who oppose US military intervention.

The Nobel Committee says that President Obama has given the world "hope for a better future". The prize is awarded for Obama's "extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples. The Committee has attached special importance to Obama's vision of and work for a world without nuclear weapons."

His diplomacy is founded in the concept that those who are to lead the world must do so on the basis of values and attitudes that are shared by the majority of the world's population.

Realities are turned upside down. "War is Peace" said George Orwell. The media in chorus upholds war as a humanitarian endeavour. "Wars make us safer and richer" says the *Washington Post*.

The Big Lie becomes The Truth. In turn, upholding The Truth – through careful documentation and investigative analysis of the horrors of US led wars – is casually categorised as "conspiracy theory".

While Washington wages a

"Global War on Terrorism" (GWOT), those who forcefully oppose America's wars of aggression are branded as terrorists. War becomes peace, a worthwhile "humanitarian undertaking". Peaceful dissent becomes heresy.

With unfolding events in Ukraine and the Middle East, humanity is at a dangerous crossroads. At no time since the Cuban Missile Crisis has the world been closer to the unthinkable: a World War III scenario, a global military conflict involving the use of nuclear weapons.

The killing machine is deployed at a global level, within the framework of the unified combat command structure. It is routinely upheld by the institutions of government, the corporate media and the mandarins and intellectuals of the New World Order in Washington's think tanks and strategic studies research institutes, as an unquestioned instrument of peace and global prosperity.

A culture of killing and violence has become imbedded in human consciousness.

War is broadly accepted as part of a societal process: The Homeland needs to be "defended" and protected.

"Legitimised violence" and extrajudicial killings directed against "terrorists" are upheld in western democracies, as necessary instruments of national security.

A "humanitarian war" is upheld by the so-called international community. It is not condemned as a criminal act. Its main architects are rewarded for their contribution to world peace.

Nuclear weapons are heralded by the US government as instruments of peace. The pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons is categorised as an act of "self-defence" which contributes to an illusive concept of "global security".

The so-called "missile defence shield" or "Star Wars" initiative involving the first strike use of



nuclear weapons has been developed globally in different regions of the world. The missile shield is largely directed against Russia, China, Iran and North Korea.

Meanwhile, in the context of unfolding events in Syria and Ukraine, there has been a breakdown of international diplomacy. Whereas a neo-Nazi regime directly supported by the West has been installed in Kiev, the Russian Federation is now threatened by US-NATO with military action on its Western frontier.

New Cold War?

While this renewed East-West confrontation has mistakenly been labelled a "New Cold War", none of the safeguards of the Cold War era prevail. Russia has been excluded from the Group of 8 (G-8), which has reverted to the G-7 (Group of Seven Nations). Diplomacy has collapsed. There is no Cold War East-West dialogue between competing superpowers geared towards avoiding military confrontation. In turn, the United Nations Security Council has become a de facto mouthpiece of the US State Department.

Moreover, nuclear weapons are no longer considered a "weapon of last resort" under the Cold War doctrine of "Mutual Assured Destruction" (MAD). Nuclear weapons are heralded by the Pentagon as "harmless to the surrounding civilian population because the explosion is underground". In 2002, the US Senate gave the green light for the use of nuclear weapons in the conventional war theatre. Nukes are part of the "military toolbox" to be used alongside conventional weapons.

The "Communist threat" of the Cold War era has been replaced by the worldwide threat of "Islamic terrorism". Whereas Russia and China have become capitalist "free market" economies, a first strike pre-emptive nuclear attack is nonetheless contemplated.

China and Russia are no longer considered to be "a threat to capitalism". Quite the opposite. What is at stake is economic and financial rivalry between competing capitalist powers. The China-Russia alliance

under the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) constitutes a "competing capitalist block" which undermines US economic hegemony.

In Asia, the US has contributed under its "Pivot to Asia" to encouraging its Asia-Pacific allies including Japan, Australia, South Korea, The Philippines and Vietnam to threaten and isolate China as part of a process of "military encirclement" of China, which gained impetus in the late 1990s.

Meanwhile, war propaganda has become increasingly pervasive. War is upheld as a peace-making operation.

When war becomes peace, the world is turned upside down. Conceptualisation is no longer possible. An inquisitorial social system emerges. The consensus is to wage war. People can no longer think for themselves. They accept the authority and wisdom of the established social order.

An understanding of fundamental social and political events is replaced by a world of sheer fantasy, where "evil folks" are lurking. The objective of the "Global War on Terrorism" narrative – which has been fully endorsed by the US administration – has been to galvanise public support for a worldwide campaign against heresy.

Global warfare

The Pentagon's global military design is one of world conquest. The military deployment of US-NATO forces is occurring in several regions of the world simultaneously.

The concept of the "Long War" has characterised US military doctrine since the end of World War II. Worldwide militarisation is part of a global economic agenda.

Militarisation at the global level is instrumented through the US military's Unified Command structure: the entire planet is divided up into geographic Combatant Commands under the control of the Pentagon. US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska plays a central role in coordinating military operations.

While surrounding and

confronting Russia and China, new US military bases have been set up with a view to establishing US spheres of influence in every region of the world. There has been a reinforcement of the six geographic commands including the creation in 2008 of United States Africa Command (AFRICOM).

As heralded by the Pentagon, AFRICOM becomes a "full-spectrum combatant command" responsible for what are described as "defence" and US "national security" operations "through focused, sustained engagement with partners in support of our shared security objectives". AFRICOM's area of jurisdiction extends to the entire "African continent, its island nations, and surrounding waters".

This US militarisation of Africa supports the concurrent economic conquest of the continent, the pillage of its natural resources, the acquisition of its extensive oil and gas reserves, etc.

AFRICOM is an instrument of a US led neo-colonial project in alliance with the Britain which consists in expanding the Anglo-American sphere of influence specifically in Central Africa, Francophone West Africa and North Africa largely at the expense of France.

While the US has military bases and/or facilities in more than 150 countries, with 160,000 active-duty personnel, the construction of new military bases is envisaged in Latin America including Colombia on the immediate border of Venezuela.

Military aid to Israel has increased. The Obama presidency has expressed its unbending support for Israel and the Israeli military, which is slated to play a key role in US-NATO led wars in the Middle East. The unspoken agenda is outright elimination of Palestine and the instatement of "Greater Israel".

*Michel Chossudovsky, *The Globalisation of War. America's Long War against Humanity*, excerpt from forthcoming book, Global Research Publishers, 2014. Expected date of publication Nov-Dec 2014. globalresearch.ca ☺

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