

On February 15 - 16 Say NO to war

Worldwide demonstrations against a war on Iraq will take place on the weekend of February 15-16. More than ten million people will mobilise against the war plans of the axis of warmongers – US President Bush, British PM Blair and Australian PM Howard. The Australian people will be part of this global protest that is saying “NO” to war.

Every effort must be made to make these demonstrations as large and as broad as possible.

At the moment the forces for peace have checked the warmongers. Global opposition to a war is growing by the day and hour, and these demonstrations will be crucial in helping prevent war.

The Australian, British and American people must force their governments to bring home the tens of thousands of troops and huge arsenal of weapons that are now gathered on Iraq's border, waiting for the order to invade.

Just as it did in 1990, the US is coercing, bullying and bribing UN members to vote for war. The Bush administration has prepared a new resolution it will attempt to force through the UN Security Council

that would declare Iraq in “material breach” of its UN obligations, and endorse military action.

The head of the UN weapons inspectors, Hans Blix, is due to report to the Security Council on February 14. Blix has challenged several of the Bush Administration's assertions about Iraqi cheating and the notion that time was running out for disarming Iraq through peaceful means.

Eminent world leaders, scientists, writers, entertainers, doctors and even experienced military personnel have joined voices for peace, and they continue to grow in number.

The leader of South Africa's victorious anti-apartheid struggle, Nelson Mandela, told the International Women's Forum in Johannesburg: “What I am condemning

is that one power, with a president [Bush] who has no foresight and cannot think properly, is now wanting to plunge the world into a holocaust”.

Mr Mandela said without reservation that he would not support UN-sanctioned war on Iraq. He described Tony Blair as “the Foreign Minister of the United States. He is no longer Prime Minister of Britain”.

A war against Iraq, involving the use of “800 cruise missiles in 48 hours” and unprecedented numbers of other weapons of mass destruction against innocent civilians would be a criminal act against humanity.

It would inflict famine, disease and death on millions of Iraqis and would take the region, and the whole world to the brink of conflict.

The Howard Government has made Australia an accomplice to this monumental crime and will be condemned along with Bush and Blair for participation in such a barbaric act. ACT NOW!

JOIN THE ACTIONS! ✪



PEACE ACTIONS

Melbourne

No war on Iraq: Rally for Peace
Friday 14th February 5pm
State Library, City
Victoria Peace Network
9659 3582 www.vicpeace.org
CICD 9663 3677

Sydney

Walk for Peace
Sunday 16th February noon
from Hyde Park North
Contacts: Alison 9389 2084;
Nick 0409 762 081;
Bruce 9386 1240;
Hannah 0418 668 089

Canberra

Anti-war rally
Saturday 15th February 11am
Garema Place, Civic
Contact: ACT Network Opposing War,
actnow_canberra@hotmail.com or
phone 0417 2699 8402

Hobart

Rally Saturday 15th February
details to come
Contact: Peace Trust - David Burn
david@lhmu.org.au 6224 9288 or
Unions Tasmania 6234 9553

Darwin

No war on Iraq rally
Sunday 16th February, 11am
Oleander St,
next to Nightcliff Market
Contact: Environment Centre
ecnt@octa4.net.au 08 8981 1984

Launceston

Contact: Launceston Peace Action
Network
www.elaunceston.com/people/peace/
Terence Seymour 0409 414 562

Perth

Dawn-to-dusk fast for peace
every Friday
on Parliament House steps
No war on Iraq rally
Saturday 15th February 11am
Forrest Pl., City
NoWar Alliance(08) 9218 9608

Wollongong

Saturday 8th February 10.30am
March from Fred Moore House to
Wollongong Mall Ampitheatre
Contact: South Coast No War,
Leanne Ph: 02 42251 339

Adelaide

Don't attack Iraq
Sunday 16th February 11.45am
Assemble at Victoria Square
for 12 noon walk to Parliament
House via King William,
Grenfell & Pultney Sts
and North Tce to
Parliament House
Speakers: Brian Deegan,
Mem Fox & David Palmer

Brisbane

Rally for peace
Sunday 16th February 12 noon
Queensland University of
Technology Riverstage
March across Goodwill Bridge
Contact: Queensland Peace Network
Gavin Sawford (QCU) 3846 2468

The hard sell of hypocrisy and lies

Rolling around the world the gathering storm of people's opposition is lashing the war drive of the US, British and Australian Governments. The "hard sell" being undertaken by Bush, Blair and Howard to justify war is being increasingly recognised and dismissed as lies and hypocrisy. Once again they are trotting out the outrageous deception that they are concerned about peace and that no decision for war has been taken. Bush declares that he would launch war to maintain peace!

Peace will never be achieved by the building of a huge war machine and threats to use nuclear weapons.

"Not in our name" is the reply of those who vehemently oppose the war preparations.

"No blood for oil" sums up the incisive understanding of the real objectives of the Anglo-American oil lobby whose cause is being pursued by their respective governments.

The mass media is playing a particularly despicable role. It gives top billing to any and every statement by Bush, Blair, Colin Powell, Howard and their like. The worldwide sweep of the peace movement that even now is making these warmongering politicians waver, goes largely unreported. The statement of Hans Blix disputing interpretations being given to his report to the UN Security Council by Colin Powell and President Bush has been virtually ignored. The demonisation of Iraq and North Korea that underpins the whole war drive remains uncontested by the media. This is understandable coming from the likes of Packer and Murdoch.

The present is a defining moment for all nations, all governments and each individual. A war on Iraq and on many other countries over the next few years would result in the deaths of hundreds of millions of people. Only those governments and individuals that make a genuine stand for peace will be able to say that their hands are clean.

It is to be hoped that journalists find the courage to take a principled stand and do more to tell the truth about the warmongers and, thereby, help save the world from the greatest possible disaster.

Beware provocations

The *Los Angeles Times* has revealed the creation of an organisation by US Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld called the "Proactive, Pre-emptive Operations Group" Its purpose is to "bring together CIA and military covert action, information warfare, intelligence, and cover and deception". The PPOG's role is to manufacture the terrorism that is to be combatted.

Faced with the massive opposition to their war plans Bush and his team may again be planning some terrorist act to provoke massive revulsion and whip a sceptical and reluctant world into supporting war against Iraq and other targets.

Chris Floyd of *CounterPunch* writes, "The US Government is planning to use 'cover and deception' and secret military operations to provoke murderous terrorist attacks on innocent people. Such operations are not new for the United States authorities.

"Operations Northwoods" was such a scheme. It was a plan put forward by America's top military brass in 1963 to justify the invasion of Cuba. It called for a phony terrorist campaign complete with bombings, hijackings, plane crashes and dead Americans to provide justification for an invasion of Cuba. President Kennedy rejected the plan – and was assassinated a few months later.

Another similar provocation was a reported attack by Vietnamese naval craft on the US navy in the Tonkin Gulf. It was used by President Johnson to escalate the invasion of Vietnam by American forces. It was subsequently revealed that the incident never took place – but that was after hundreds of thousands of soldiers and millions of civilians were killed in the Vietnam War.

Many believe that the events of September 11 were another such provocation using a terrorist organisation infiltrated by the CIA and under its effective control. There is no other logical explanation for the complete failure of the interception of the hijacked planes that crashed into the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon. September 11 has been used by Bush, Rumsfeld, Cheney and others to launch the phony "war on terrorism".

The "war on terrorism" requires a steady stream of alleged "terrorist" actions and who better to arrange them than the CIA and Rumsfeld's "Proactive, Pre-emptive Operations Group" or other "special" forces.

PRESS FUND

This week the Press Fund received a very welcome and greatly appreciated contribution of \$1000. Just what is needed at such a critical time for our and our planet's future survival. Just when every effort is required to expose the lying warmongers and their propaganda machines. The war can still be stopped. It is not inevitable. Bush, Blair and Howard are finding it harder every day. Our warmest thanks to this week's contributors:

In memory of Audrey Johnson from Kate, Fiona, Mark & Christine \$1000

Bert Appleton \$20, Hannah and Denis *Guardian* tin \$60.

This week's total: \$1080 Progressive total: \$1770.

Human Shields Speak Out

Last Wednesday, a group of well-wishers carrying banners and placards gathered at the Adelaide airport to farewell the first of the human shields volunteering to go from South Australia to stand with the Iraqi people. Edward Cranswick is a US citizen of Australian background who worked for the US Government's Geological Survey for 22 years. Ruth Russell is a project officer with the SA Department of Human Services and a Tea Tree Gully city councillor. She is also a member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and the Australian Democrats. Federal Democrat Senators Andrew Bartlett and Natasha Stott Despoja and Ron Gray from the Australian Peace Committee (SA) addressed the gathering. Earlier in the week, Ruth spoke to Bob Britton from *The Guardian* about her forthcoming trip to Iraq.

Guardian: Firstly, what led you to make this decision?

Ruth: Why am I doing it? All my life I've been working toward making this a better world and I believe that war, which is essentially killing and violence, is not the answer. If there is a problem the international community, through the United Nations, needs to work together to work out how are they going to change the situation with what they call "rogue states" or human rights abusers.

We need to find different solutions – not bombing people. The trouble with bombing is that the innocent people around get hurt.

In the last Gulf War all the sewerage works were knocked out by American bombs. That meant that all the water was polluted. How was that a military target? All that it hurt was the civilian population.

G: What do you think will happen when you arrive in Iraq?

R: I'm going as part of an effort by ten international peace groups. We're planning to go in peace and to be working in hospitals, schools, being with host families, some possibly camping at military targets. We're going essentially to say to the people that not every Australian supports our Government's stand on this. We don't believe that war is right.

G: How do you react to reports that at least one of the hostages held in Iraq during the Gulf War has come out and said that the Iraqi Government will probably use the human shields as part of some sort of propaganda exercise?

R: No, I clearly don't support the human rights abuses that have been carried out by Saddam Hussein's

regime. There mustn't be any confusion about why we are there. This is why, before we go, we should be very clear to the world that the reason we are going is that we don't think this war is right. Even if Saddam Hussein tries to manipulate us through PR, we've already made it perfectly plain all around the world why we're going there.

G: Do you worry about any possible future repercussions for yourself from the Australian Government or allied governments – problems with employment or travel, for example?

R: I've been told very clearly that I run a very high personal risk that, even if I come back from Iraq, that I can be blackballed, I might lose my job, I might be harassed and, of course, there's also the risk that I might be captured by America or Australia and that they'd just treat me as a traitor. That's why I need to be speaking out now and letting people know that I'm a bona fide pacifist and don't believe in war. It's a very high risk I run either way.

G: You've mentioned Become the Change. Could you tell us what you know about the extent of the worldwide movement to lend this sort of support to the Iraqi people?

R: Become the Change is one of the ten international peace organisations involved that I've made the pledge with. They are based on the principles of Mahatma Gandhi who said that we have to become the change that we want to see in the world. That's their philosophy. I'm not sure how many members they've got.

One of the other groups is Voices in the Wilderness. They've had a lot of their members working in Iraq in

a peace team over the last ten years. Voices in the Wilderness were actually part of the human shield that was in place in the Gulf in 1991. They've had a continued presence there over the last ten years and they'll be providing a lot of information and help with their local networks in Iraq for the people like me who will be arriving there in the convoys.

G: It seems that the Australian Government has very little concern for the welfare of Australian citizens that have ended up in Guantanamo Bay, don't you agree?

R: One of the interesting things that has happened – and my situation highlights it – that had they been able to get the ASIO Bill in, technically I could have been taken away at any time and held as a suspected terrorist, without any evidence.

I could have been held incognito and with no legal representation. That was the type of law that Howard wanted to bring into Australia. It's pretty scary and, thank goodness, that legislation has not gone through.

We must be aware that these are the sorts of risks that there are in these moves. Somebody like me who speaks out from their conscience runs that risk of being misinterpreted and labelled as a terrorist or a traitor.

G: I saw on an item on the 7.30 Report where the Reverend Neville Watson of the Uniting Church, who is going over to Iraq, said that he is going simply to be with the people and that the idea of being a human shield in a military sense is misguided. He said that invading forces would have no respect for the lives of the human shields in those circumstances. What do you make of these views?

R: I think he's probably right. When we say "human shield", it's very emotional and I personally want to go and stand with the Iraqi people to say to them "listen, we come in peace and we don't agree with this". So, I support his stand.

We are going to a war zone and we are automatically putting our lives at risk. So we are human shields because we are going to where the action is. I'm not sure where I'll be going but wherever it is, I'll be spreading the word that I don't agree on the Australian Government's stand on this war. ☘



Ruth Russell speaks about her forthcoming trip to Iraq.

Photo: Avante Media Australia

Legal expert attacks "terror" bills

Last Wednesday, while addressing the National Press Club luncheon, distinguished Professor of Public Law George Williams scathingly reviewed the Howard government's "terror" legislation.

by Peter Mac

Since September 11, 2001, many Western governments have sought to introduce new legislation to curb terrorism. In Australia, the Howard and NSW Governments have done so.

The Howard Government's original legislation was ostensibly aimed at creating new legal offences for engaging in or planning a terrorist act, receiving terrorist training or being involved with a terrorist organisation. This legislation, with major amendments, was finally enacted as the *Security Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2002* (the "terror" law).

Australia is the only country on earth whose government has sought to detain non-suspects in secret without trial.

The original "terror" law criminalised harmful or damaging actions intended to advance "a political, religious or ideological cause". As Professor Williams commented: "This could have subjected Australians engaged in minor unlawful civil protest to life imprisonment, including farmers, unionists, students, environmentalists and even Internet protesters ... (It) would not (have been) out of place in ... Pinochet's Chile."

Professor Williams likened the Federal Government's "terrorism" initiatives to Sir Robert Menzies' 1950 legislation to ban the Communist Party, which was rejected by the High Court and then by a referendum of the Australian people.

Although Howard once declared himself opposed to this legislation, Professor Williams noted striking

similarities between it and Howard's original "terror" Bill.

He commented: "In provisions seemingly modelled on the Menzies anti-communist legislation, the terrorism bill also empowered the Federal Attorney-General to ban organisations, accompanied by 25 years imprisonment for their members and supporters."

The counterpart of this legislation, the *ASIO Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2002*, (the "ASIO" bill) has been rejected by Parliament and will be reconsidered in the current sitting of Federal Parliament.

Civil rights are even more threatened by this legislation, which allows for both adults and children to be strip-searched and detained incommunicado and indefinitely for rolling two-day periods, and for non-suspects to be detained if ASIO believes they could provide information regarding terrorism.

Professor Williams noted that Australia is the only country on earth whose government has sought to detain non-suspects in secret without trial. He stated: "... a journalist could be detained without access to legal advice and denied their right to silence or to protect their sources. A failure to answer a question put by ASIO would be punishable by a five-year jail term."

He also commented acidly that the government's indefinite and incommunicado detention policy "is consistent with the Government's acquiescence in the indefinite detention of David Hicks and Mamdouh Habib by the United States military at ... Guantanamo Bay".

Under amendments to the legislation now agreed to by the Government, ASIO could still detain non-suspects and child suspects as young as 14 years, without legal representation. The ALP has demanded that questioning be limited to 20 hours and that the right to legal representation be preserved, but the Democrats and the Greens have rejected the legislation outright.

The Bill also contains areas of dangerous ambiguity.

Professor Williams says there is "a strong case for Australian citizens being compelled to answer questions about information they have on terrorist activity. This should override their right to silence."

"This approach would focus the law on the questioning and not the detention of people with useful information. ... Once the questioning has ended, a person must be free to go."

The bill does compel citizens to answer questions about terrorist activity, but does not leave them free to go. It also begs the question: could the reply, "I don't know" to a question be deemed to be a non-answer, with a possible penalty of five years jail?

Professor Williams said that the original "terrorism" legislation could be used "in 10, 20 or even 50 years time against the Australian people by an unscrupulous government". But what is to prevent the present government from using the draconian powers of the ASIO Bill – or any such legislation – against the Australian people the moment it is passed?

And finally, a fundamental question remains about both pieces of legislation. Many people have assumed that new laws were essential to combat terrorism. Yet the laws that existed prior to September 11 provided ample powers for the state to arrest, interrogate, prosecute and punish terrorists.

The outstanding characteristic of the new legislation is not so much that it would provide the state with improved powers to combat terrorism as that it would strip the Australian people of very basic civil rights.

Regarding the laws needed to govern during national crisis most would agree that: "... there must be as little interference with individual rights as is consistent with concerted national effort ... the greatest tragedy that could overcome a country would be for it to fight a successful war in defiance of liberty and to lose its own liberty in the process". And who said that? It was Sir Robert Menzies, on the outbreak of WWII in 1939. ☼

Crown workers consider casino offer

Workers at Melbourne's Crown Casino are currently considering an improved offer from management in their enterprise bargaining negotiations. The new offer, which includes a guaranteed 12.5 percent wage increase over three years, was forced out of Crown after a determined campaign by staff, members of the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union (LHMU).

They will consider the whole enterprise bargaining document over the coming week before voting on it. There have been two walkouts in the past two months over management's stalling and bullying tactics.

Workers were spoken to individually by management as part of a program of intimidation but the union said that this served to increase support for the campaign.

Last month more than 1000 workers walked off the job for a four-hour stoppage from all sections of the casino – food and beverage,

games tables, gaming machines, security and warehouse. The casino reacted by locking them out for the duration of their shifts.

This only caused further angry reaction among the night shift dealers. They came into work, got changed, went down to the pit, swiped on and then left to join the locked out workers.

And while the company worked hard to spin the line that the action had hardly any effect on business, gamblers were telling the media how shocked and amazed they were at the

amount of tables that were closed.

The LHMU estimates that nearly one-in-four tables were closed (there are 3000 LHMU members at Crown). The union was seeking a 20 percent pay increase over three years; Crown offered 10.25 percent.

Other issues include the removal of the entry level salary structure, better annual leave provisions, workers' entitlements, parental leave and union rights.

"The entry level salary structure is a key equity issue", said LHMU acting Assistant Secretary Connie DeNino, "because union members are losing thousands of dollars in wages. The company wants to roll back some of the union rights provisions, including pay roll deductions and the union office inside the casino." ☼

SA Gets First State Green MP



Kris Hanna (above), the Member for the state seat of Mitchell, injected some interest into South Australian parliamentary politics last week when he announced his decision to leave the ALP and apply for membership of the Greens.

by Bob Briton

Kris explained that the betrayal of traditional ALP values by both the federal and the governing state Labor Parties had pushed him to make the decision. The Rann Government's "tough on crime" posturing, its promotion of backdoor privatisation through "public/private partnerships" and the tendency of the parliamentary party to legislate for the sake of conservative media approval had proven too much for the former Labor member.

On federal issues, Kris is critical of the ALP's failure to come up with a principled policy of opposition to any war on Iraq. The question that had brought about a breaking point, though, was when Labor made very little effort to distance itself from the Howard government and its inhumane treatment of asylum seekers.

The Greens considered and accepted Kris' application to join the state party at a special conference held last Saturday. Federal Greens Senator Bob Brown had already given his backing to the move.

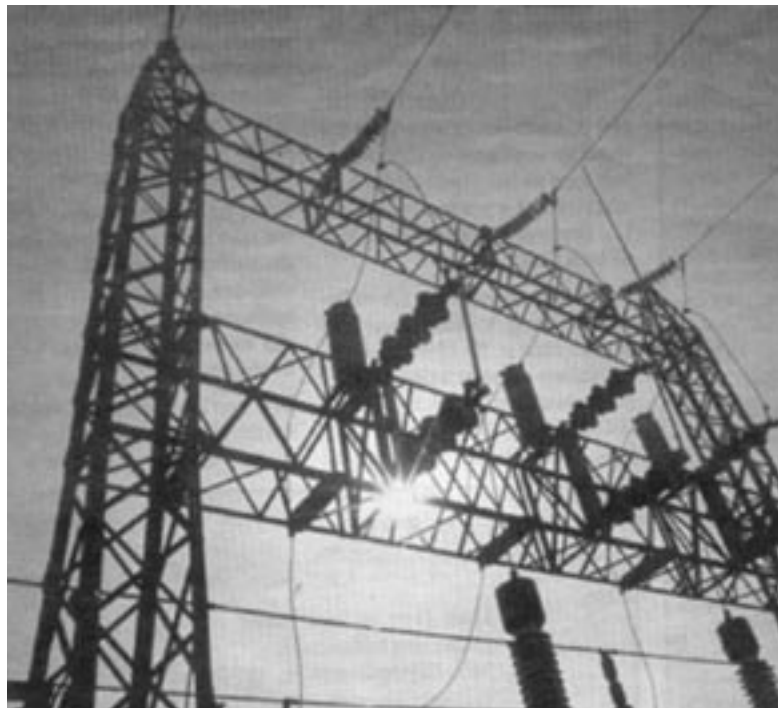
Kris summed up his motives in a piece in *The Advertiser* last Saturday:

"I have applied to join the Australian Greens. They're the only party going anywhere today and it's because of their integrity and idealism. ... Sadly, I have come to believe that only by leaving the Labor Party can I effectively represent my constituents and the South Australians who most need a Labor Government."

In the meantime, the knives of the Murdoch editors and columnists are out for the member for Mitchell. Disturbing the cosy two-party club of government is not on. While little was made of former Liberal, later independent, Peter Lewis switching his graphically expressed allegiances to back the ALP and help give it government following the last elections, Kris is being told that he must recontest his seat immediately.

Even Federal Opposition leader Simon Crean – from the same party that gleefully welcomed Cheryl Kernot's "defection" – feels that the public is sick of people being elected under one banner only to have them switch later on. This was said with a straight face, apparently. ☼

More SA power woes



Some more footnotes were added recently to the pathetic story of South Australia's privatised electricity utility.

by Bob Briton

A crisis threatened a fortnight ago when an accident at Santos' Moomba plant in the State's far north closed down production at what is still SA's only source of gas. The mishap reportedly resulted from a 10 sq cm piece of metal cut from a pipe being drawn into the flare system of the plant. Repairs were expected to take from three to four days.

The shutdown had the potential to leave gas driven electricity generating facilities without supplies. The resulting shortfall in generating capacity could not be made up from interstate sources through the various interconnectors and so a full-blown emergency loomed.

The State Government announced restrictions for larger industries and householders were set to have limits placed on their electricity usage. Fortunately,

the necessary repairs were completed ahead of schedule; sparing the long-suffering public some more electricity related heartburn.

The shutdown had the potential to leave gas driven electricity generating facilities without supplies.

Blackouts have dogged the State's electricity supply in recent months.

Last week it was revealed that NRG – the transnational with a cash-strapped US parent company – had tried to make windfall profits out of the emergency.

At the height of the crisis NRG, which operates the coal fired plants at Port Augusta, withdrew 170MW

of power from the market and raised its offering price from \$269 per megawatt hour to \$9697!

The company had pulled off a similar coup in December when it managed to get \$3102 per megawatt hour in place of the \$59 being paid up until that time of peak demand. This time there weren't any takers at the inflated price. Who knows what might have happened had the State's gas crisis deepened.

All the usual sources professed outage. State Treasurer Kevin Foley, the Essential Services Commission Chairman, Lew Owens, the National Electricity Code Administrator and Murdoch's *Advertiser* all expressed their regret at this entirely predictable consequence of the National Electricity Market's rebidding system.

Despite all the bad press, however, it seems that what NRG did was proper and perfectly legal in the best capitalist tradition. ☘

LABOUR NOTES

Last Saturday private prison guards at the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre in Brisbane took strike action as management refused to hold meetings with the union and workers as recommended by the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. The 24-hour strike follows an earlier one on January 8. Ron Monaghan, Queensland Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers' Union (LHMU) Secretary, said prior to the strike, "The failure to sit down and negotiate around the table means that prisoners at the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre will have to be locked down and regular weekend visits from their families will be denied for security reasons. He said the union's members did not want to deny prisoners these rights but felt they were being forced to act because their employer refused to respect its workforce. The Queensland Industrial Relations Commission handed down a recommendation that Australasian Correctional Management should schedule meetings with the union and its members to allow for further negotiations.

Refugee detention centre workers at Australia's six centres have forced Australasian Correctional Management (ACM) to pay the \$18 Living Wage increase – and backdate the payment to last September – following a threat to call their first ever 24-hour national strike. More than 500 workers at Port Hedland and Perth in Western Australia, Woomera and Baxter in South Australia, Maribyrnong in Victoria and Villawood in Sydney were planning to stop work. "In a last minute deal ACM ... decided to avoid the embarrassment of a national strike by paying a wage increase which all other low-waged workers have had in their pockets since last year", LHMU Assistant National Secretary Jo-anne Schofield said. "The company first met with us last Friday – only after we issued the threat of a strike – to discuss the workforce's long-standing concerns." The union had considerable problems getting the company to sit down and talk with its members.

Victorian Trades Hall Council Secretary Leigh Hubbard has warned trade unionists to expect increased anti-union activity from the Federal Government when the Cole Royal Commission report is handed down next month. Mr Hubbard said the Howard Government would use the Commission's findings to justify the intensification of attacks on basic union rights. "The Royal Commission has been exposed as a blatant exercise in union bashing. The government has wasted over \$60 million in tax payers' money in an attempt to destroy the CFMEU." The union movement must conduct a unified campaign to stop any further attack on workers democratic rights Mr Hubbard said. "I would urge all union members and activists to attend a rally at Trades Hall on February 6 in support of building unions and CFMEU State Secretary Martin Kingham as the first step in a campaign to defend basic union rights in 2003." Martin Kingham will appear in the Melbourne Magistrates Court on February 6 to face charges arising out of the Cole Royal Commission. The rally will be held on February 6, at 9am at Trades Hall to coincide with Martin Kingham's court appearance.

Vic library staff on strike

Staff at the State Library of Victoria have voted to take strike action following a break down in Enterprise Bargaining discussions and in protest at the low wages paid at the State Library of Victoria.

They are paid less than their colleagues in other public, university and school libraries across Victoria.

This was confirmed in a recent survey by the Australian Library and Information Association prepared as part of the 2002 test case application

by the Public Services Association of NSW to their Industrial Relations Commission.

Around Australia, all State Libraries pay higher wages than the State Library of Victoria.

The State Libraries of South

Australia and NSW as well as the National Library pay librarians and library technicians 11.7 per cent more on average.

The starting rate for a qualified professional at the State Library of Victoria is less than \$30,000 per annum. Some librarians and library technicians with more than ten years at the library, are still paid less than \$30,000 p.a.

The staff are members of the Community and Public Sector Union, have been agitating for pay parity with a new career structure for years.

Recruitment and retention of qualified experienced staff is difficult. Resources that could be invested in the existing workforce are wasted on expensive premiums being paid for recruitment and advertising because of the high turnover.

Their Certified Agreement expired last December and in the current round of negotiations library management has offered only a three percent p.a. wage increase and rejected outright the union's demand for a proper career structure which offers employees the opportunity for parity and progression.

This left staff with no alternative taking industrial action. ☘



COMMUNIST YOUTH OF AUSTRALIA

WORKING BEE

- ☘ **WHEN: SUNDAY 9 FEB, 12 NOON - 1:30PM.**
- ☘ **WHERE: CPA SYDNEY CENTRAL BRANCH, 65 CAMPBELL ST, SURRY HILLS, SYDNEY.**
- ☘ **GETTING PEOPLE TO SIGN PEACE PETITIONS**
- ☘ **MAKING PLACARDS,**
- ☘ **MAKING "NO WAR ON IRAQ" BADGES**

**FOR THE "WALK AGAINST THE WAR" RALLY
FEBRUARY 16 12 NOON HYDE PARK NORTH**

Ruling on Yorta Yorta claim strikes blow at land rights

The recognition of the rights of Indigenous Australians to native title and land rights suffered a big blow with the High Court's recent decision rejecting a Yorta Yorta native title claim.

Back in 1994, the Yorta Yorta lodged a claim over about 2000 square kilometres in NSW and Victoria. They sought title and management rights over the Barmah and Millewa red gum forests on either side of the Murray River as a jointly managed national park.

In 1998 the Federal Court handed down a decision rejecting the claim, on the basis that the Yorta Yorta had stopped occupying their land in accordance with traditional laws and customs.

Justice Olney of the Federal Court said, "the tide of history has indeed washed away any real acknowledgement of [Yorta Yorta people's] traditional laws and any real observance of their traditional customs".

In considering an appeal, five out of seven High Court judges upheld the Federal Court's decision. Adding a sting to the tail of their disappointment, the Court made orders for them to pay costs for the appeal!

"When will the tide of history turn?" asks William Jones, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner in the article published in *Koori Mail*.

Here is what he writes:

The High Court's decision on the Yorta Yorta people and their claim to native title established a test for recognition that many indigenous people would find impossible to meet.

The claimants must prove that the society under whose laws and customs native title rights arise has continued to exist from colonial rule until now. As such they must prove a continual observance and acknowledgement of traditional laws and customs.

How such continuity can be established was not elaborated upon, except to concede it would be very difficult.

It was clear, however, that evidence that there had been a short interruption to this acknowledgement and observance in the late 19th century was considered sufficient to make a finding that native title could not be recognised.

The difficulty of establishing native title contrasts markedly with

the ease with which it can be extinguished.

Four months ago, the High Court handed down two native title decisions that reduced native title to a minor interest in land.

In the *Miriwung Gajerrong* case, the High Court confirmed native title could be extinguished on a piecemeal basis whenever there was an inconsistency between non-Indigenous rights and native title rights.

In the *Wilson and Anderson* decision, the High Court found that perpetual use leases created under the Western Lands Act completely extinguished native title over 42 per cent of NSW.

With these two decisions it is clear that even if native title is recognised it poses absolutely no threat to non-Indigenous interests.

There is no longer a need to find co-existence from a reconciliation of interests.

The test of extinguishment ensures non-Indigenous interests will always prevail.

These legal tests for the recognition and extinguishment of native title together ensure the economic, social and cultural outcomes that naive title could deliver to Indigenous people will never eventuate.

The hope that native title could deliver economic outcomes, with Indigenous people taking control of assets and resources on their land, is gone.

Agreement-making, heralded as the way forward for native title holders, will be framed by laws that give greater bargaining power to the non-Indigenous interests.

The social benefits arising from the co-existence of Indigenous and non-Indigenous interests on land must be found outside the native title arena.

The cultural benefits of having Indigenous laws and customs recognised as a vital and necessary part of the lives and contemporary Indigenous people is replaced by a notion of native title as a heritage value only.

The High Court and the Government have been made aware of other ways to give recognition to Indigenous people's inherent right to land.

The United Nations has made it clear that Australia's approach to native title and indigenous issues generally does not meet the standards agreed to by most developed countries.

In 1999 and 2000 the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) called on Australia to reformulate native title laws with the informed consent of Indigenous people affected by them.

A human rights approach to the recognition of native title would require the Australian legal system to give respectful and non-discriminatory recognition to a system of law and culture whose origins are external to and different from itself.

The process would be meeting of two cultures, and the development of an understanding between them.

Native title would provide a vehicle for the continued enjoyment of Indigenous culture within the protection of the common law or legislature. It would not seek to exclude or extinguish, but to give Indigenous people full enjoyment of their inherent rights.

The legal test which underlies the court's rejection of the Yorta Yorta people's appeal was based on the High Court's fundamental assumption about the relationship between law and society. They said:

"Law and custom arise out of, and, in important respects, go to define a particular society. In this context, 'society' is to be understood as a body of persons united in and by its acknowledgement and observance of a body of law and customs."

In the High Court's view, society is defined by and reflected in the laws it observes.

The High Court was directing this assumption to Indigenous people, their laws and their society.

It required the claimant group to prove that the society of which it is a part is fully constituted around a system of laws that existed prior to colonial rule.

It is a high standard of proof in an age where society is more characterised by a diversity of views and identities than a unanimous set of values reflected in one legal system. Yet it remains a society.

For many Indigenous people, whose identity is moulded by a diverse range of influences, institutions and laws it provides a demeaning test, casting doubt upon, in most cases, the most significant aspect of their identity, their Indigenous identity.

The irony of the High Court's assumption about the relationship between the laws and the society that observes them is understood when it is applied to contemporary Australian society.

On this assumption what does the law of native title say about contemporary Australian society and how does it define who we are?

Is contemporary Australian society one that will uphold laws that discriminate against Indigenous people?

With native title law in its current form, the answer to this question must be yes.

I can only hope that the High Court is wrong when it assumes that laws are a reflection of society.

I can only hope that there are many, many people who will find native title laws intolerable. ☹



Yorta Yorta people march in Melbourne following the High Court ruling.

Photo: Koori Mail



NSW Greens MP Lee Rhiannon has called on the Carr Government to address the fundamental problem dogging the Villawood detention centre in Sydney. The problem with the Villawood detention centre, said Ms Rhiannon, "is that it exists. The ultimate cause of the disruption in the centres is that there are large numbers of refugees being held in detention when they should be in the community."

Still on the Greens front, in South Australia Labor backbencher Kris Hanna has resigned from the Labor Party and joined the Greens. "These days populism rules the Labor Party, not principle", he said. "Too many Labor leaders focus on balancing the books and mastering the media." Mr Hanna is the first Greens representative in the South Australian Parliament. He said one of the issues that moved him to resign was Labor's position on asylum seekers. "It's [treatment of asylum seekers is] so blatantly unfair and an abuse of human rights which would continue under a Federal Labor government." He is also opposed to a war on Iraq.

Lying hypocrites that they are, the Howard Government meantime has launched a "Workplace Giving" program to allow workers to donate \$2 tax-free a week to charities. The aim is to create a "culture of generosity". Corporations such as ABN Amro, Citigroup and Pricewaterhouse Coopers have already got their charity programs up and running. Bloated with profits thanks to corporate welfare, tax breaks and cheaper labour, these corporations are the real charity cases – funded by taxpayers, bailed out, bolstered and ballyhooed by the Government. The shift to charities and philanthropy, the move away from government responsibility for the provision of services, handing the reins of the economy to big business, massive spending on the military – sounds a lot like what used to be called the military industrial complex and which nowadays is called the corporate state.

CAPITALIST HOG OF THE WEEK: is the pharmaceutical industry. Raking in trillions in profits through, among other things, depriving Third World countries of life-saving medicines – such are the dirty machinations of the global drug monopoly. What should be scientific research and development towards profoundly humane ends is subverted into a means for enriching already disgustingly rich drug company directors and major shareholders. Here in Australia they're pushing for the destruction of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, with the backing of the Howard Government. They also wine and dine medical specialist to have them favour their particular brand. Self-regulation being the order of the day, instead of the Government banning such practices, the drug companies have come up with guidelines themselves. So now at these promotional events the bribe subjects are not to be served lobster, seafood platters or caviar, are not to be given free tickets to sporting, cultural and artistic events, there's to be no golfing weekends, no raunchy chorus girl type entertainment, and so on. What can you say but ... rotten to the core.



William Jones

Photo: Koori Mail

War without end

So you think the war on Iraq is all about weapons of mass destruction? **WRONG!**

Maybe about Saddam Hussein's dictatorship – about “regime change”? **WRONG!**

About Iraqi links with al Qaida or other terrorists? **WRONG!**

That Iraq has not complied with the UN Security Council resolutions? **WRONG AGAIN.**

That the US and Britain (and their Australian deputy sheriff) are about bringing “freedom and democracy”? **WRONG.**

About seizing control of Iraq's oil? That is a main part of the plan but even that is not all.

by Anna Pha and Peter Symon

“Regardless of whether we say so publicly”, said defence intelligence expert Anthony H Cordesman of the influential Washington Center For Strategic and International Studies, “we will go to war because Saddam sits at the centre of a region with more than 60% of all the world's oil reserves.”

In a draft plan prepared by the Pentagon and quoted in the *New York Times* (9/3/92) it was stated quite bluntly: “In the Middle East and South West Asia our overall objective is to remain the predominant outside power in the region and preserve US and western access to the region's oil.”

Ten years on that objective has not changed.

Vice President Dick Cheney received an energy policy report five months before September 11, 2001, advocating the use of military force against any enemy such as Iraq to secure US access to and control of Middle Eastern oil fields.

“Iraq remains a destabilising influence to ... the flow of oil to international markets from the Middle East. Saddam Hussein has also demonstrated a willingness to threaten to use the oil weapon and to use his own export program to manipulate oil markets”, said the report to the Pentagon.

The report titled *Strategic Energy Policy Challenges for the 21st Century* describes the energy sector as being in a critical condition. It says, “A crisis could erupt at any time [which] could have a potentially enormous impact on the US ... and would affect US national security and foreign policy in dramatic ways.”

The report raises concerns about the US becoming too reliant on foreign powers supplying it

with oil and gas and the growing anti-American feeling in the oil rich states.

“Gulf allies are finding their domestic and foreign policy interests increasingly at odds with US strategic considerations, especially as Arab-Israeli tensions flare”, said the report.

“They have become less inclined to lower oil prices ... A trend towards anti-Americanism could affect regional leaders' ability to co-operate with the US in the energy area.”

This fear of oil states in the Middle East being beyond the control of the US and its energy corporations is behind the wider objective of the US which is expressed when George Bush says in his State of the Union speech, “Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen”.

George Bush makes it very clear when he says, “Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbour or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.”

Hence the agenda, of which war on Iraq is only the beginning, is not only the establishment of a US base in Iraq and a compliant Government, but it involves a far broader objective -- that of controlling all Middle Eastern oil. Any threat to this objective will be dealt with.

Redrawing the map

For many decades British and French imperialist interests dominated the Middle East. With the break-up of the Ottoman Empire and following WW I, the spoils were divided up and new states carved out by these two powers.

French power predominated in Syria and Lebanon. British power held absolute sway in Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

The US objective is not simply to seize control of Iraqi oil but all the oil resources of the Middle East and if this involves the redrawing of the political map in the face of rising anti-American sentiments, this will also be done.

Today the four biggest and most powerful petroleum corporations in the world are based in Britain and the US: Exxon-Mobil, Shevron-Texaco, British Petroleum-Amoco and Royal Dutch-Shell.

This explains why the Blair Government has so enthusiastically lined up with the US objectives of war and revision. It also explains the resistance of France and Germany. They are being excluded and as a by-product, the Euro as a currency will be weakened against the dollar.

Sasha Lilley who is an independent producer and correspondent for Free Speech Radio News, reports on an interview with British Labour Party Member of Parliament George Galloway. He confirmed that the aims of the US and Britain go well beyond replacing the Iraqi leader.

Lilley quotes Mr Galloway as saying: “They include a recasting of the entire Middle East, the better to ensure the hegemony of the big powers over the natural resources of the Middle East and the safety and security of the vanguard of imperialist interests in the area – the State of Israel. And part of that is actually redrawing boundaries.”

Mr Galloway is vice-chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party Foreign Affairs Committee and, says Lilley, has close relations to Britain's Ministry of Defence. “Galloway says that British Ministers and former Ministers are primarily focused on the break-up of Saudi Arabia and Iraq in the wake of an attack against Saddam Hussein, but are also discussing the possible partition of Egypt, Sudan, Syria and Lebanon”, reports Lilley.

“These officials have become taken with the realisation that the borders of the Middle East are recent creations dating back only to WWI when Britain and France divided the region between themselves.”

Lilley continues, “This divvying up of the region by imperial powers led to the creation of the states of Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq among others. Under the aegis of Britain, the modern state of Saudi Arabia emerged in the late 1920s, absorbing the hitherto separate eastern, central and western regions – including the holy sites of Mecca and Medina – of what constitutes the country today.”

“The partition of the Middle East was partially driven by the oil conglomerates of the time.”

Lilley makes the point that, “While massive upheaval in the Middle East would hurt oil revenues initially, a new constellation of power there could in the long run

safeguard the interests of the petroleum conglomerates from the present instability of the region.”

Saudi Arabia, with a quarter of the world's petroleum reserves is one of the main areas of concerns to the US. There are fears that the present regime will be overthrown and replaced by more progressive and anti-US Government.

According to George Galloway one of the scenarios being discussed in British government circles is to divide Saudi Arabia into two or possibly three countries.

This “would have the helpful bonus of avoiding foreign forces having to occupy the holiest places in Islam, when they're only interested really in oil wells in the eastern part of the country”.

According to Galloway, the US troops based throughout Saudi Arabia could be withdrawn from the areas containing Mecca and Medina, the most hallowed sites of the Islamic world, where the US military presence is a source of great anti-American sentiment amongst many Saudis.”

Soldiers would then occupy the eastern province of the country which contains the major oil fields, including the largest oil field in the world, Ghawar, and the industrial centres of the kingdom.

Lilley raises the question of the destabilisation of the region with war on Iraq in which “radical anti-American protesters move to overthrow their governments and the US intervenes to prevent the emergence of such hostile regimes. The US long ago granted itself permission to intervene in Saudi Arabia if the House of Saud were threatened by internal revolt, and this could be extended elsewhere under the licence of the ‘war on terrorism’.”

What is being talked about here is a reorganisation, or redistribution of boundaries in the Middle East and a re-colonisation by the US and Britain. Such thinking is not only prevalent in British Government circles but also in the US.

Securing the realm

The Under-Secretary of Policy at the US Department of Defense, Douglas Feith, who is now in the number three position at the Pentagon, prior to his Pentagon appointment wrote with others a document headed *A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm*.

He advised the Israeli Government to “work closely with Turkey and Jordan to contain, destabilise, and roll back some of its most dangerous threats”, including attacking Lebanon and Syria.

“Israel can shape its strategic environment, in cooperation with Turkey and Jordan, by weakening, containing and even rolling back Syria”, wrote Feith and others.

Apart from using the war on Iraq as an opportunity to attack Syria, “Israel could once and for all settle the ‘Palestinian question’ by expelling the Palestinian population to Jordan as many in Israel have been advocating”, says Lilley.

Henry Kissinger summed up the sentiment held by the US administration's thinking in the opening of his *Does America Need a Foreign Policy*, with the words, “the US is enjoying a pre-eminence unrivalled by even the greatest empires in the past”.

Thinking in British circles is very similar. In an article entitled “*A Civilisational Challenge*”, Kanan



Staged casualties and chalked slogans in a chance to promote the February

Makiya says, “the problem is much deeper than bin Laden and his associates, and will not end with their demise. Nor is it about Islam and its relation with the West; it is above all about the mess that the Arab part of the Muslim world is in, and that part is some seventeen per cent of the whole.”

Kanan Makiya teaches at Brandeis University, a Jewish college near Boston.

He refers to the ultimate target being the whole post Ottoman Arab order. “This is a revolt of the sons against the fathers who had to make all the compromises and broker all the dirty little deals that created the constellation of ultimately failed states that we see today in the Middle East.”

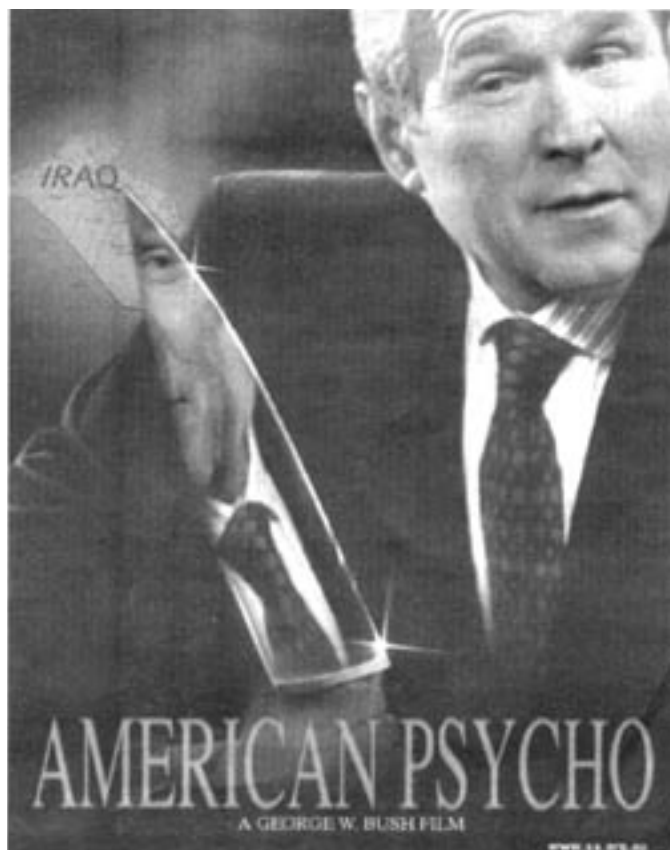
These “dirty little deals” were the cut up and reworking of boundaries made by the French and the British imperialists, but there is no mention of the French and British creating “failed states”, it's all the fault of the Arabs.

This article appeared in a publication called *Re-Ordering the World, the long term implications of 11 September*. It was published by the Foreign Policy Centre in Britain, whose patron is British Prime Minister Tony Blair and whose President is former Foreign Secretary Robin Cook.

In that publication Robert Cooper, an adviser to Tony Blair, says, “The challenge to the post-modern world [the successful states] is to get used to the idea of double-standards. Among ourselves, we operate on the basis of laws and open cooperative security. But when dealing with more old fashioned kind of states outside the post-modern continent of Europe, we need to revert to the rougher methods of an earlier era – force, pre-emptive attack, deception, whatever is necessary to deal with those who still live in the 19th century world of ‘every state for itself’.”

Robert Cooper goes on to propose a return to colonialism and imperialism. “Empire and imperialism are words that have become terms of abuse in the postmodern world. Today there are no colonial powers willing to take on the job, though the opportunities, perhaps even the need, for colonisation is as great as it ever was in the 19th century.”

Cooper talks about “a new kind of imperialism”.





in Adelaide – a voice of protest
anti-war rally.

Photo: Avante Media Australia

The Lion and the Eagle

Military Historian Colonel Bernd Fischer (Retired) looks at Britain's long-standing pursuit of Iraqi oil.

Prime Minister Blair leaves no doubt that in case of a conjured war against Iraq, his country will participate, side-by-side with the transatlantic hegemonic power, and provide British naval, air and army units, including "special task" forces.

Apparently it makes no difference whether the action will be sanctioned by the United Nations Organisation or go ahead as a unilaterally determined war of aggression.

How does such an unequivocal policy stand up in the face of public opinion polls, showing that a clear majority of British voters oppose the war against Iraq?

Without exception, the media interpret Blair's "shoulder to shoulder" stand with Bush in terms of Britain's own oil interests in the Persian Gulf region.

This is probably the most important motive behind Britain's current policy. For nearly a century it explained Britain's dubious role in this part of the world.

A History of Greed and Intrigue

Already before World War I, in the days of the Ottoman Empire, Iraq was a target for British expansionism, and that of other European powers, due to its central position across the land route from Egypt to India, and its rich oil deposits at Kirkuk and Mossul.

German and British monopoly capital turned Iraq's three Ottoman administrative regions – Baghdad, Basra, and Mossul – into some of the most important theatres of war in the Middle East.

Already in early December 1914, British and British-led Indian troops

occupied Basra, the port city on the Shatt-el-Arab.

However, the British suffered a defeat at Kutt-el-Amara in April 1916, when they tried to advance on Mossul. It took till March 17, 1917, for the British to take Baghdad.

After the collapse of the German-Turkish front in Syria and Mesopotamia in October 1918, the British occupied the Mossul district at the insistence of the oil companies, contrary to the terms of the ceasefire which had been concluded on October 30, 1918, at Mudros.

Thus at the end of World War I the entire territory of Iraq was occupied by British troops. On April 15, 1920, at St Remo, the Allied Great Council awarded Great Britain the mandate over Iraq.

For decades British oil interests secured the lion's share of Iraqi oil concessions, although in 1920 American companies – Standard Oil of New Jersey and Socony-Vacuum Oil Company (Mobil) – were able to enforce participation with the support of President Wilson and the US Congress.

The Kingdom of Iraq, in 1921, was a British creation. Britain's first ambassador was also the regional head of Britain's state-owned British Petroleum (BP) since 1913, and the company initially provided Iraq with administrative personnel.

In 1925 the British Mandate Administration obtained, for its Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC), the oil drilling concession for the entire territory of Iraq, with the exception of Basra.

The British Government, which in conjunction with Royal Dutch Shell controlled almost half of all

Iraqi oil production, also controlled the oil production in Qatar and in further territories along the Gulf (today the United Arab Emirates).

In 1929 the TPC became the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), with two subsidiaries, the Mossul Petroleum Company and Basra Petroleum Company. This completed the monopolisation process of Iraqi oil deposits.

Back to Colonialism?

Even between 1972 and 1975, when the Iraq Oil Company and some others were being nationalised, the British retained control over more than a third of Iraq's oil production.

Two of the notorious oil multinationals – British Petroleum and Shell – until today remain predominantly British owned.

Their share of oil in the region makes an important contribution to Britain's economy. Hence London has, since the 1990s, kept a permanent military presence – the so-called stand-by force – of at least 4000 men in the region, at the cost of several billion dollars to the British taxpayer.

Against this background it is noteworthy that Blair's political advisers from the Foreign Policy Centre* in London hold the view that the terrorist attacks on New York have demonstrated the need for a revival of 19th century colonialism. They expounded these ideas in a paper entitled *Reordering the World*. (See page 6 for more details.)

*The Centre was launched by Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair and former Foreign Secretary Robin Cook in 1991. Excerpts from the communist monthly *RotFuchs* (Red Fox), Nov 2002, Berlin, translated by Vera Butler. ✪

He said that if states wished to benefit "they must open themselves up to the interference of international organisations and foreign states ...". He goes on to cite the example of Kosovo where intervention has resulted in not only the on-going presence of foreign forces but the imposition of police, judges, prison officers, central bankers, 100 NGOs and many others who also remain on an on-going basis.

The UN is involved in the establishment, training and financing of this infrastructure.

Cooper dresses up his vision of re-colonisation with warm-sounding terms such as "cooperative empire", "dedicated to liberty and democracy".

The post-modern states, and he means Britain and the US in the first place, will colonise the "failed states" in a new world "which is open for investment and growth". This is Cooper and Blair's "new kind of imperialism".

The Middle East is just the beginning.

References:

1. *Re-Ordering the World: the long-term implications of 11 September*, The Foreign Policy Centre, 2002, London
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These and a number of other extremely important articles may be read on the Third World Network's website *The US War Against Iraq: Some Perspectives*: www.twinside.org.sg ✪

BLAIR IS A COWARD

continued from 12

The answer is to be found in a "confidential" UN document, based on World Health Organisation estimates, which says that "as many as 500,000 people could require treatment as a result of direct and indirect injuries".

A Bush-Blair attack will destroy "a functioning primary health care system" and deny clean water to 39 per cent of the population. There is "likely [to be] an outbreak of diseases in epidemic if not pandemic proportions".

It is Washington's utter disregard for humanity, I believe, together with Blair's lies that have turned most people in this country against them, including people who have not protested before.

Last weekend Blair said there was no need for the UN weapons inspectors to find a "smoking gun" for Iraq to be attacked.

Compare that with his reassurance in October 2001 that there would be no "wider war" against Iraq unless there was "absolute evidence"

of Iraqi complicity in September 11. And there has been no evidence.

Blair's deceptions are too numerous to list here. He has lied about the nature and effect of the embargo on Iraq by covering up the fact that Washington, with Britain's support, is withholding more than \$5 billion worth of humanitarian supplies approved by the Security Council.

He has lied about Iraq buying aluminium tubes, which he told Parliament were "needed to enrich uranium". The International Atomic Energy Agency has denied this outright.

He has lied about an Iraqi "threat", which he discovered only following September 11, 2001 when Bush made Iraq a gratuitous target of his "war on terror". Blair's "Iraq dossier" has been mocked by human rights groups.

However, what is wonderful is that across the world the sheer force of public opinion isolates Bush and Blair and their lemming, John Howard in Australia.

So few people believe them and support them that *The Guardian* [in Britain] this week went in search of the few who do – "the hawks". The paper published a list of celebrity warmongers, some apparently shy at describing their contortion of intellect and morality. It is a small list.

IN CONTRAST the majority of people in the West, including the United States, are now against this gruesome adventure and the numbers grow every day.

It is time MPs joined their constituents and reclaimed the true authority of parliament. MPs like Tam Dalyell, Alice Mahon, Jeremy Corbyn and George Galloway have stood alone for too long on this issue and there have been too many sham debates manipulated by Downing Street.

If, as Galloway says, a majority of Labour backbenchers are against an attack, let them speak up now.

Blair's fig leaf of a "coalition" is very important to Bush and only the moral power of the British people can bring the troops home without them firing a shot.



Tony Blair – appeasing the Third Reich of our times, the USA

The consequences of not speaking out go well beyond an attack on Iraq. Washington will effectively take over the Middle East, ensuring an age of terrorism other than their own.

The next American attack is likely to be Iran – the Israelis want this – and their aircraft are already in place in Turkey. Then it may be China's turn.

"Endless war" is Vice-President Cheney's contribution to our understanding.

Bush has said he will use nuclear weapons "if necessary". On March 26 last Geoffrey Hoon said that

other countries "can be absolutely confident that in the right conditions we would be willing to use our nuclear weapons".

Such madness is the true enemy. What's more, it is right here at home and you, the British people, can stop it.

On the weekend of Saturday-Sunday, February 15-16, great demonstrations against an attack on Iraq will be held throughout Australia and the world.

This is perhaps the last chance to stop the Bush, Blair and Howard war without end. ✪

World Social Forum

Where the hopes of the world are gathered

PORTO ALEGRE, Brazil: 100,000 representatives of the world's peoples came together in the World Social Forum (WSF) here to say in one thunderous voice: No to war, no to global capitalist military and economic domination! Another world is possible!

by Susan Webb

The coming to power of a working people's coalition with the election of Luis Ignacio da Silva, "Lula", in Brazil – Latin America's largest country – has electrified the atmosphere. Everywhere red flags are flying, and the symbols of Lula's Workers Party, along with those of the Communist Party of Brazil and movements of the poor and rural workers blaze on banners, billboards, t-shirts and caps.

Participants represented 156 countries and 5717 organisations, with many different viewpoints and concerns, but with a common cause: unanimous opposition to the military and economic aggression of the Bush administration and its corporate backers.

They rejected the "neo-liberal" policies of privatisation and control pushed by the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund.

Even beyond the vast array of events listed in the 78-page program booklet, so many additional activities were organised that people find out about them only by happening across a flyer, or by a major low-tech method: word of mouth.

Audiences in meeting halls and stadiums range from hundreds to many thousands.

Although the WSF insists on its non-governmental, non-political-party character, the excitement of real political events has permeated the Forum.

At a "dialogue and controversy table", Willie Madisha, President of the Congress of South African Trade

Unions (COSATU), Gladys Marin, leader of the Communist Party of Chile, José Genoino, head of Brazil's Workers Party, and Louise Beaudoin, Minister of External Relations in the province of Quebec, Canada, discussed relationships between social movements, political parties and governments and how to advance participatory democracy, before an attentive audience of 5000 at the Gigantinho sports arena.

Madisha said COSATU has found, based on its experiences since the victory of the African National Congress, that "we can't simply elect a government – the struggle really starts once the new government takes office. We should not have sacrificed mass organisations and mobilisation of the people", he said.

"The government has to be reshaped to include the people's mass organisations."

Marin said, "A blanket rejection of politics and political parties is a mistake for social movements. Social movements work on specific issues, and it's the job of political parties to represent global demands", Marin argued.

"Social movements need political parties and political parties have to be involved with social movements."

The main theme that runs throughout the Forum is: how do we fight against and defeat the economic, political and military power of what here is widely called US imperialism, as well as the neo-liberal policies that are being imposed on people around the world not only by the Bush

administration and US-dominated world economic groups, but also by their own governments.

The examples of both Brazil's experience and the struggle to defend the democratically elected government of Hugo Chavez in Venezuela are getting a lot of attention here, and an outpouring of support.

Chavez himself came to Porto Alegre on January 26. Speaking to the packed state Legislative Assembly hall, with thousands more listening in a plaza outside, Chavez said the Forum "is the most important political annual event in the world. Here in Porto Alegre ... the hopes of the world are gathered."

He continued, "Here is being constructed an alternative to the savage neoliberal model that threatens to destroy our planet".

Chavez described the campaign of sabotage being carried out by bosses, managers and the wealthy in Venezuela to destroy the populist government. But, he said, "They are failing, they are losing steam."

He reported that a new labour federation has been formed that truly represents the workers of Venezuela, and national student groups, the farmers and rural people are organizing, to defend the Chavez Government.

The Venezuelan crisis will only be resolved, he said, "when the old society of inequality and greed that has to die finishes dying, and the new society finishes being born."

People of all ages are here. In Harmony Park, near the Guiba River, young people from around the world are camping in a vast Youth Camp – a tent city of 25,000 including representatives of about 700 groups.

Throughout each day and late into the evening, a tremendous



Anti-war protest in Brazil – the Forum unanimously opposed US aggression

range of meetings, discussions, and cultural events take place as well as daily marches and rallies.

During a stroll through the many-coloured tents of Harmony Park in the late afternoon, one could see young people hanging out, talking quietly, resting their tired feet, with clothes and towels draped over the tent ropes.

Nearby, a municipal stadium houses participants in Via Campesina, a movement of rural people, including groups of the landless, those displaced by dams, and pastoral youth groups.

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People's Weekly World
Communist Party, USA. ☪

NAFTA: good for who?

As the business elites and the ex-Presidents of Mexico, the United States and Canada (Carlos Salinas, George Bush Sr. and Brian Mulroney) who signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1993 were celebrating together its "successes", mass demonstrations were taking place in Mexico to declare the Mexican countryside in a state of economic, social and environmental emergency.

by Dena Hoff*

Thousands of Mexican farmers and peasants took to the streets in Mexico City demanding a moratorium on NAFTA, provoked by the very real threats to their livelihoods when the tariffs on almost all agriculture products were reduced to zero on January 1, 2003.

Recently, the current President of Mexico, Vicente Fox, announced that the agriculture chapter of NAFTA would be renegotiated because of the serious crisis of the Mexican rural areas. But the following day, following warnings from the US embassy that "if tariffs are frozen, there will be a violent response of US producers", the Mexican Government backed down.

This statement of the agriculture advisor from the US embassy was published in one of Mexico's daily newspapers, *La Jornada*, on December 13.

Now, it is necessary to clarify an important point. When US officials refer to "US farmers" they must be referring to huge agribusiness firms

and commodity groups the same "farmers" promoting trade and benefiting from trade.

These "farmers" back US agriculture policies that maintain family farmers in poverty across the globe, while allowing agribusiness to enjoy record profits of up to 300 percent since NAFTA, while taxpayers pay the price.

In fact, family farm organisations wholeheartedly support the actions and the arguments that Mexican farmers have presented over the last few weeks for several reasons:

1) Before NAFTA, trade experts predicted that NAFTA would create 170,000 US jobs, while official figures show a loss of over 1,000,000 jobs;

2) Experts predicted a trade surplus with Mexico of up to US\$12 billion. In reality, in 2000 our trade balance with Mexico was negative US\$24.2 billion;

3) Commodity prices are at record lows, while prices to consumers have risen by 20 percent;

4) Prices that Mexican farmers receive for their corn have fallen by

48 percent since NAFTA, and the value of other crops has also fallen. The only positive trade balance is for the Mexican products of beer, tequila and mescal.

Mexican farmers are unable to compete with US imports because our farm policy unfairly sets the minimum price far below a farmer's cost of production whether in the United States or Mexico.

In the United States, some of these losses are made up by payments made by taxpayers, not the companies that buy our commodities. Take the case of corn. For Mexico, a corn-producing society, it is cheaper to buy mass-produced US Cargill corn than to grow their own.

Corn is exported to Mexico at prices below Mexico's cost of production, otherwise known as "dumping". However, if a farmer's only source of income is selling their corn crop and they are unable to sell because of cheap Cargill corn in the Mexican market, they have no money to buy the imported corn, and no way to make a living.

It is no coincident that regions with the highest rates of poverty and thus migration are also primarily producers of basic grains.

The United States and Chile just signed a free trade agreement. The next agreements are with Singapore, then Central America. After that is



the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) which will include all of Latin America and the Caribbean except for Cuba, set for 2005.

All of these agreements include agriculture, based on the NAFTA model. What will become of our farm economy then? What will become of the millions of small farmers throughout the entire Western Hemisphere who now are forced to compete with corporate agribusinesses who receive millions in farm subsidies?

Food security is equivalent to national security. Agriculture cannot be considered as just another sector of the economy left at the mercy of

the "free" market in efforts to maximise profits.

Therefore, small farmers in Mexico are right to demand protection for their agriculture products and a revision of NAFTA. We must demand the same. So next time you hear the words "free trade" and "national security" in the same sentence, ask yourself whose interests are truly represented.

*Dena Hoff is a farmer in Glendive, Montana. He chairs the Free Trade Task Force of the National Family Farm Coalition, www.nffc.net
People's Weekly World, paper of the Communist Party, USA. ☪

Worldwide anti-war actions

On February 15-16 millions of people across the world will be taking actions against the war on Iraq. It will be a powerful show of protest against the criminal aggressors and self-appointed rulers of the world. The message is clear – the majority of people, despite the actions of their right-wing governments, are against the war.

"The scenario we are facing ... is of a world dominated by a single superpower that proclaims 'infinite war' and a will to use nuclear weapons preventively. Under the pretext of fighting terrorism, a pretext that conceals the true objectives of the war, the United States have equalled its hegemonic policy to the unilateral militarisation of the globe.

"They have built a colossal war machine that eats up more than 400 billion dollars yearly and represents 36 per cent of military expenditure in the world....

"They tore down the treaty against the use of nuclear missiles and developed the program known as 'Star Wars'. And as a sign that those initiatives are not local or episodic, the US imperialism, under the ultra-conservative administration of George W Bush, adopted a new military doctrine – preventive war – that consists of granting themselves the right to attack nations under suspicion, labelled by espionage organisations as 'rogue states' and members of the 'axis of evil'....

"These are macabre and bestial plans that may represent countless

sacrifices, the destruction of human lives and material and cultural values", wrote Jose Reinaldo Carvalho, Vice President of the Communist Party of Brazil. He was one of the many participants at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre (see article on page 8).

The reason millions of people are taking part every day in peace actions is simple. It is not just a war against Iraq that the US, British and Australian Governments are preparing for, but a war against humanity.

In the US, most importantly, the anti-war movement is growing daily in numbers and breadth as protestors pack the streets of cities and towns demanding "Peace now!" and "No blood for oil!"

Speaking in Washington actor Jessica Lange praised the crowd for coming from as far as Minnesota and said, "I address this assembly as a mother, an American woman, determined that the legacy passed on to our children is not shame, greed, bloodshed."

She accused the administration of using September 11 terrorist attacks to "keep us mesmerised with

the war, the Patriot Act, the Homeland Security Act.

"It is an excellent cover, as they turn back the clock on civil rights, women's rights. We cannot be silent."

At a huge rally in San Francisco, Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif) said, "The silent majority has become the vocal majority. George Bush has awakened a sleeping giant in our country."

In Chicago the City Council voted 46-1 opposing a pre-emptive US military attack on Iraq.

"Those people talking about the first strike will be eating caviar while some young people are dying", said one of the aldermen.

"Had this resolution not been introduced, we would have been accused of being morons, amoral. If we don't speak out for the people who will?", asked another alderman.

Governments too are speaking out. Indonesian Vice President Hamzah Haz urged the United States to cancel its plans to launch an attack on Iraq, otherwise other countries would isolate it.

Foreign Ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will hold an extraordinary meeting to discuss "what actions ASEAN can take in case of a war in Iraq. All of us do not want to see a war in Iraq ...", the Philippine Foreign Secretary said. ☼



Part of the crowd attending the NZ Anti-Bases rally in Blenheim

Waihopai spy base protest

People from all around New Zealand converged on the super-secret Waihopai satellite interception spy base, near Blenheim, on the weekend of January 24-26 for an anti-war protest.

by Dr Hannah Middleton

Blenheim shed its small town conservative image as over 200 locals joined the 40 activists for an anti-war rally in the town's Seymour Square.

This was followed by a walk through the town which received many positive responses from Saturday morning shoppers.

Protestors returned to the square for a sausage sizzle to sustain them before about 100 people travelled to the spy base itself.

Here passports for the Undemocratic Republic of UKUSA were issued as a figure of Uncle Sam, supported by police, allowed demonstrators through the outer gate and up to the electrified double main gate and fence for a rally of about 60 people.

The following morning, local police, who dropped in as the protestors were taking down their tents, genially took over the task of disposing of the camp's accumulated rubbish!

The New Zealand Anti-Bases Campaign, which organised the protest, points out that as the world

stands on the brink of being sucked into an aggressive American-led war on Iraq, Waihopai is New Zealand's most important contribution to the American war machine.

"Our demand hasn't changed since the base was first announced, in the late 1980s. Waihopai is not in the public interest and it must be closed", Murray Horton from the ABC said.

Waihopai is an electronic intelligence gathering base operated by New Zealand's Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) in the interests of foreign powers grouped in the super-secret UKUSA Agreement (which shares global electronic and signals intelligence among the Intelligence agencies of US, UK, Canada, Australia and NZ).

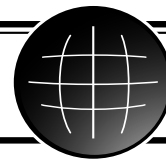
It intercepts a huge volume of satellite phone calls, international calls, plus telexes, faxes, e-mail and computer data communications from across the Asia-Pacific region and forwards it on to the major partners in the UKUSA Agreement, specifically the US National Security Agency.

"The codename for this – *Echelon* – has become notorious worldwide. New Zealand is an integral, albeit junior, part of a global spying network, one that is ultimately accountable only to its own constituent agencies, not governments, and certainly not to citizens", Murray Horton said.

Australia has a similar Echelon spy base at Geraldton in Western Australia. This became notorious when it was used to spy on communications between the Maritime Union of Australia and the Tampa crew and between Australian lawyers and their refugee clients on the Tampa.

The Waihopai protest was joined by representatives from the Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition, Denis Doherty and Hannah Middleton. In October 2002 the AABCC organised a major protest at the huge US spy base at Pine Gap (near Alice Springs), which is serviced through the US military base at Christchurch Airport.

Waihopai is one small but vital part of a global American-dominated network of spy bases. The campaign to close it and its sister stations in several other countries is also international. ☼



Global briefs

BRITAIN: The British Airline Pilots Association (Balpa) have opposed a European plan to increase the hours per day worked by pilots, saying that it would put passengers' lives at risk as exhausted crew struggle to stay awake in the cockpit. The plan, backed by the European Parliament, would add two hours to the maximum working day for pilots. The European plan would impose a limit of 14 hours or more per day at the controls. Balpa chairperson Mervyn Gramshaw said this would leave his members "unable to behave in an intellectually sensible way". Their concentration levels would be as badly affected as if they had been drinking over the limit. He compared the safety risk to the long hours worked by overtired doctors: "They kill patients one at a time. We tend to kill ours hundreds at a time".

VIETNAM: Three Vietnamese children were killed and one child was injured when a US cluster bomb of Vietnam War vintage exploded while they were playing with it.

CUBA: Cuba and China signed an agreement on economic and technical co-operation. Under the agreement China will provide a grant to help with Cuba's education. Cuban and Chinese firms signed contracts on China's purchase of Cuban nickel and sugar and a letter of intent on Chinese investment in Cuba.

USA: The Bush administration is lobbying hard to block an African candidate for the top position at World Health Organisation (WHO), Africa being a continent in the front line of the battle against HIV/AIDS. The US pharmaceutical giants do not want to see the WHO led by someone who might believe that the right to life is more important than "patent rights" and corporate profits. The last thing they want is a WHO that supports and even encourages poorer countries to produce and export generic medicines. The United States is working behind the scenes for Mexican Health Minister Julio Frenk, who has worked closely with Washington in the NAFTA North American Free Trade Association area. Someone who obviously understands the importance of monopoly profits and patent protection.

VENEZUELA: The eight-week long strikes in the non-oil sector, led by business groups and right-wing trade union leaders, which began on December 2, are crumbling. Under mounting public pressure the banking sector is resuming normal hours, and many businesses facing bankruptcy are reopening for business. The aim of the strikes is to force left-wing Hugo Chavez out of the presidential office. It is not working, but it is doing considerable harm to the Venezuelan economy, small businesses and the people. Leading newspapers in Venezuela, all of which support the opposition against the government, have started to question the wisdom of continuing the general strike.

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Letter to National Security Hotline...

1. War criminal Dr Henry Kissinger is in Australia and should be immediately arrested for crimes against humanity.

2. *The Guardian Weekly* December 5-11 2002 p.3 claims that George W Bush has pardoned Cuban exile terrorist Orlando Bosch and granted him US residency.

It further alleges that according to the US Justice Department Bosch had participated in 30 terrorist acts. He was convicted of firing a rocket into a Polish ship that was on passage to Cuba.

He was also implicated in the 1976 blowing-up of a Cubana plane flying to Havana from Venezuela in which all 73 civilians on board were killed.

It seems that Bosch's case is not unique.

Other Cuban exiles allegedly involved in terrorist acts are: Jose

Dionisio Suarez and Virgilio Paz Romero, who carried out the 1976 assassination of the Chilean diplomat Orlando Letelier in Washington.

It is imperative that these terrorists are banned from ever entering Australia.

I hope these comments will prove helpful to you in the fight against terrorism.

Yours faithfully
Gareth Smith

... Hotline replies

Mr Gareth Smith,
Thank you for contacting the National Security Hotline.

Your information has been logged and forwarded to the appropriate authorities.

If you have any further information regarding this matter please quote reference number: 10882196.

Regards

National Security Hotline

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Hardly convincing

The arguments of the US, British and Australian Governments about Iraq would be more convincing if:

1. At the time the US forced Iraq out of Kuwait, it had gone on to evict Turkey from north Cyprus, Israel from Palestine, Indonesia from East Timor, etc.

2. The USA was showing any interest in tackling other countries over weapons of mass destruction like Israel and its own massive stockpiles.

3. The USA was showing any intention of confronting other countries that abuse human rights, like Israel, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Russia, Burma and others.

Until these things happen, forgive me for thinking that the US is selectively pursuing a foreign policy that leaves friendly undemocratic and brutal regimes alone while it attacks regimes that stand in the way of its economic, political and military domination and have strategic value to it.

The USA's interest in Iraq has nothing to do with liberating its people, it's an imperial and colonial agenda aimed at securing the oil and other rich resources of the Middle East and Central Asia regions.

Steven Katsineris
Hurstbridge, Vic

Not just the troops

Our Prime Minister has despatched *HMAS Kanimbla* and other service personnel to the Middle East to get acclimatised in case we go to war.

This proposed war is opposed by 94 percent of the Australian people and by the Labor Party leaders if the United States goes ahead without United Nations approval.

If our government decides to bring our troops home again through the lack of gaining a tick from the UN, what do we do about Pine Gap, a "joint facility" situated in our own Northern Territory, and an essential part of the US war machine for the spying and guiding of their missiles?

Ron Gray
Australian Peace Committee
(South Australian Branch) Inc
www.peacecourier.com

Dump the dump

The Government's plans to construct a nuclear waste dump near a military weapons target range near Woomera in South Australia are a disaster in waiting. Not only is there a risk of contamination from spills because of the distance the waste will travel, from Lucas Heights in Sydney, but even the government's own bureaucrats are concerned about its impact.

Science Minister Peter McGauran's so-called environmental impact statement was according to the Defence Department misleading.

This dump would store almost six million litres of waste less than 1km from the target area of the weapons range where the Department of Defence and commercial space companies routinely drop missiles and weapons for testing.

Got something to say?

Got an opinion about the system, about human rights, the labour movement, peace, land rights, socialism, privatisation, child care, your local community? Then write it down and send it to us.

Letters of up to 400 words in length are preferred.

The nuke dump will also be a short distance from the Woomera Detention Centre.

Even the company BAE Systems, who has government contracts to provide defence commercial support to the Woomera village, has echoed serious concerns about using any part of the area as a nuke dump.

According to *The Australian* newspaper, one defence official has raised serious doubts about whether the Department of Defence's views are being considered at all.

It seems obvious by all accounts, except those warmongers in the Howard Government, that there is no place in Australia for any nuclear dumps or nuclear weapons for that matter.

It's time to tell the Howard Government we do not want war with Iraq or any other country or his nuclear dumps or weapons of mass destruction.

Janine Hamplin
Waterfall

Culture & Life

Propaganda good and bad

The other Saturday, in the afternoon, the ABC ran two British propaganda films back to back: *The Day Will Dawn* made in 1942 and *Highly Dangerous* made in 1951. I found the juxtaposition interesting.

by Rob Gowland

I had not seen either film before. *The Day Will Dawn* is a fairly well-known wartime propaganda film about foreign correspondents, Nazis and the role of newspapers in a democracy, combined with undercover work and derring-do in Occupied Norway.

It was written by a Russian, Anatole de Grunwald, together with Terence Rattigan and Patrick Kirwan. De Grunwald had himself been a journalist before entering films as a screenwriter in 1939.

The son of a Tsarist diplomat, he had fled with his family from the Revolution when he was only 17. But obviously, he picked up a few ideas during the grim '30s. Anatole wrote or co-wrote many of the best British wartime propaganda films, beginning with *Freedom Radio* in 1940 and including the first openly pro-Soviet British film, *The Demi-Paradise*.

The latter starred Laurence Olivier as a Soviet marine engineer come to Britain to oversee the production of a new propeller he has invented, and having a hard time coping with the eccentricities of the English.

Much more biting was his script for Leslie Howard's brilliant anti-Nazi comedy-adventure *Pimpernel Smith*. Also of a particularly high standard were his scripts for the morale-boosting RAF dramas *The First Of The Few* and *The Way To The Stars*.

From 1943 he was also a film producer, as was his younger brother Dimitri.

The Day Will Dawn features Ralph Richardson as Frank Lockwood, leading foreign correspondent for a major Fleet street daily, who persuades his editor to send racing reporter Colin Metcalfe (played by Hugh Williams) to cover Norway.

Lockwood assures the younger Metcalfe that his job will just be to "keep his ears open" because nothing dramatic is going to happen in Norway: "Rumania is where the Nazis are going next".

Of course, Hitler did invade Norway next, and Metcalfe finds himself mixed up with Nazis, Norwegian patriots and also Norwegian followers of Prime Minister Quisling who gave his name to Nazi-collaborators all over Europe.

It is one of the very few films (perhaps the only one) to present the struggle in Parliament during the early part of the war between the appeasers led by Chamberlain (still Prime Minister) and the anti-Hitler forces ranged behind Churchill.

It is a well-filmed yarn, with some remarkably realistic night-time scenes so black you can only dimly - but tellingly - glimpse what is happening.

What comes through clearly though is that sense that many of the propaganda films of the early War years had, of ordinary people faced with a powerful and implacable foe but who can nevertheless be confident that they will ultimately win because their cause is just.

The confidence of these films that democracy could and would defeat fascism was taken up in the post-war years by the propagandists



Highly Dangerous, an early British contribution to the Cold War

of anti-communism. By the simple expedient of equating socialism with fascism, they thought, the West could capitalise on all that splendid propaganda of the anti-Nazi cinema.

Curiously, it did not work out that way. In the first place, the anti-Nazi cinema had had been the product of a united film industry: actors, writers and directors believed in what they were doing.

In the Cold War cinema, many of the best writers and filmmakers had been blacklisted. Some actors and directors chose to work in costume pictures and avoid the crude propaganda of contemporary drama.

And it was crude. Taking their lead from the extreme anti-Soviet hysteria and simple-minded bigotry of the *Reader's Digest*, visions of life "behind the Iron Curtain" made war-time films of life in Nazi Germany look positively rosy by comparison.

The second film in the ABC's Saturday afternoon line-up was of this type. *Highly Dangerous* was an early British contribution to the Cold War, being made in 1950. Directed without great distinction by Roy Baker, it had a script by thriller writer Eric Ambler.

I don't imagine Ambler was very proud of it. The web site *Brit-Movies* quite correctly describes the film's story as "comprehensively silly". It concerns a British entomologist (played by major English star Margaret Lockwood) who foils germ warfare experiments in Yugoslavia while under a drug-induced delusion that she is the heroine of a radio spy serial.

She is helped in this endeavour by an American journalist, played by Dane Clark, who was capable of much better things. The inclusion of an American actor was a ploy, common at the time, to try to get a US release for the film. For most Eng-

lish films, "Limey" accents were the kiss of death in the singularly insular US market.

In *Highly Dangerous* the Communist authorities are clearly meant to be seen as paranoid and distrustful. They suspect everyone and trust no-one. Every foreigner is regarded as a probable spy and every local as a potential "enemy of the state".

The odd thing is that the film unconsciously shows such a viewpoint to be absolutely 100 percent justified! Every foreigner in the film is a spy and as for the local villagers, under the leadership of their catholic priest they will do anything to thwart the hated authorities.

The secret plot that our heroine foils is to develop germ-infected insects to inflict upon an unsuspecting West. The film was made in 1950, the year the Korean War began.

During the Korean War it was the US, not the Commies, that used germ warfare bombs and shells. ☹

Rob Gowland previews

ABC & SBS public television programs

Sun February 9 ~
~ Sat February 15

Ella Fitzgerald: Something To Live For (ABC 2.00pm Sunday) chronicles the life and career of singer Ella Fitzgerald.

Ella Fitzgerald was born into poverty (like most African-Americans) in 1917. By the time she died in 1996, she had become one of the greatest jazz vocalists ever.

She recorded over 2000 songs, including a 19-volume series of "song books" which she recorded between 1956 and 1967 in which she interpreted nearly 250 outstanding songs composed by Richard Rodgers, Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Duke Ellington, Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, and Johnny Mercer.

A band singer in the '30s, who created a solo cabaret act in the '40s, Ella became the star attraction for many years of jazz impresario Norman Granz's *Jazz at the Philharmonic*. Here she displayed her mastery of improvisational "scat" singing, where the vocalist uses her voice with the imagination and skill of a modern jazz horn player.

The six-part series *Ape Man: Adventures In Human Evolution* (ABC 5:00pm Sundays) more or less speaks for itself. It not only brings to life the early humans and the endless struggle of their existence, but it also brings to life the detective work by scientists throughout the ages in their attempt to piece together the truth about our distant ancestors.

This week's episode recounts modern efforts, some - like using research into hallucination - rather outlandish, to decipher the meanings of Ice Age cave paintings and to use them to provide a window to our past.

The documentary series *Empires* this week and next

deals with *Rome In The First Century* (SBS 7.30 pm Sundays).

The series acknowledges that among the problems besetting the Roman Empire, such as "violent coups, assassination, overarching ambition, civil war, clashes between the sexes and questions of personal freedom versus government control", were also "clashes between the classes".

However, it does not in any way treat the contradiction and struggle between the classes as fundamental to the development of the Roman Empire, and is consequently obliged to fall back on the "great men make history" approach.

This week's episode concentrates on Caesar Augustus, but does include the experiences, memory and writings of the people both famous and uncelebrated who helped build the empire.

Next week, it's the turn of Tiberius, Caligula and provincial troublemaker Jesus.

After all the nature programs we've seen about Africa, you could be forgiven for thinking that no new images could be discovered that would be fresh and startling. But as last week's first episode of *Wild Africa* (ABC 7.30 pm Sundays) showed, such is not the case.

That episode, *Mountains*, featured awesome footage of heavily coated baboons perched on cliffs four kilometers up in the mountains of Ethiopia. More importantly, it made clear the vital relationship of the wildlife with the physical environment and showed how both are part of the process of evolution.

Intensely scientific in approach, exquisitely beautiful in execution (some of the footage is just breathtaking), this series is a tribute to BBC Bristol which produced it. My only quibble is the overly portentous music, which tries unsuccessfully to be as imposing as the visuals.

This week's episode is *Savannah*, and deals with what is in fact the newest and most dynamic of all Africa's environments, the grasslands that are home to a wonderful variety of big cats as well as the greatest herds on earth today.



Lilli Palmer (left) in *The Gentle Sex* (ABC, 2pm Saturday)

The energy turnover in the savannah is faster and more furious than anywhere else, enabling it to support this vast number of animals. Paradoxically, termites on the savannah are responsible for consuming more grass than wildebeest, zebra and elephants combined.

The BBC documentary series *Allies At War* (SBS 8.30 pm Sundays) deals with the often stormy relationship between the war-time leaders of Britain, France and the USA.

Churchill, Roosevelt and de Gaulle were essentially three imperialist leaders forced into an alliance to defend bourgeois democracy against Nazi German fascism while never relinquishing their own imperialist interests. They also endeavoured to act as a bloc in their relations with the fourth member of the anti-fascist alliance, Soviet leader Stalin.

That Churchill despised de Gaulle is well known. The extent of

Roosevelt's opposition to the French general is less well known. Even now, the story is so sensitive that the British Public Records Office has not yet released MI5's files on the war-time surveillance of de Gaulle

The progressive and outspokenly anti-Nazi actor-director Leslie Howard was shot down by German aircraft and killed while flying back to Britain from fascist-lead but technically neutral Spain in 1942.

The last film he made before his death was a typically low-key, gentle but effective contribution to the propaganda campaign to change male attitudes towards the role of women in the war.

To many men in 1939, the idea of a woman driving a heavy truck was unheard of, and hence unthinkable. It wasn't safe and it wasn't proper, they maintained.

Women knew better (and so did many men, of course) but attitudes among the populace at large were

slow to change, and women were needed to fill jobs that men could no longer be spared for.

The Gentle Sex (the title is of course ironic) came out in 1943. It was originally intended for screening to military personnel, but was considered so good it was released theatrically. Its original purpose probably accounts for its strong documentary approach, although it is entirely dramatised.

The story of seven girls from different backgrounds conscripted into the Auxiliary Territorial Service (to become army truck drivers or anti-aircraft gunners), whom we first meet on a train. Howard's voice picks out each of them amongst real servicemen and women on Victoria Station.

The film introduced and made stars of Lilli Palmer, Joan Greenwood and Rosamund John.

In the early 1940's, Val Lewton made some classic horror films at RKO, probably the most atmospheric of which was *Cat People* (ABC 10.30 pm Saturday), a psychological monster movie that never showed the actual monster.

The film abounds in brilliant touches, such as in the sequence when the heroine (Simone Simon), walking down a dark street, hears the panther following her. When the sound actually stops, and she no longer knows whether the panther is behind her or in front, beside or even above her (in the overhanging trees), you feel the hair on the back of your neck prickle.

The bravura sequence with the audible but unseen panther in the indoor swimming pool is another famous highlight of a very imaginative piece of genre filmmaking. ☺

Melbourne
Children of the Gulf War Photographic exhibition
by Takashi Morizumi
January 31 - 10th February
12-6pm everyday except Tuesday
Horti Hall Gallery 31 Victoria Street

A deeply moving exhibition documenting the aftermath of the Gulf War. It focuses on the lasting effects of the 300 tonnes of Depleted Uranium Weapons that were used and the plight of the many children who have been affected by these weapons. Depleted Uranium Weapons are known to cause leukaemia, liver and kidney problems as well as vastly increasing the chances of abnormalities at birth.

Takashi Morizumi is a well respected photojournalist and advocate of a nuclear free world.

Sponsored by Melbourne City Council.
<http://www.vicpeace.org/iraq/actions/exhibition.html>

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With Jeanette Cronin

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Robert Kennedy and Jenny Green's *Women of Troy* is an unashamed protest against the impending US-led war in the Middle East

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BLAIR IS A COWARD

William Russell, the great correspondent who reported the carnage of imperial wars, may have first used the expression "blood on his hands" to describe impeccable politicians who, at a safe distance, order the mass killing of ordinary people.

by John Pilger

In my experience "on his hands" applies especially to those modern political leaders who have had no personal experience of war, like George W Bush, who managed not to serve in Vietnam, and the effete Tony Blair.

There is about them the essential cowardice of the man who causes death and suffering not by his own hand but through a chain of command that affirms his "authority".

In 1946 the judges at Nuremberg who tried the Nazi leaders for war crimes left no doubt about what they regarded as the gravest crimes against humanity. The most serious was unprovoked invasion of a sovereign state that offered no threat to one's homeland. Then there was the murder of civilians, for which responsibility rested with the "highest authority".

Blair is about to commit both these crimes, for which he is being denied even the flimsiest United Nations cover now that the weapons inspectors have found, as one put it, "zilch".

Like those in the dock at Nuremberg, he has no democratic cover.

Using the archaic "royal prerogative" he did not consult Parliament or the people when he dispatched 35,000 troops and ships and aircraft to the Gulf; he consulted a foreign power, the Washington regime.

Unelected in 2000, the Washington regime of George W Bush is now totalitarian, captured by a clique whose fanaticism and ambitions of "endless war" and "full spectrum dominance" are a matter of record.

All the world knows their names: Bush, Rumsfeld, Rice, Wolfowitz, Cheney and Perle, and Powell, the false liberal. Bush's State of the Union speech last night was reminiscent of that other great moment in 1938 when Hitler called his generals together and told them: "I must have war". He then had it.

To call Blair a mere "poodle" is to allow him distance from the killing of innocent Iraqi men, women and children for which he will share responsibility.

He is the embodiment of the most dangerous appeasement humanity has known since the 1930's. The current American elite is the Third Reich of our times, although this distinction ought not to let us forget that they have merely accelerated more than half a century of unrelenting American state terrorism: from the

atomic bombs dropped cynically on Japan as a signal of their new power to the dozens of countries invaded, directly or by proxy, to destroy democracy wherever it collided with American "interests", such as a voracious appetite for the world's resources, like oil.

When you next hear Blair or Straw or Bush talk about "bringing democracy to the people of Iraq", remember that it was the CIA that installed the Ba'ath Party in Baghdad from which emerged Saddam Hussein.

"That was my favourite coup", said the CIA man responsible. When you next hear Blair and Bush talking about a "smoking gun" in Iraq, ask why the US Government last December confiscated the 12,000 pages of Iraq's weapons declaration, saying they contained "sensitive information" which needed "a little editing".

Sensitive indeed. The original Iraqi documents listed 150 American, British and other foreign companies that supplied Iraq with its nuclear, chemical and missile technology, many of them in illegal transactions. In 2000 Peter Hain, then a Foreign Office Minister, blocked a parliamentary request to publish the full list of lawbreaking British companies. He has never explained why.

As a reporter of many wars I am constantly aware that words on the page like these can seem almost abstract, part of a great chess game unconnected to people's lives.

The most vivid images I carry make that connection. They are the end result of orders given far away by the likes of Bush and Blair, who never see, or would have the courage to see, the effect of their actions on ordinary lives: the blood on their hands.

Let me give a couple of examples. Waves of B52 bombers will be used in the attack on Iraq. In Vietnam, where more than a million people were killed in the American invasion of the 1960's, I once watched three ladders of bombs curve in the sky, falling from B52s flying in formation, unseen above the clouds.

They dropped about 70 tons of explosives that day in what was known as the "long box" pattern, the military term for carpet bombing. Everything inside a "box" was presumed destroyed.



When I reached a village within the "box", the street had been replaced by a crater.

I slipped on the severed shank of a buffalo and fell hard into a ditch filled with pieces of limbs and the intact bodies of children thrown into the air by the blast.

The children's skin had folded back, like parchment, revealing veins and burnt flesh that seeped blood, while the eyes, intact, stared straight ahead. A small leg had been so contorted by the blast that the foot seemed to be growing from a shoulder. I vomited.

I am being purposely graphic. This is what I saw, and often; yet even in that "media war" I never saw images of these grotesque sights on television or in the pages of a newspaper.

I saw them only pinned on the wall of news agency offices in Saigon as a kind of freaks' gallery.

SOME YEARS LATER I often came upon terribly deformed Vietnamese children in villages where American aircraft had sprayed a herbicide called Agent Orange.

It was banned in the United States, not surprisingly for it contained Dioxin, the deadliest known poison.

This terrible chemical weapon, which the cliché-mongers would now call a weapon of mass destruction, was dumped on almost half of South Vietnam.

Today, as the poison continues to move through water and soil and food, children continue to be born without palates and chins and scrotums or are stillborn. Many have leukemia.

You never saw these children on the TV news then; they were

too hideous for their pictures, the evidence of a great crime, even to be pinned up on a wall and they are old news now.

That is the true face of war. Will you be shown it by satellite when Iraq is attacked? I doubt it.

I was starkly reminded of the children of Vietnam when I travelled in Iraq two years ago. A paediatrician showed me hospital wards of children similarly deformed: a phenomenon unheard of prior to the Gulf war in 1991.

She kept a photo album of those who had died, their smiles undimmed on grey little faces. Now and then she would turn away and wipe her eyes.

More than 300 tons of depleted uranium, another weapon of mass destruction, were fired by American aircraft and tanks and possibly by the British.

Many of the rounds were solid uranium which, inhaled or ingested, causes cancer. In a country where dust carries everything, swirling through markets and playgrounds, children are especially vulnerable.

For 12 years Iraq has been denied specialist equipment that would allow its engineers to decontaminate its southern battlefields.

It has also been denied equipment and drugs that would identify and treat the cancer which, it is estimated, will affect almost half the population in the south.

LAST NOVEMBER Jeremy Corbyn MP asked the Junior Defence Minister Adam Ingram what stocks of weapons containing depleted

uranium were held by British forces operating in Iraq.

His robotic reply was: "I am withholding details in accordance with Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information."

Let us be clear about what the Bush-Blair attack will do to our fellow human beings in a country already stricken by an embargo run by America and Britain and aimed not at Saddam Hussein but at the civilian population, who are denied even vaccines for the children.

Last week the Pentagon in Washington announced matter-of-factly that it intended to shatter Iraq "physically, emotionally and psychologically" by raining down on its people 800 cruise missiles in two days.

This will be more than twice the number of missiles launched during the entire 40 days of the 1991 Gulf War.

A military strategist named Harlan Ullman told American television: "There will not be a safe place in Baghdad. The sheer size of this has never been seen before, never been contemplated before."

The strategy is known as Shock and Awe and Ullman is apparently its proud inventor. He said: "You have this simultaneous effect, rather like the nuclear weapons at Hiroshima, not taking days or weeks but minutes."

What will his "Hiroshima effect" actually do to a population of whom almost half are children under the age of 14?

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If war starts rally at:

Adelaide 5pm on the day Parliament House steps
Brisbane 5pm on the day in King George Sq,
and then on the following Saturday at 12 noon
Canberra 5pm on the day US embassy
Hobart 5pm on the day Frankston Square
Melbourne 5pm on the day State Library
Perth 5 pm on the day outside GPO in Forrest Place
Sydney 5pm on the day at Town Hall
Wollongong 5.30pm the day after at the Ampitheatre