

ASIO Bill

As *The Guardian* goes to press, the ALP has indicated it will seek further amendments to the Government's draconian ASIO Bill before allowing it to pass through the Senate. The ALP move was a last-minute response to a fact that the Greens, Democrats, and Communist Party of Australia had been pointing out for some time: there is a clause in the legislation that will allow ASIO to detain people "indefinitely".

The Government insists that Labor knew all along that indefinite detention was allowed under the Bill.

"The Government maintains the effect of the legislation has always been clear", said a spokesperson for the Attorney-General. "To deny the opportunity for further and subsequent warrants would play into the hands of terrorists".

But this is in direct contrast to what the Attorney-General himself promised last year. Speaking about the Bill then before Parliament, Darryl Williams said, "The maximum period for which a person can be detained will be seven days". "People will not be able to be detained indefinitely."

Senator Bob Brown explained that the ALP had been all set to pass a Bill where "It was obvious to me that there was nothing in the legislation to stop ASIO from getting second or third or fourth seven-day warrants".

In effect, a Bill allowing "open-ended warrants, timeless warrants" would have come into force.

As *The Guardian* goes to print, Parliamentary debate on the Bill has been suspended, and the ALP has not clarified exactly what further amendments it will be seeking.

"Dangerous and anti-democratic"

The Democrats have previously pointed out that the Bill "applies to non-suspects, and could be used to lock up teachers who have had terrorist suspects in their classrooms, journalists who have been investigating terrorist offences, or people who happen to live next door to a terrorist suspect".

Community organisations have expressed deep concern that the legislation will reinforce discrimination against ethnic minorities.

Goolam Laher, spokesperson for the Islamic Council of Victoria, stated that: "...this piece of legislation is being introduced at a time

when the Islamic community is being marginalised and ... labeled as terrorist".

She added: "Already there are stereotypes that are making the connection between terrorism and Islam, yet the Government has not addressed those issues and have not approached the Islamic community on the need to address these issues".

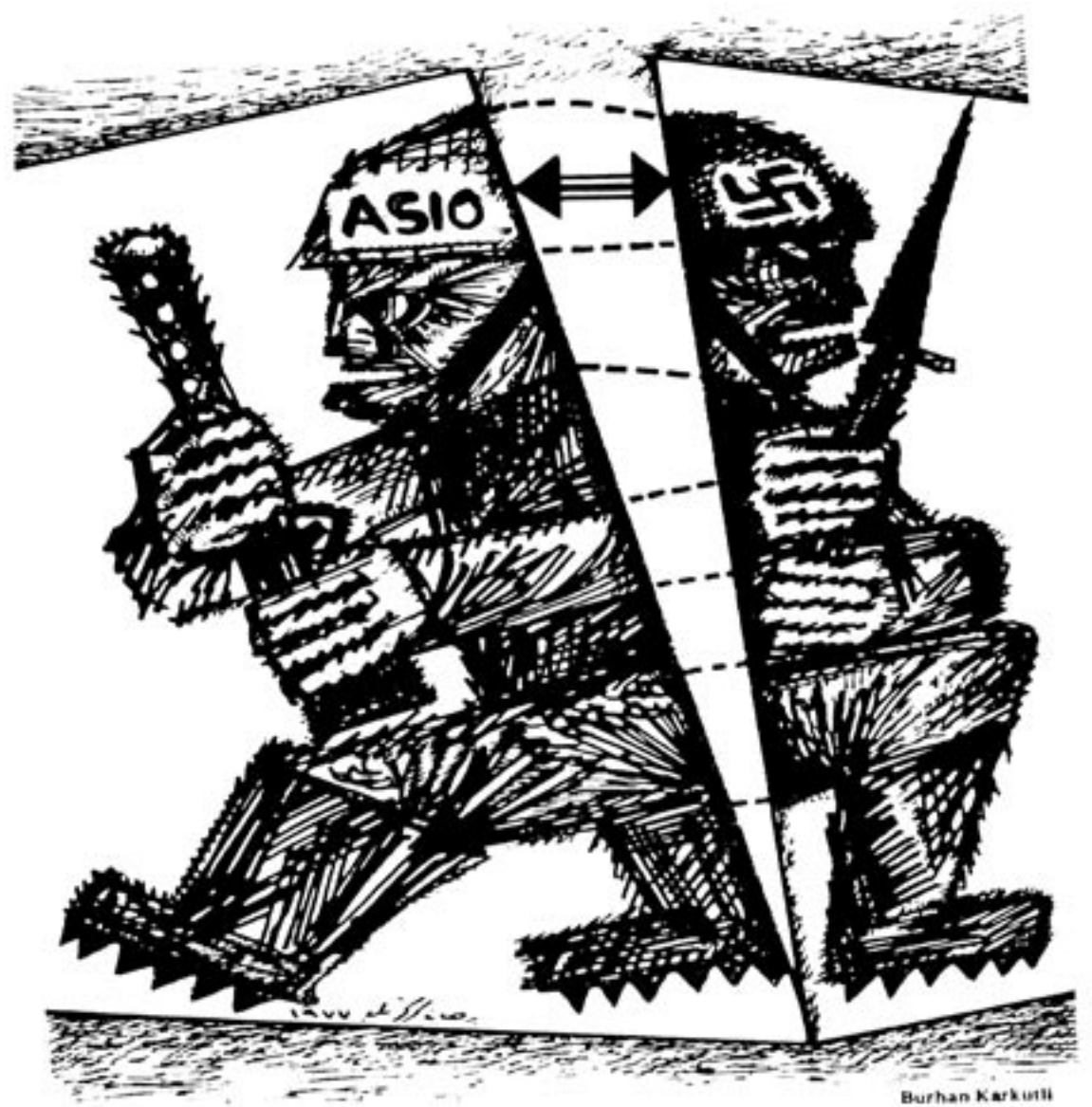
Clair Mahon, a representative of the Law Institute of Victoria, pointed out that the legislation actually violates the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. She commented: "The government has, for a long time now, shown with its policy of detaining children asylum seekers that it does not intend to protect the rights of young people and does not take seriously its obligations under the convention".

Nicole Bieske from Amnesty International also pointed out that innocent people could be detained simply for being near a terrorist suspect in a restaurant. She noted: "Somebody next to you, at the next table, is being surveyed by ASIO. You get picked up the next day because ASIO suspects you may have overheard something, and you can be detained for seven days..."

The Bill has even been the subject of objections from major media corporations, which fear (quite rightly) that journalists will now be forced to operate in a climate of ASIO intimidation.

The Attorney-General, Darryl Williams, admitted that it is "an unusual power to be seeking". It certainly is. The legislation, which smacks of neo-fascism, has no equivalent in the US, Britain or Canada.

The Government's first attempt to pass the legislation was blocked in the Senate last December. Previous amendments to the Bill were proposed by the ALP, which discussed them with the Government, but not with the minor parties. Those amendments, and the ALP's endorsement of



them, were announced just prior to the re-introduction of the Bill in parliament last week.

"The legislation should be thrown out. It is one of the most dangerous and anti-democratic pieces of legislation ever to be brought before Parliament", Peter Symon, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Australia, told *The Guardian*.

"Every individual Labor Member of Parliament should consider very seriously whether they are going to vote to adopt these neo-fascist police-state style laws. I urge that they take a principled stand and protect the rights of every demonstrator and activist who opposes this attack on democratic rights and exposes the phoney 'war on terrorism' used to justify them.

"In the long run these laws will be used against trade unionists, against communists, against environmentalists, against peace activists, and even against some of those who are presently lined up to vote for them.

"We should learn from history what happens when one stands by and does nothing, or worse still, as in the present situation, votes for them.

"There is absolutely no need for the Bill. Federal and state police already have ample powers to detain anyone suspected of involvement in terrorist activities. Even if the Bill becomes law, opposition to it can still continue until it is eventually repealed or, as a result of public pressure, made unworkable", Mr Symon concluded.

The minor parties and in-

dependent senators Len Harris and Meg Lees, have continued to reject the amended Bill. They insist that it should apply only to those suspected of carrying out, or planning terrorist attacks.

The objections of the minor parties to the legislation are timely and praiseworthy and in sharp contrast to Labor's capitulation.

However, this does not appear to cut much ice with the ALP leadership. Greens leader Bob Brown commented that Labor's proposed limited amendments to the ASIO Bill constituted "a historic sell-out of centuries-old rights by the ALP". He added bitterly: "What is the point of having an opposition to the Howard Government if you are left with the ALP? Doc Evatt must be rolling in his grave." ✪

Wrecking ATSI

Ever since the Howard Government came to power it has steadily intensified its attacks on the Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander Commission (ATSIC). The assault came to a head last week with the publication of a review commissioned by the Federal Government. The Commission was clearly designed to destroy ATSI and return Aboriginal affairs to the control of a committee dominated by persons appointed by the government – not the Aboriginal people.

The Government's racist attitudes and its determination to reimpose a colonialist type regime on the Aboriginal people is no different to its attitude to refugees, its support for the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, its intention to invade and occupy the Solomon Islands, its steady destruction of Medicare and its aims to completely shackle the trade unions of Australia.

The review committee comprised John Hannaford (Liberal), Bob Collins (a right-wing Labor Party politician from the Northern Territory) and Jackie Huggins who is said to be an academic. They have done exactly what Phillip Ruddock wanted.

The Government's real intentions are revealed in a scurrilous article in *The Australian* (18/6/03) written by Janet Albrechtsen, a pen-prostitute if ever there was one. She writes: "... the policies of the International of the World's Indigenous People, based on self-rule with little accountability, have done more damage to indigenous Australians than the white missions of the 1930s did".

In other words the white man knows best and the herding of the Aboriginal people onto reserves (as refugees are herded into mandatory detention centres) was an enlightened policy. She claims that "The deluge of self-rule without accountability throughout indigenous communities presents a post-diluvian picture of indigenous money-squandered, indigenous lives wrecked".

Albrechtsen does not let the truth spoil the bile that pours out of every sentence in her article.

She could have referred to a statement by ATSI chairman, Geoff Clark and Deputy Chairman Ray Robinson issued last April as the attack on ATSI was hotting up. Needless to say, she makes no mention of it. Geoff Clark and Ray Robinson are the particular targets of the Howard Government's venom and the media that are happy to support the Government's racist attacks.

This statement records that the latest report of the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) found that ATSI's financial management of more than \$860 million was sound. The ANAO report stated that the real problem for ATSI was that it was being forced into providing supplementary funding because the State and Territories would not accept their responsibilities.

A report by the Commonwealth Grants Commission found that ATSI's major program – the Community Housing and Infrastructure Program (CHIP) – was the best-targeted Indigenous assistance program in Australia.

The Grants Commission also reinforced the fact that it was mainstream government programs that failed to meet the needs of Indigenous Australians. The provision of essential services in health, housing, education and employment are State and Federal Government responsibilities.

The Clark-Robinson statement says: "The Australian National Audit Office has given ATSI its ninth unqualified audit, yet our critics say millions of dollars are being squandered".

What really disturbs the Howard Government is the steady progress being made by Australia's Indigenous communities. Their culture is flowering, their national consciousness has grown enormously and ATSI has become an effective centre fighting for Indigenous rights and relief from the third world standards that the white man's governments have never been interested in overcoming.

The most recent ATSI election resulted in a record 50,000 voting and a substantial increase in new voters. Howard, Ruddock and the mass media detest such active democracy.

Australian governments, while shedding dishonest tears about "appalling levels of neglect" and "unaccountability of leaders", have never yet had the courage to acknowledge the prior occupation and ownership of the Australian continent by the Indigenous people. They have yet to acknowledge that the British occupation of the Australian continent was an invasion and that the land was stolen from the Indigenous people. These questions are basic matters that have to be resolved in a Treaty but this too is resisted by successive governments.

In the meantime ATSI should be defended – just like Medicare.

PRESS FUND

Australia's immigration detainees have certainly got a bad deal. But we could all become detainees under the new ASIO laws! They allow anyone whom ASIO believes might have information about national security (i.e. anyone in the country) to be detained and questioned for up to a week, or for longer if they consider the detainee is withholding information. *The Guardian* is part of the struggle against this terrible law. We need your support, so we'd appreciate a contribution for the next issue of *The Guardian*. Our sincere thanks go to this week's generous contributors, as follows:

Bert Appleton \$20, D Elliot \$25, B Griffin \$9, A Mitchelson \$15, "Round Figure" \$11.

This week's total: \$80. Progressive total: \$5775.

Governor-General is Howard's man

Australia's new Governor-General, handpicked by Prime Minister Howard, is the first ever military man to be appointed to that position. It is an indication of Howard's push to militarise the Australian society and to promote the aggressive wars that Australia is being led into by the US.

Michael Jeffery's conservative views and his own militarism make him an ideal choice to serve the Government's purposes in the coming period.

He has already publicly justified the unjustifiable dirty war in Vietnam that proved so unpopular among the Australian people. The war was an act of aggression and was fought to advance the interests of the United States.

Jeffery's units did their share of the killing of Vietnamese people defending their country. The Vietnamese were not engaged in any attempt to attack or interfere in Australia's internal affairs.

Jeffery was a commanding officer of SAS troops who are specialists in the art of killing. They are quite different to regular army units. Their purpose is infiltration, sabotage and assassination. "They (the SAS) are a magnificent bunch of young men", says Jeffery.

Only recently he supported the

invasion of Iraq and echoed the lies of the Prime Minister saying "There's no question Iraq, Iran and North Korea have weapons of mass destruction – chemical, biological, and in the case of two of those countries, nuclear – and the means of delivering them". He claimed that "Western civilization" was being threatened.

Jeffery also carried the imperialist flag in Malaya, Borneo and Papua New Guinea.

His paternalistic attitude to the Aboriginal people is also on record, having once called for a return to the despicable policy of assimilation.

Michael Jeffery is one of those who asserts that one can get anywhere in life by "hard work" and offers his own career success to prove it. He would be better advised however, to ask those who have been given the sack by Telstra, Ansett or HIH insurance, where their "hard work" got them.

Michael Jeffery claimed that "each [person] can aspire to being governor-general of this country, if they're prepared to work hard". Such statements are mere hogwash.

He is also a protagonist of returning the Church into schools to promote "values". Even his predecessor, former archbishop Peter Hollingworth, did not go as far as that in winding the clock back and in the promotion of conservatism.

He claims to be "of the people and for the people", but he is certainly not "by the people" who had no say in his appointment. Howard merely consulted his own clique of ultra-conservatives – John Anderson, Alexander Downer, Tony Abbott, Phillip Ruddock, Peter Costello and the former Liberal Premier of WA, Richard Court.

Simon Crean was only told one hour before Howard's announcement. There is no suggestion that even Parliament should be consulted on such an appointment.

Michael Jeffery is in every sense of the word, Howard's man – a conservative, a militarist and a supporter of the wars to come. ✪

World Refugee Day

Thousands of people around Australia attended rallies in support of Australia's appallingly-treated asylum seekers.

On Sunday, at the Sydney rally speakers included federal parliamentarians Bob Brown and Carmen Lawrence and several asylum seekers and members of support groups. Author Thomas Kennealy pointed out the savage irony of our treatment of asylum seeking boat people compared to other mariners.

For example, he said two British oarsmen were rescued from the Indian Ocean by the Australian Navy and were welcomed on arrival at Fremantle, whereas asylum seekers are effectively held in prison and are even given a bill for their detention centre accommodation!

One speaker told of the agony of months of separation from his wife, who is currently being held in Nauru. He pointed out that Australia is the only country in the world that routinely separates husbands from their wives and children in similar circumstances.

The protestors marched from Hyde Park to Belmore Park in bril-

liant sunshine, hoping all the while that the skies would also clear for all those unjustly detained in camps around Australia.

In Melbourne, there was an action endorsed by many organisations, including the Victorian Alliance for Refugees, Rural Australians for Refugees and the Victorian Trades Hall Council.

Marching with the slogans "Stop the War on Refugees", "Residency not Rejection", "End Mandatory Detention" and "End the 'Pacific Solution'", protesters marched from the State Library to Federation Square.

Actors for Refugees performed at the Yarra River. Speakers included Mohammed Aljanabi, Fivo Freitas and ACTU President Sharan Burrow.

In Perth 400 people rallied in Forrest Place and marched through Perth streets on Saturday. The rally was called by the Refugees Rights Action Network. At 3pm people from the March boarded a bus to

take them to the detention centre at Perth Airport.

Speakers welcomed the Family Court decision on refugee children and highlighted the Government's waste of taxpayers' money with its plan to appeal against the Court's decision.

Speakers also condemned the memorandum between the Australian and Iranian Governments to send back 277 Iranian refugees, many of whom will face imprisonment, torture and death. People were also reminded of the plight of the many refugees being held in prisons on Pacific islands, as part of the Government's so-called "Pacific Solution".

Another speaker called on those who marched against the war on Iraq to march now for those displaced by war. From July 17-29 protesters will gather at the Port Headland detention centre to continue to highlight the plight of innocent refugees locked away by the Federal Government's inhumane refugee laws.

Rallies were also held in Hobart, Brisbane and Darwin. ✪

Professor Doug Rokke

Will speak on the impact of

DEPLETED URANIUM

Prof Rokke's scientific training and his first-hand experience with DU contamination led him to speak out regarding the cover-up of Gulf War casualties and depleted uranium.

He calls use of DU a "war crime"

SYDNEY

Thursday 3rd July 7-9 pm

Tom Mann Theatre 136 Chalmers St Surry Hills
Also Rev Dr Ann Wansbrough speaking on the Australian connection

FREMANTLE

Saturday 5th July 1-4pm

Fremantle Town Hall

Also short film "Hidden Wars of Desert Storm"

LANCELIN WA

Sunday 6th July 9.30 am

Lancelin Angling and Aquatic Club Hopkins St

SUBIACO WA

Monday 7th July 7.30 pm

McDonald Lecture Theatre Princess Margaret Hospital

ADELAIDE

Wednesday 9th July 7.30 pm

Cynthia Poulton Hall adj St Peter's Nth Adelaide
Also David Noonan Australian Conservation Foundation

Corrupt lawless government

Events of recent weeks have revealed a worsening of the trend in Australia towards unaccountable, high-handed and outright corrupt government. The Federal Government used fraudulent arguments to involve Australia in a war against Iraq. Members of Parliament have accepted donations to the Liberal Party from doubtful characters that later received visas to remain in Australia. While pushing to increase the powers of the country's "security" agencies, it is becoming clear that the Government ignored intelligence available under the present arrangements that might have spared the lives of those struck down by the terror bombing in Bali. All the while, the Government seeks to prevent or hamper any investigation into its outrageous behaviour and to strip us of hard-won democratic rights.

by Bob Briton

As weeks turn into months since the official end of the war against Iraq and the occupation of the country, proof of a program for weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) – the pretext given for the invasion by the leaders of the "Coalition of the Willing" – still eludes the massive foreign occupying force in Iraq. Despite their control and the taking into custody of the alleged engineers of the "massive" program, no such evidence has come to light.

In fact, time has only served to undermine the case given to the people living in countries sought as partners in Operation Iraqi Freedom. "Intelligence" detailing Iraq's efforts to get quantities of uranium from African nations like Niger – amounts far too large for any peaceful purposes – has been shown to be fake.

John Howard, who pedalled this lie in the Federal Parliament as proof of a nuclear threat from Iraq

and its alleged terrorist friends, now concedes that it was a lie.

The corruption of the role of intelligence gathering was so marked that it led to the resignation of intelligence officer Andrew Wilkie. He has agreed to give evidence before an inquiry conducted by the British Parliament into the WMD case. However, the Australian Government has managed to blunt any probe into its pre-war manoeuvring to such an extent that it seems that Mr Wilkie may not even be called before an Australian investigation.

Support from Labor has seen to it that the issue will now only come before a joint parliamentary ASIO Committee. Calls from the Democrats and Greens for a Senate Committee to consider the matter – as far away as possible from the Coalition's stifling influence – have been ignored.

In related statements, John Howard has recently put "reform" of

the role of the Senate, including the dropping of its veto powers, on the agenda. That would certainly ease the passage of his Government's anti-people legislation and remove one of the few mechanisms for accountability.

The minor parties have managed to get a Senate inquiry into intelligence failures in the lead up to the Bali bombing. This outcome is well short of the demand for a Royal Commission from those like Brian Deegan, father of Josh who perished in the terror attack. However, some potential remains for exposing the failure of the Australian Government to issue the sorts of warnings given to travellers by the US authorities, for example.

While Howard and Downer insist that the intelligence services did their work competently in the months leading up to the Bali bombing, their Government is pressing with all its might for extraordinary new levels of power and secrecy for those spy organisations. (page 1 article)

The Foreign Minister insists that the "...Office of National Assessment [ONA] produced around 20 reports on the issue of terrorism in South-East Asia and not on any of those reports was there a mention of a possible attack in Bali".

The truth is that ASIO and ONA briefed the Minister on several occasions and identified Bali as an attractive "soft target" for terrorist activity, from September 2001



onwards. In spite of its failure to act on these reports to upgrade warnings to travellers when it mattered, the Government is using the tragic Bali events to justify the "ASIO Bill" due for consideration by the Senate this week.

The principles of *habeas corpus*, the presumption of innocence, the onus of the accusers to prove guilt, the right of the "accused" to a choice of legal representation are all set to be undermined by this dangerous legislation.

Terror is obviously NOT this Government's main focus of attention and its grab for spy agency powers begs the question: what is the real purpose of these attacks on long-standing democratic rights?

Immigration and the treatment of asylum seekers are other issues that have been exploited by the Federal Government for some time now. The cynicism of the Government's "tough-on-queue-jumpers" stance has recently been underlined by recent reports of the "cash for visas" scandal surrounding a number of senior Liberal Party figures.

Visa scams

As those who have fled regimes – regimes recognised by the Government itself as wholesale abusers of human rights – languish in concentration camps, other more cashed up individuals have found a way through Australia's tight immigration controls.

Dante Tan, for example, is reported as having gained Australian citizenship after he gave \$10,000 to the re-election campaign of Immigration Minister, Philip Ruddock.

Somehow, the usually slow and fastidious Australian office in Manila overlooked the fact that Mr Tan was a fraudster wanted by the Philippines Government for massive market manipulation that nearly caused the collapse of the national stock exchange.

Prior to obtaining citizenship, the cancellation of Mr Tan's business visa was withdrawn after the Minister intervened personally in the affair. Mr Tan further breached "fortress Australia's" defences by skipping the country the day after *The Sydney Morning Herald* broke the "cash-for-visas" scandal.

Apparently Mr Ruddock intervened in at least six visa applications at the request of two Liberal Party donors, Karim Kisrwan and the "Lebanese Friends of Mr Ruddock", who transferred \$19,450 to the Liberal Party's coffers.

In another immigration-related bombshell, while whole families of asylum seekers are forced to endure the hellish conditions in "centres" like Baxter in South Australia, the Government has seen fit to fast track an application for refugee status from a former Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

The bigwig in question was sentenced in his homeland to 15 years jail for misappropriating wheat and rice from a food for work program for the poor of Bangladesh.

These developments are only examples of the arrogant disregard for "due process" and "the rule of law" that used to be promoted as features of corporate rule in countries like Australia. The need for an effective movement to stop this disturbing trend cannot be overstated. ☺

Now, free all asylum seekers

"What a way to celebrate World Refugee Day", declared the Refugee Council of Australia referring to last Sunday's worldwide actions for refugee rights. The Council was responding to a decision of the Family Court of Australia that the Court has the power to release children held in immigration detention centres. The decision is another blow against the Howard Government's inhuman mandatory detention of asylum seekers. It opens the way for the 107 children being held in detention centres on the Australian mainland to be freed.

by Tom Pearson

The case arose out of an appeal on behalf of five siblings being held in the Baxter detention centre in South Australia. The matter is now to be returned for trial by a Family Court judge who will order the children's release or outline the conditions they are to be detained in.

"Yet again a significant legal declaration is made, this time by the Full Bench of the Family Court of Australia, that Australia's policy of indefinite mandatory detention of children is illegal", said Refugee Council President, David Bitel.

The Human Rights Commissioner, Dr Sev Ozdowski, called on the Federal Government to accept the decision and immediately release all children being held in detention centres.

Instead, Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock claimed that the Family Court ruling "would encourage people smugglers", and that the Government intends to appeal to try to block the decision being put into effect.

The majority judges, Chief Justice Alastair Nicholson, Justice John Ellis and Justice Stephen O'Ryan, in their ruling rejected the Government's argument – which is based on its immigration laws – that detention could only be brought to an end by parents seeking to be

sent home or the children requesting to be sent back once they were "mature enough" to do so.

"Such an interpretation of the legislation raises the real possibility of these children spending their entire childhood in detention", said the decision. Significantly, the Court found that such indefinite detention of children in the immigration centres was illegal because the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – to which Australia is a signatory – is part of Australian law.

The Convention, ratified by Australia in 1990, requires Australia to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to all children seeking refugee status, with the best interest of the child as a primary consideration. Detention should be used "only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate time".

The UN guidelines stipulate that unaccompanied children seeking asylum "should not be kept in detention".

Australia also violates the UN Convention of the Rights of Refugees because its mandatory detention regime is applied without discrimination, is neither brief nor necessary, and because refugees in detention centres are not informed of their rights.

Head of Monash University's child abuse and family violence

research centre, Chris Goddard, also called for the immediate release of children in detention. Mr Goddard said that they should not be forced to apply individually to the Family Court.

"Months of legal process might not be very long in terms of an adult, but in the life of a child it can be extraordinarily developmentally damaging."

The Australian Greens pointed out that the Government's Migration Act breaches the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, as does the current ASIO Bill due to be passed with the backing of the ALP.

"The innocent kids should never have been put behind razor wire", said Greens Senator Bob Brown. "It is abhorrent that the Australian Government did this to them. The children with their parents should be freed to safe houses outside these asylum-seeker prisons."

David Bitel said that for too long Australians have been misled about our obligations to protect refugees. "Those deserving of our compassion have rather been demonized. Those lawyers bold enough to assist people to protect their human rights, and thereby fulfill their professional duty, are sneered at dismissively, as though they are perpetrating a great abuse on the Australian people."

"The time for political hyperbole is over. The Government must dismantle a policy which brings no credit to us as Australians. It is simply no longer acceptable to justify an inhumane and immoral policy by reference to a politically expedient process."

"On this, 2003 World Refugee Day, we call on the Government to set in motion a serious policy rethink." ☺

Perth
What Future For
Cuba in the
New American Century?
Guest speakers
Dr. Seva
Vice-President of the
Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples, ICAP
Alicia Corredor
Director of the Asia and Oceania Section of ICAP
Sicilia Fernandez
Consul-General of the Republic of Cuba, Sydney
Monday 30th June 7pm
Alexander Library Theatre, Northbridge
Entry gold coin donation
Organised by
NOWAR Alliance & Australia Cuba Friendship Society (ACFS)

CANCELLED

Cuban visitors denied visas by Australian Government

Xstrata committed ... to profits

“Xstrata is committed to Australia”, say the ads, as the notoriously anti-union Swiss-owned company makes a bid for Mount Isa Mines. If its takeover of MIM succeeds Xstrata will become the third biggest mining operator in Australia, behind BHP and Rio Tinto.

Xstrata unleashed an advertising blitz last week, calling on MIM shareholders to support its takeover bid.

The Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) has called on Xstrata to come clean on its real agenda for Australian mineworkers and their communities.

Miners’ Union General President Tony Maher challenged the company to back up its claim that “Xstrata is committed to Australia”.

“It’s an easy claim to make”, said Tony Maher, “but if it is to be more than a clever media spin to alleviate Australian concern over a foreign multinational taking over an Australian mining icon, then Xstrata needs to spell out just exactly why and how it is committed to Australia.”

“I mean, this is a company listed in London and controlled by private interests based in Switzerland. Now I’d like this company to spell out exactly what its commitments are to the thousands of Australians who

will be affected by its proposed takeover of MIM.”

Xstrata has been waging industrial war against Australian miners for some time now.

Coal mineworkers at Xstrata’s new Beltana mine in the Hunter Valley (NSW) have been on strike for more than a month now, over company moves to slash wages.

The pay-cut comes just as Beltana is set to become one of the most productive and profitable coalmines in the world with a workforce of just 70 producing five million tonnes of coal per year.

The CFMEU also points out that the mining community of Lithgow is still attempting to recover from the recent elimination 50 more jobs from its Baal Bone coal mine in the Blue Mountains.

Last December, coalmine workers at Xstrata operations throughout Australia walked off the job in response to the company’s aggressive anti-union agenda.

This included the victimisation of union activists, the forced removal of sacked miners at Xstrata’s Bulga mine in NSW and a plan to replace them with contractors and casuals.

In scenes reminiscent of the waterfront dispute, miners were frog-marched off the property by private security officers.

The 2300-worker nation-wide strike was successful, and the Bulga workforce was reinstated.

“Xstrata’s practice falls a long way short of its commitment to Australia rhetoric”, says Tony Maher. ❖



LABOUR NOTES

Sixty-year-old construction worker David Hands died last week when a freestanding wall collapsed at a North Bondi building site, in Sydney’s eastern suburbs. The state WorkCover authority has closed the site and is conducting an investigation. Union organiser from the Construction Division of the CFMEU, Martin Wyer, said the three-metre high one-metre wide wall was “an accident waiting to happen”. Pointing out that one worker dies each week on construction sites around Australia, Mr Wyer said that someone has to regulate the sites the union can’t get to. “The union doesn’t have the resources to get to all the sites and it’s left to WorkCover.” Mr Hands was working behind the wall when it collapsed. He was rushed to hospital with severe head injuries where he was subsequently pronounced dead.

In South Australia, the Australian Nursing federation (ANF) has cautiously welcomed the release of a general review of the South Australian Health System. While the report confirms the need for greater focus on primary health care, the ANF is concerned that the recommendations suggest hospital budgets and activity levels are to be frozen. The Federation warns that primary health care initiatives – based on improving health and preventative health care measures – take some years to lead to an actual change in demand for hospital care and admissions. “This fact combined with the aging population and population growth means that we can actually expect increased demand for services for the next three to ten years”, said the ANF’s State Secretary, Lee Thomas. Ms Thomas said the review’s proposal for a call centre to improve public access to services also posed problems. “The experience in the UK with a similar scheme was that it attracted nurses away from public emergency services where their skills and experience are desperately needed to maintain direct patient care.”

For more than 50 years most of the sugar industry’s harvesters have been manufactured in the Queensland town of Bundaberg, but the plant is due to close in the next few months and move off shore to Brazil, which is producing sugar at a lower price than Australia’s growers. The move by the Austoft company will put 220 workers out of a job, in an area with 15 percent unemployment.

In the Gippsland Yarram district of Victoria, the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union is conducting an investigation into the exposure of workers to defoliants 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T which was used in the 1970s to spray blackberries and other noxious weeds for what was then the Victorian Lands Department. The defoliants, better known as Agent Orange, used by the US in its war on Vietnam, contain the long-lasting carcinogen dioxin. In the late 1970s the Consultative Council on Congenital Abnormalities found that the number of birth defects in babies born in 1975 and 1976 in the Yarram District “was not such that a specific local cause was operative”. Concerned families contacted the union this year, which is now conducting tests on soil in the area. The union says there has been a lack of continuing research and monitoring. In WA, where the same chemicals were used, a government inquiry is underway.

“We’re not going to take it anymore”

A midday rally by bus drivers in the centre of Brisbane last Monday is the latest action in a long campaign by members of the Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) against Brisbane City Council’s war of attrition on drivers’ jobs, wages, conditions and safety. Central to the dispute is the failure of the Council and the Beattie State Government to properly fund the service, having cut their subsidy to it by \$1 million per year over the past five years.

by Tom Pearson

The rally, called by the RTBU, was in response to a large range of issues that include hours of work and casualisation. It was attended by the 220 drivers who were not rostered to work during that period.

Brisbane City bus drivers are on

the lowest pay level in the Council. They are required to work nine ordinary hours in a day before they are paid overtime, and have an 80 hour fortnight.

Drivers are harassed for leaving depots late but are only given five minutes to prepare both themselves and the bus before departure,

including conducting considerable safety checks on the vehicle.

As well as cutting services and creating confusion for commuters by taking away all the colour-coded bus stops in the city, the Council has allowed buses on the road which have stalled and even caught on fire.

Over 20 percent of drivers are employed as casuals and receive as little as two hours work per day. In the other extreme, some drivers start work before 7am and do not finish until 7pm while receiving less than four and a half hours’ pay.

When it suits the boss, drivers are told to take a 75-minute unpaid lunch break, and most have no morning or afternoon break. The union says Council has spent millions on fancy gadgets which in some cases have turned out to be white elephants and that there is a big question mark now over new buses that are already proving unreliable.

David Matters, the Assistant State Secretary of the RTBU, told *The Guardian* the drivers don’t see why they should be made to pay for the shortfall through their wages and conditions. “The Government and the Council should provide the funding.”

Mr Matters pointed out that other Council employees are on a 38-hour week, nine-day fortnight, and that the clerical staff have a 36-hour week.

“Bus driver have been singled out for the past five years. They’re fed up and not going to take it any more”, said Mr Matters.

A delegation of drivers met with Brisbane Mayor Tim Quinn after the rally to air their grievances. ❖

Support the locked out workers

Since May 11 Geelong Wool Combing’s workforce of 100 has been locked out by management which is trying to force them to take a 26 percent pay cut in the name of “greater flexibility”.

The workers’ union, the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union (TCFU), has begun a letter writing campaign designed to put pressure on agri-business corporation Elders, which owns 41 percent of Geelong Wool Combing, and the Futuris Corporation, which owns Elders.

The TCFU is calling on people to write letters to the CEO of Futuris, Les Woznicza, and board members of both Geelong Wool Combing and Elders Australia, demanding that the company cease their lockout immediately and negotiate with the union.

“We need to ensure this dispute is resolved quickly so as to minimise the harm caused to the workers and their families.” ❖

Write, email
or fax to:

Futuris
Corporation
Limited

Level 6,
27 Currie Street
Adelaide SA 5000
Tel (08) 8425 4999

Fax (08) 8410 1597

www.futuris.com.au

Plenty of money for bombs

Forty-three million, three hundred and four thousand, eight hundred and fifty-four dollars and seventy-four cents per day

The 2003-04 Federal budget gives Australia's military \$43.3 million to spend every day. We are entitled to ask if we are getting value for all this money. The answer is NO. The money is not spent on Australia's security but on what the US demands of us. Australia's military budgets have been skewed for years by US foreign policy demands. The 2003/4 budget is no exception.

by Denis Doherty

Over the last decade, allegations of an "arc of instability" to our north and then the "threat of terrorism" have been used as excuses for a rise in military spending from around \$10 billion to \$15.8 billion per annum in the latest budget.

"The Australian Government intends to upgrade Australian military forces with the principal aim of making them interoperable with those of the US. It is these policies which are the real threat to Australia's security." (CPA Congress Document April 2001)

The budget reveals a major shift in spending from capital acquisition to personnel and operating costs.

Several huge acquisitions such as the new tactical fighter (replacing the F/A18's), estimated to cost \$5 billion, have been put on hold.

Strategy is shifting further from defence of Australia to acceptance of US hegemony.

The *Australian Financial Review* points out: "Hill particularly is much more focused on the need to make the ADF [Australian Defence Forces] more ready to participate in distant coalitions under US leadership ..." (13-5-03)

Who pays?

Adele Horin says the budget "continues the trend of turning Australia into a less caring and sharing society, into a country of individuals, some of whom are much better equipped than others to bear the new risks." (*Sydney Morning Herald* 14-5-03)

Ordinary Australians and their families will pay for exorbitant spending on the military with their Medicare card, their children's higher education and older people's sense of security.

In comparison with Australia's military spending of 1.8% of Gross Domestic Product, New Zealand

spends 1.3%, Germany 1.5% and Austria 0.08% of GDP. The UK spends 2.4% of GDP and the USA spends 3.1% of GDP and both countries are involved in several wars and carry out nuclear weapon production and research.

Total Australian military spending is equal to the combined spending of many of our nearest neighbours.

How will it be spent?

Major new spending is for bombs and bullets. The expenditure of \$1.1 billion for logistics over five years will supposedly address a shortage that the Department of Defence has been complaining about for years.

This is an ominous signal for future wars against whoever the Bush administration decides to attack next.

An amount of \$645 million is set aside for future operations in Iraq. There is also \$157 million for Special Forces.

The cost of the war against Iraq is given as \$412.5 million, which is in addition to the normal costs of running the ADF.

The costs of the Multi-National Interception Force (MNIF) were \$349 million for two years. The MNIF was the force which helped impose the sanctions which killed over half a million Iraqi children.

The total cost of ten years of sanctions and four months of war is over \$1 billion.

Military projects

There are many new and continuing defence projects that eat into our standard of living.

Collins submarines: The brainchild of 'Bomber' Beazley, these notorious submarines have continu-

ing problems. They are extremely expensive and do not work.

"The current operational capability of the Collins Class is below that contracted for and the vessels are only provisionally accepted into naval service. Around \$1 billion of additional work is planned to bring the vessels up to required standard. This includes a new combat system to replace the current interim arrangements. These are technically challenging projects that are not without risks." (Budget papers 2003-04)

In the 2003-04 budget the Navy will spend \$773.7 million on the black hole called the Collins submarines. This is in addition to the \$5 billion already spent – and there is still no guarantee they will work.

E-Defence: The Government will be spending \$37.11 million to upgrade the ADF's information and communication technology (ICT) facilities.

This system will complement existing structures for military emails and communications but it will be more secure. It will also be interoperable with allies (i.e. the US) and enable them to supervise the Australian military.

This project will receive additional spending over the next five years and there are plans for \$100-150 million more in the 2008/9 budget depending on the growth of ICT over the next period.

Military Satellite Communication: In June Optus will launch a C1 satellite. It will have a large ADF payload which will allow the military to spy on anyone on the globe from Sri Lanka to Hawaii.

Giving control of Australian military communications to Optus, which is owned by the Singapore Government, has raised eyebrows in Australia.

Of more concern is that the satellite means Australia is committed to spying on its neighbours instead of co-operating with them to fix regional problems.

It also raises the spectre of Australia operating like the US and assisting it in the illegal militarisation of space.

Intelligence Budget : The Howard Government is using the insecurity and fear arising from the September 11 attack and the Bali

bombing to put in place structures that will further impinge on our democratic rights.

The Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO), Defence Signals Directorate (DSD), and Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation (DIGO) received big budget increases.

Total spending is up \$60 million to \$432 million.

War games: "There are three joint ADF exercises and forty-seven combined exercises planned for 2003/4 including 13 with the US." (Budget papers)

All this will cost \$483 million.

Conclusion

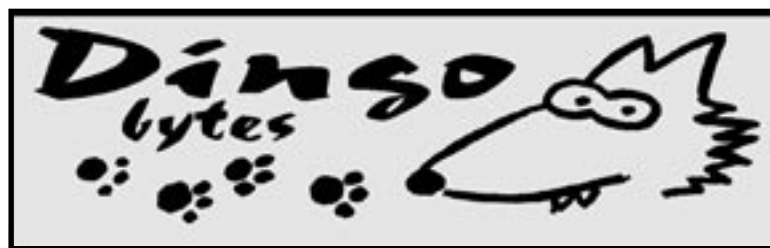
The Australian Defence budget for 2003-04 shows that the Government has given up any pre-

tence of defending Australia and is preparing for US directed pre-emptive strikes anywhere on the globe

This policy shift threatens Australians by making more and more people our enemies and by dealing with the effects and never the root causes of "terrorism".

The CPA has consistently campaigned for a ten percent cut in military spending with the money saved to be spent on socially usefully needs.

This should include overseas aid to provide food security, clean water, jobs, health, education and sustainable development in neighbouring countries. This would be the most cost-effective, positive and equitable way to ensure security for our country and its people. ☘



The Howard Government's recent attack on the Senate, with a push to change the Constitution and allow the joint sitting of both houses of Parliament so as to pass legislation blocked in the Senate, was a naked grab for power. The Government based its move on the argument that the Senate kills off the "mandate" of the government of the day by blocking legislation. But of the 1238 bills presented by the Howard Government to the Senate, only 33 have been voted down or set aside. In other words more than 97 percent of Government legislation has been passed by the Senate. And of the 5400 Bills voted on by the Senate over the past 30 years, 97.6 percent have been given passage. On the other hand, not one of the 57 private members Bills presented during the current Parliament has passed, all blocked by the Government.

Crime does pay. The National Tax and Accountants' Association often exposes the contradictions, ludicrous in many cases, inherent in the tax system. Last week the Association recounted how a convicted drug dealer was entitled to a deduction for stolen money intended for a drug purchase. The bloke failed to lodge a tax return for several years. Following an audit the Tax Commissioner issued default assessments. His objections to this included that the stolen amount of \$220,000 was assessable income because it was money provided to him by the Australian Federal Police when he was acting as an agent for them in a drug dealing operation. Eventually his appeal went to the Full Federal Court which held that, illegality considerations aside, he was entitled to the loss of \$220,000 as one "incurred in the course of gaining or producing assessable income", because it was lost in connection to his drug dealing business.

So, the Office of Film and Literature Classification (OFLC) has banned the film *Ken Park* from being shown at the Sydney Film Festival. By way of explanation the censor issued a statement referring to scenes of "child sexual abuse". Perhaps the OFLC should see child abuse first hand in the real world by visiting an Australian refugee detention centre, where babies, toddlers, school aged children and teens have been locked away like criminals.

CAPTILIST HOG OF THE WEEK: The Australian Federal Government, which has suffered widespread international criticism for its refusal to donate money to the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. At the recent G8 summit world leaders pledged billions towards the fund, and the Global AIDS Alliance has calculated that a fair donation by Australia – relative to those already received – would be \$190 million. Upon denying the request, Government Spokesperson Christine Gallus pointed out that Australia was already contributing to the global fight against AIDS, having allocated \$200 million over six years. Putting Australia to shame, countries that did dig deep for the Global Fund include Zambia, Niger, Burkina Faso and Zimbabwe.



The Power Broke

While US President George W Bush gives the appearance of being an ignorant, uneducated and semi-literate idiot, the forces behind him are none of these things. They consist of an interlocking group of highly organised, well educated, extremely wealthy and sophisticated group of individuals and organisations. Bush is their public mouthpiece whose appointment to the presidency by the US Supreme Court also put them in office. Their policies, which were drafted over the past decade in readiness for the Republicans gaining control of the White House, are now being implemented by the Bush administration.

by Anna Pha

Ten years ago, they would have been considered on the fringe – too far to the Right to be taken seriously. Now they dictate military and foreign policy. Bush shares their highly dangerous and ultra-conservative politics and ideology.

This grouping brings together ultra-Right (neo-conservative) Christians, equally extremist (pro-Sharon/Likud) Zionists and certain corporate interests including weapons manufacturers, oil corporations and a section of the media including outlets owned by Murdoch.

In addition to being in government many are members of a group of “think tanks” with overlapping memberships.

A number of them are to be found on the Bush administration’s Defense Policy Advisory Committee Board (DPB). The DPB gives allegedly “independent” policy advice to the Secretary of Defence and his deputies. Almost all of Board’s 30 or so members are from the private business sector.

The Center for Public Integrity reports that the Board’s members have ties to leading military corporations such as Boeing, TRW, Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin and Booz Allen Hamilton and “at least nine have ties to companies that have won more than \$US76 billion in defense contracts in 2001 and 2002”. Some are registered lobbyists for defense contractors.

In many respects these powerful, privately sponsored institutes have become the most listened to advisers to the Government, a role more often associated with government departments whose staff are directly employed by the State. This is one form of the “privatisation of government” that is now taking place in Australia.

Policy-wise these organisations advocate:

- US global domination and control over and exploitation of the world’s peoples and resources, imposed by military means if necessary;
- US leadership rather than UN leadership and the rejection of international treaties where they

do not serve the interests of US imperialism;

- increased military expenditure, in particular the construction of a “national missile defence system” – Star Wars II;

- unilateral intervention by the US anywhere in the world, with or without UN support. Where it is not possible to form a coalition under US leadership, the US will act alone;

- pre-emptive wars, first-strike use of nuclear weapons and strong opposition to arms controls treaties;

- “regime change” in Iraq, Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia and the Palestinian Authority;

- the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands and support for Sharon’s genocidal policies;

- the rolling back and privatisation of social services such as public health and public education;

- support for “free trade”, “free markets”, the World Bank and World Trade Organisation;

It goes without saying, that while preaching freedom and democracy, they are rabidly anti-trade union and anti-communist.

The notes below give a brief overview of some of the policy “think tanks”, their leading figures and their links to government. It is by no means a complete picture.

Organisations

AEI – American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research is an extremely powerful right-wing think tank and policy developer. More than 20 of its people are working for the Bush administration. It has a budget of around US\$20 million. It is “dedicated to preserving and strengthening the foundations of freedom – limited government, private enterprise, vital cultural and political institutions and strong foreign policy and national defense”. It publishes the *American Enterprise* magazine and holds regular seminars with high ranking speakers from government and military.

Its members include Lynne Cheney (Dick’s wife), Thomas Donnelly, Reuel Marc Gerech, Newt Gingrich, Robert Helms, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Irving Kristol,



Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz and Libby – the “War Cabinet” of capitalism. Front-left is odd-man-out Colin Powell

Michael Ledeen, Richard Perle, Radek Sikorski.

JINSA – Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs is another powerful ultra right-wing “think tank” which publicly declares that “there is no Israeli occupation”. It has succeeded in its campaign to make Israeli “security” a central feature of US foreign policy.

PNAC – Project for a New American Century is a leading neo-conservative think-tank advocated “regime change” in Iraq long before Bush came to office. Its white paper *Rebuilding America’s Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources for the New Century* was published in September 2000. It is almost identical to government policy – even the language used.

Its members include Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, Bill Kristol, John Bolton and Lewis Libby – all powerful operators in directing US foreign and military policy.

Other important institutions include: **The Olin Institute for Strategic Studies**, the **Center for Security Policy (CSP)**, **Enterprise America** and the **New Atlantic Initiative (NAI)**.

The People

Some of those named below may not be household names but

they are extremely powerful in the Bush administration. Many are to be found in one or another or even several of the above “think tanks”.

Bolton, John is the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control in the State Department. He is a PNAC member and was on the JINSA board of advisers prior to joining the Bush administration. He is believed to have been a prime architect of the Iraq policy of the US.

Cheney, Dick is the Vice-President to Bush and a leading war-hawk. He is a founding member of PNAC and was on JINSA’s board of advisers until taking office. He was Defence Secretary under Bush Snr and Halliburton chairman, whose subsidiary Kellogg Brown and Root has secured lucrative contracts from the US army. He is a trustee of AEI and has numerous oil links including Chevron. His wife Lynne sat on the board of Lockheed Martin which makes Cruise missiles.

Donnelly, Thomas is deputy executive director PNAC and principal author of *Rebuilding America’s Defenses* (PNAC) He is a columnist for *The Washington Times* and executive editor of *The National Interest*. His articles are also published in *The Weekly Standard*, *The Washington Post*, *Jane’s Defence Week* and he appears on FoxNews. He is a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for Nuclear Forces and Arms Control Policy. He is the director of strategic communications and initiatives of the Lockheed Martin Corporation (2002).

Feith, Douglas was a JINSA board member before joining the Bush administration and is the third highest ranking executive in the Pentagon being the Under-Secretary for Policy. He has represented Northrop Grumman, a major arms manufacturer, as a lawyer and selects members for the government’s Defence Policy Board.

Gerecht, Reuel Marc is a resident fellow of AEI and the director of the Middle East Initiative at PNAC and writes for *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Weekly Standard*, *The New Republic*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and other publications. He was a CIA Middle East specialist and consultant on Afghanistan for CBS News

Gingrich, Newt is on the NAI advisory board and a senior fellow of AEI. He was Republican Speaker for the US House of Representatives (1995-1999) and an analyst for Fox News.

Kirkpatrick, Jeane is on the advisory boards of NAI, JINSA; and the CSP. She is a senior fellow of AEI. Her former positions include membership of the Defence Policy Review Board and the President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, US representative to the United Nations and member of White House cabinet.

Kristol, Bill is chairman of PNAC and on the advisory board of NAI. He is editor of the Washington-based *The Weekly Standard* (a Rupert Murdoch paper). He appears regularly on television as a leading political analyst and helped shape the 1994 Republican Congressional victory. He served as chief of staff to Vice-President Dan Quayle.

Ledeen, Michael is a foreign policy expert and former consultant to the National Security Council, the State Department and the Defence Department. He is a resident scholar of AEI in the Freedom Chair and on the JINSA advisory board. His articles include “Syria and Iran Must Get Their Turn”.

Libby, I Lewis is a founding member of PNAC and Cheney’s Chief of Staff. He served in the Defence Department under Bush Snr and sits on the board of the Rand Corporation which has lucrative contracts with the Pentagon.

Perle, Richard is a member of PNAC and JINSA’s board of

This grouping brings together ultra-Right (neo-conservative) Christians, equally extremist (pro-Sharon/Likud) Zionists and certain corporate interests including weapons manufacturers, oil corporations and a section of the media including outlets owned by Murdoch.

ers

Out of their own mouths

“Maintaining imperial order”

advisers. Until recently he was chairman of the Pentagon's Defence Policy Advisory Board but stood down amidst controversy over his relations with the failed Global Crossing corporation. He is a resident fellow of AEI.

He writes for the *Wall Street Journal*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Washington Post*, and other papers, and was once a director of the *Jerusalem Post*. He is director of the software company Autonomy Corp and other corporations whose clients include the Pentagon and was Assistant Secretary for Defence for International Security Policy (1981-1987). He worked as an aid to former Israeli PM Benyamin Netanyahu and is a member of the Board of Advisors of Foundation for Defense of Democracy (FDD), a pro-Israeli organisation that “conducts research and education on international terrorism”.

Rosen, Stephen Peter is director of the Olin Institute and a founding member of PNAC. He is professor of National Security and Military Affairs at Harvard University, an advisor to the CIA and US Department of Defence and previously worked in the Department of Defense and the National Security Council of the Naval War College.

Rumsfeld, Donald is a founding member of PNAC and a member of the advisory board of NAI. He is Bush's Defence Secretary and is credited with planning the invasion of Iraq. He also plays a key role in the allocation of reconstruction contracts in Iraq and has links with Bechtel (a major beneficiary of US wars).

Shultz, George is a patron of AEI and is on the board of directors of Bechtel. He is chairman of the International Council of JP Morgan Chase that has interests in post-war “investment opportunities” in Iraq. He is a member of the Defense Policy Board.

Sikorski, Radek is an executive director of NAI. He comes from Poland where he held positions of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (1998-2001), Deputy Minister of Defence (1992) and Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Solidarity party (1999-2002). He was News Corp's representative (1989-1992) and a roving correspondent for *National Review* (1988-98). He became a political refugee in the UK (1981-1989).

Wolfowitz, Paul is a PNAC member and Bush's Deputy Defence Secretary. He is an important ideologue in the Bush administration.

Woolsey, James is a member of PNAC and a former CIA director. He is also a member of the JINSA board of advisers. His business interests include DynCorp, Titan Corporation, British Aerospace, Paladin Capital Group and Booz Allen Hamilton – corporations that stand to benefit from US wars.

Notably missing from the list is Secretary for State Colin Powell, who is at odds with them over their methods, but not their long term goals.

The positions held by these individuals show that there is an unholy alliance between government, corporations, the media and bodies advising the government. They are often one and the same persons. ☪

Empires have come and gone in world history – the Roman empire, the Mongols, the British and Ottoman empires. The objective of the leaders of Nazi Germany was world domination but they were resisted and they failed. The British empire disintegrated after WW2. Now, a new and even more powerful and dangerous nation has launched its crusade for a New World Order – a new world-wide American empire. They have become so arrogant that they do not hide their objectives and the ways by which they intend to enforce their domination. This article, the first of three, brings you what their spokespersons have said. Now read on ...

by Anna Pha

“The United States has no rival. We are militarily dominant around the world. Our military spending exceeds that of the next six or seven powers combined, and we have a monopoly on many advanced and not so advanced military technologies. We, and only we, form and lead military coalitions into war. We use our military dominance to intervene in the internal affairs of other countries, because the local inhabitants are killing each other, or harbouring enemies of the United States, or developing nuclear and biological weapons.” (S R Rosen, “The Future of War and the American Military”, *Harvard Magazine*, May-June 2002)

“A political unit that has overwhelming superiority in military power, and uses that power to influence the internal behaviour of other states, is called an empire. Because the United States does not seek to control territory or govern the overseas citizens of the empire, we are an indirect empire, to be sure, but an empire nonetheless. If this is correct, our goal is not combating a rival, but maintaining our imperial position, and maintaining imperial order.” (Emphasis added)

“[I]mperial strategy focuses on preventing the emergence of powerful, hostile challengers to the empire: by war if necessary, but by imperial assimilation if possible”, writes Rosen.

You may say that this is just extremist language but its author is part of a circle of very powerful and dangerous people and organisations who are in control of the Bush administration's foreign policy. (See article opposite for details of some of these people and their organisations.)

In September 2000, prior to Bush's appointment to the US presidency and one year before the September 11 attack on the World Trade Centre, the Project for a New American Century (PNAC) (one of the many US think tanks) published a statement called *Rebuilding America's Defense: Strategy, Forces and Resources for a New Century*.

The report identifies core tasks for the US military to achieve. These include:

“MAINTAIN NUCLEAR STRATEGIC SUPERIORITY...

“DEVELOP AND DEPLOY GLOBAL MISSILE DEFENCES to defend America and American allies and to provide a secure basis for US power projection around the world.

“CONTROL THE NEW ‘INTERNATIONAL COMMONS’ OF SPACE AND ‘CYBERSPACE’, and pave the way for the creation of a new military service – US Space Forces – with the mission of space control.

“EXPLOIT THE ‘REVOLUTION IN MILITARY AFFAIRS’ to ensure long-term superiority of US conventional forces...

“INCREASE DEFENCE SPENDING gradually to a minimum level of 3.5 to 3.8 percent of gross domestic product, adding \$15 billion to \$20 billion to total defence spending annually.” (PNAC) (Upper case from the original text)

Michael Ledeen is a member of another of the “think tanks” – the American Enterprise Institute (AEI). He published an article “We'll Win this War” in the AEI's *The American Enterprise* magazine in December 2001.

“We must wage revolutionary war against all the terrorist regimes, and gradually replace them with governments that turn to their own people's freely expressed desires as the basis of their political legitimacy”, he writes.

“If we act like the revolutionary force we truly are, we can once again reshape the world, as we repeatedly did throughout the last century. But if we settle for token victories and limited accomplishments, we will permit our enemies to reorganize, and attack us with even greater venom in the future.” (emphasis added)

Shock and Awe warfare

Shock and Awe is the method of warfare to achieve these goals. It has just been tested in Iraq. It is explained by Rosen:

“The maximum amount of force can and should be used as quickly as possible for psychological impact – to demonstrate that the empire cannot be challenged with impunity... [W]e are in the business of bringing down hostile governments and creating governments favourable to us.

“Conventional international wars end and troops are brought back home. Imperial wars end, but imperial garrisons must be left in place for decades to ensure order and stability. This is, in fact, what we are beginning to see, first in the Balkans and now in Central Asia...”

This type of warfare is explained in the strategy document, *Shock and Awe: Achieving Rapid Dominance*, which was published by the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA) in 1996. It says:

“The military posture and capability of the United States of America are, today, dominant. Simply put, there is no external adversary in the world that can successfully challenge the extraordinary power of the American military in either regional conflict or in ‘conventional’ war as we know it once the United States makes the commitment to take



“Shock and awe” – Nagasaki, August 9, 1945

whatever action may be needed.” (Emphasis added)

Rapid Domination

“The aim of Rapid Dominance is to affect the will, perception, and understanding of the adversary to fit or respond to our strategic policy ends through imposing a regime of Shock and Awe.

“Clearly, the traditional military aim of destroying, defeating, or neutralizing the adversary's military capability is a fundamental and necessary component of Rapid Dominance. Our intent, however, is to field a range of capabilities to induce sufficient Shock and Awe to render the adversary impotent. This means that physical and psychological effects must be obtained.

“‘Dominance’ means the ability to affect and dominate an adversary's will both physically and psychologically. Physical dominance includes the ability to destroy, disarm, disrupt, neutralize, and to render impotent.” (Emphasis added)

“Psychological dominance means the ability to destroy, defeat, and neuter the will of an adversary to resist; or convince the adversary to accept our terms and aims short of using force. The target is the adversary's will, perception, and understanding....

“...deception, confusion, misinformation, and disinformation, perhaps in massive amounts, must be employed.” (Emphasis added)

“Theoretically, the magnitude of Shock and Awe Rapid Dominance seeks to impose (in extreme cases) is the non-nuclear equivalent of the impact that the atomic weapons dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki had on the Japanese...”

“The impact of those weapons was sufficient to transform both the mindset of the average Japanese citizen and the outlook of the leadership through this condition of Shock and Awe. The Japanese simply could not comprehend the destructive power carried by a single airplane. This incomprehension produced a state of awe....

“It will imply more than the direct application of force. It will

mean the ability to control the environment and to master all levels of an opponent's activities to affect will, perception, and understanding. “This could include means of communication, transportation, food production, water supply, and other aspects of infrastructure as well as the denial of military responses.”

The JINSA document continues: “The first priority of a doctrine of Rapid Dominance should be to deter, alter, or affect the will and therefore those actions that are either unacceptable to U.S. national security interests or endanger the democratic community of states and access to free markets....

“Should deterrence fail, the application of Rapid Dominance in these circumstances should create sufficient Shock and Awe to the immediate threat forces and leadership as well as provide a clear message for other potential threat partners. The doctrine of Rapid Dominance ... has applications in a variety of areas such as countering WMD, terrorism, and perhaps other tasks.

“...in addition to improving our force capabilities, the US must develop an intelligence repository far more extensive than during the Cold War, covering virtually all the important regions and organizational structures throughout the world.” (JINSA)

Space control

Space control is also necessary in the eyes of the imperial war hawks. As long ago as 1976, the Joint Strategy Review by the National Defense Panel said, “Unrestricted use of space has become a major strategic interest of the United States.” (as quoted in *Rebuilding America's Defenses*)

“Building an effective, robust, layered, global system of missile defenses is a prerequisite for maintaining American preeminence.” (PNAC)

“The Clinton Administration's adherence to the 1972 ABM Treaty frustrated development of useful ballistic missile defenses”, says the PNAC strategy document.

continued on page 12

US forces slaughter Iraqis: eyewitness

RAWAH, Iraq, June 14 – American troops “slaughtered” more than 100 Iraqi civilians, most of them killed while asleep, in the early hours of Friday, June 13, eyewitnesses have told Islam Online (IOL).

by Hossam al-Sayed

The US forces deliberately opened fire from tanks and helicopter gunships at the houses of Iraqi civilians in Rawah, 400 kilometres to the north-west of Baghdad, killing tens of people, they charged.

The town residents rushed out of their homes which came under heavy American bombardment. Some of them emerged with their light arms and battled the occupation forces, killing and injuring an unspecified number of American troops, eyewitnesses told IOL.

“The bodies of 12 of your boys were found tied with ropes, each with a bullet in the head. The Americans detained them and immediately executed them in this horrible way”, charged Abu Saadoun, one of the town tribal leaders.

“Now we have to avenge not only the occupation of our country but also the slaughtering of our boys. We will open the gates of hell on the Americans”, he pledged in exclusive statements to IOL.

Tired and exhausted Abu Khaled told IOL he spent three hours in the desert at the outskirts of Rawah digging a mass grave for the victims of the American massacre.

“We buried more than 80 of our sons but are still puzzled at what pushed the Americans to massacre our people. We are far away from

Baghdad and no fighting has been reported here”, said Abu Khaled.

One of the local leaders said, “I swear by Allah Almighty there are no training camps here. We do not need one. Each Iraqi child knows how to use arms.

“The obligatory enlisting and the long-running wars Iraq fought over the past two decades taught lots of Iraqi men military planning and tactics of using heavy weapons.”

He said that the Popular Army and Al-Quds Army formed by Saddam to falsely depict him as defender of the Arab nation did not prevent the Americans from invading, but they helped train men, elders, women and children in the use of all types of arms.

“This will certainly help when we start real resistance to boot out the occupation forces outside the town”, the local leader told IOL.

The Americans, he said angrily, break into our homes in a violent and barbaric way, not respecting in the least our traditions.

“They (US forces) claim they are hunting down Ba’athists while in fact they are only trying to terrify us not to resist the occupation”, he concluded.

US casualties

The American occupation forces sustain daily losses and damages in all Sunni areas in northern Iraq.



The US occupation forces sustain daily losses

In Falluja, anti-occupation resistance has been on the upswing to the extent that American forces stationed there fear to leave their posts after sunset and open random fire at anything that moves.

Also, the towns of Abu Ghareb, el-Ramadi and Heit, all to the west of the capital Baghdad, witness regular resistance operations that inflict fatalities and damage to the Americans and their weaponry machine.

During a three-day period this month the Americans lost seven soldiers; three Apache helicopter

gunships, downed by Russian-made Strella missiles, and two tanks.

Maddened by the resistance attacks and the causalities, the Americans developed a hostile attitude towards the media and deprived the entire population of Falluja of electricity.

The American forces are always keen on evacuating any attack site immediately even if this would cost them more lives.

One US officer told IOL that there are strict orders not to allow the media to document any American casualties. The American

forces even rearrange the attack site so that no one would ever notice a battle was raged there.

Fires blazed on the major pipeline from Iraq’s northern oilfields after twin bomb attacks aimed at sabotaging exports through Turkey.

Iraqis accuse the Americans of stealing their oil wealth by trying to export oil without the approval of a central Iraqi government in Baghdad. This month US occupation forces killed 31 Iraqis northeast of Baghdad, one day after another massive raid killed 70.

IslamOnline.net (abridged) ✪

Greece Huge demonstration

An estimated 50,000 people took part in the biggest demonstration ever seen in the Greek city of Thessalonica on Saturday June 22. Contingent after contingent of Branches of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), trade union organisations, the Communist Youth of Greece (KNE) and other groups marched with a mixture of good humour, passion and great discipline. The demonstration was called by the KKE and opposed developments in the European Union which is steadily destroying the sovereignty of the formerly independent states of Europe.

by Hannah Middleton*

Press reports of the violence by anarchist demonstrators give a false picture. As well as the huge KKE-inspired demonstration there was another protest organised at the same time by social democratic organisations and some other political forces. This numbered about 5000 and included the anarchists.

The purpose of the violence was made clear when most of the media reported the destruction by a tiny handful and largely ignored the huge KKE demonstration.

If any confirmation of the pur-

pose of the political violence was needed it came with reports that the offices of the Communist Youth of Greece and a bookshop belonging to the Communist Party of Greece were attacked by anarchists and windows broken.

Damage would have been more extensive had it not been for these premises being protected by members of the Youth League and the Party.

* Hannah Middleton was on a visit to Greece and took part in the KKE-organised demonstration. ✪

Action needed on Bills to end Cuba travel ban

While aggression against Cuba reached a new low when Bush administration officials expelled 14 Cuban diplomats on allegations of espionage, very important advances are being made in ending the embargo. Members of Congress recently introduced Bills in both chambers to end the ban on travel to Cuba.

One of the most positive developments of the current congressional session was the formation of a Senate Cuba Working Group (CWG). The Senate CWG’s mission is to “examine US policies toward Cuba, including current trade and travel restrictions”, and they believe that “the sanction policy of the United States has been ineffective since it was adopted in 1962”.

Republican Senator Michael Enzi and members of the Senate CWG introduced the “Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act of 2003” on April 30. The Bill has 11 sponsors. The House Cuba Working Group,

led by Republican Jeff Flake, introduced a Bill with identical language.

The House version of the Bill was introduced with 55 co-sponsors, including all the members of the House CWG. If passed, these Bills would lift all restrictions on travel to Cuba permanently.

On March 24, the Treasury Department, the agency charged with enforcing the ban on travel to Cuba, announced the elimination of “people-to-people” educational licences, which will effectively end more than 60 percent of the legal, non-Cuban American travel to Cuba.

Travel groups and ordinary citizens expressed outrage over the change and reportedly overwhelmed the Treasury Department with negative responses during the 60-day comment period.

The expulsion of the diplomats was the latest in a series of events which have provoked rising tensions between the US and Cuba. The Cuban Foreign Ministry denied the espionage charges and called the expulsions part of a larger administration plan to increase tensions and provoke a crisis.

According to a May 15 *New York Times* article, “the deci-

sion to expel Cubans was made ‘at the highest levels’ in the State Department and the White House, and the policy makers then turned to the bureau [FBI] for names of intelligence operatives”.

In mid-March, 78 Cuban dissidents were arrested, tried and imprisoned on charges of conspiracy to harm the national security of Cuba. The Cuban Government said the charges were a direct result of US organising, advising, equipping, and support of the dissidents.

Cuban officials said the actions of these dissidents were more akin to working for a foreign government – one whose stated policy is the overthrow of the Cuban Government – than to acting as a legitimate opposition.

A number of organisations have issued statements of concern over Cuba’s actions. These groups and others also took issue with Cuba’s re-institution of the death penalty for three Cubans convicted of hijacking.

The Cuban Government said a US slowdown in issuing visas for Cubans is leading to some of Cuba’s desperation migration attempts like the hijackings. The US-Cuban migration accords of 1994 require the US to provide a minimum of 20,000 immigration visas to Cubans yearly. So far this year, fewer than 1000 visas have been issued.

People’s Weekly World, paper of Communist Party, USA ✪



ALEIDA GUEVARA

Aleida Guevara is Che Guevara’s eldest daughter. She is a Cuban-based pediatrician who has served as an international doctor in both Nicaragua and Angola in the 1980s. She has emerged as a prominent figure in the anti-globalisation movement, and will be speaking in Australia for the first time.

“Che Guevara, War and the Fight for Global Justice”

Melbourne: Wednesday 2nd July 7pm
RMIT Storey Hall, Swanston Street
Entry \$5

Sydney: Saturday 5th July 7pm
Eastern Avenue Auditorium
University of Sydney, City Road Entrance
Entry by donation \$6

Contact Pilar: Ph: 03 93264280 Email: pilar@oceanbooks.com.au

Republican Party's corporate merger

By appointing Ed Gillespie, a leading corporate lobbyist, to head the Republican National Committee, President Bush has opened a conduit for corporate America to strengthen its already formidable influence in the White House and Congress, rights watchdog Public Citizen has warned. The lobbying firm Gillespie co-founded in 2000, Quinn, Gillespie & Associates, has grown into one of the capital's most lucrative, in part because of Gillespie's strong ties to the Bush administration.

A party chairman works hand-in-hand with the White House and congressional leaders on policy matters and election strategy, and wields a great deal of influence on legislation that may benefit contributors to the national party. Gillespie's access to inside information will be invaluable to the clients and partners at Quinn Gillespie – even if Gillespie does not lobby or engage in any policy discussions with clients of his firm, in which he will continue to hold an ownership stake.

"The party chief is in a unique position to help friends and punish enemies", Public Citizen President Joan Claybrook said. "This is just one more step in the merger of the Republican Party and Corporate America. Ed Gillespie is a richly rewarded lobbyist who greased the wheels in Congress and the White House for Enron, one of the most crooked companies in US history. And now he's at the head of the GOP. That should tell citizens where President Bush's interests lie."

Public Citizen released a new analysis of Quinn Gillespie's efforts on behalf of a slew of corporate clients on legislation to undercut consumer rights and increase the power of big business. Drawn from federal disclosure forms, the analysis shows that:

- Since its founding by Gillespie and former Clinton White House counsel Jack Quinn in 2000, the firm has reported US\$27.4 million in lobbying-related income through 2002.

- Gillespie has worked to keep national energy policy in lockstep

with the wishes of Enron and other energy giants. Quinn Gillespie earned US\$700,000 from Enron in 2001 alone to lobby the White House on the electricity crisis on the West Coast. The administration aggressively supported Enron's position against re-regulating electricity markets.

- Gillespie also channelled money from DaimlerChrysler and Enron to his 21st Century Energy Project, which bought print and television ads in July 2001 to promote the administration's energy plans, including blocking any increase in fuel-economy standards.

- PricewaterhouseCoopers paid Quinn Gillespie US\$1.35 million from 2000 to 2002 to lobby against increased oversight of the accounting industry. PricewaterhouseCoopers – which paid a US\$5 million fine to the Securities and Exchange Commission in 2002 for repeated accounting irregularities, including improperly auditing millions in fees paid to its own consultants – tried to limit restrictions on consulting and other services that an accounting firm could offer its clients.

Effectively, Quinn Gillespie was trying to water down accounting reforms in the wake of an unprecedented wave of corporate fraud.

- The US Chamber of Commerce paid Gillespie's firm US\$860,000 from 2000 to 2002 to lobby for the so-called Class Action Fairness Act – legislation that would benefit corporations by moving lawsuits from state to federal courts, where it is more difficult to certify class actions and delays result from

large case backlogs. All told, the firm has collected at least US\$1.12 million to lobby for this anti-consumer bill.

- After helping set up the Commerce Department as part of the Bush transition team, Gillespie returned to his practice and immediately began lobbying on behalf of clients with business before the department. Gillespie helped secure tariffs against foreign competition for the "Stand Up for Steel" coalition and USEC Inc, the country's largest supplier of enriched uranium fuel to nuclear power plants.

- Tyson Foods paid Quinn Gillespie US\$440,000 in 2002, in part to downplay federal charges against Tyson for conspiring to smuggle illegal immigrants into the United States to work at its poultry processing plants for lower wages than it paid legal workers.

The firm also lobbied on "wage and hour" issues for Tyson, a result of a Labor Department lawsuit against Tyson seeking US\$300 million in back pay owed to workers.

Other clients of Quinn Gillespie include DirecTV, Microsoft, SBC Communications, Verizon and Viacom.

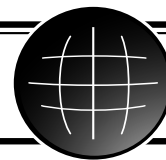
As chairman of the RNC, Gillespie will be the party's lead fundraiser and spokesman, responsible for raising hundreds of millions of dollars each election cycle and determining which candidates get the money, thereby holding the purse strings for the legislators his firm works to persuade.

"Very few non-governmental positions in American politics offer so much potential for corruption", said Frank Clemente, director of Public Citizen's Congress Watch. "Why would corporations need to hire a lobbyist if they could go straight to lawmakers through Gillespie? President Bush was wrong to appoint such a crony of big business."

Public Citizen ☪



PEACE AND FREEDOM



Global briefs

IRAQ: A British inquiry into the two trailers claimed to have been used by Iraq as mobile germ warfare laboratories has found that they were in fact used for the production of hydrogen gas to fill hot air balloons to assist in artillery fire. According to the British newspaper *The Observer*, Iraq purchased such a system from a British firm in 1987. This conclusion by biological weapons experts is a further embarrassment, not only for Tony Blair who used the threat of weapons of mass destruction to justify an illegal war against Iraq, but to the rest of the "coalition of the willing", including Australia.

KOREA: In a historic ceremony North and South Korea connected railways at their border, re-linking the two countries for the first time in more than 50 years.

GREECE: Seventy-one Communist parties are taking part in a forum Movements Against War and Globalisation in Greece. After a discussion of theoretical questions, forum participants joined the anti-globalisation protestors. The forum opened last Thursday and coincided with the European Union summit. The Greek authorities, determined to prevent protestors from disrupting the biggest gathering yet of European leaders, shifted the EU summit from Salonica to Chalkidiki, a luxury resort 120km from Salonica.

USA: As Ministers from over 100 countries gather for a US Government sponsored four-day "Ministerial Conference and Expo on Agricultural Science and Technology", concerned citizens from around the world are uniting to challenge the Bush administration's policy of promoting increased corporate control over global food systems. One of their concerns is the US Government's efforts to push genetically engineered food on the world. The ministerial is one of the key international meetings in the lead-up to September's World Trade Organisation (WTO) meeting in Cancun where the Bush administration will be pushing its agenda of promoting corporate globalisation through the expansion of sweeping "free trade" agreements. The recent US WTO challenge to the European Union's restrictions on genetically engineered food and the Bush administration's linking of AIDS relief for African nations to their support of genetically engineered food, has raised concerns that the Bush administration is using the Ministerial to promote an agenda favouring US biotech and agribusiness corporations, amongst others. Policy experts refute the US Government's claim that the Ministerial will address the problems of poverty and hunger around the world.

BELGIUM: US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said that the US would not provide further funds for a new NATO headquarters in Brussels unless Belgium repealed a 10-year-old law that asserts that Belgian judges have jurisdiction over war crimes committed in any part of the world. The Belgian courts have entertained complaints of war crimes against former President Bush Snr and other US leaders. The laws were passed during the Balkan wars.

Call for new trial for Cuban Five

The Berkeley City Council in the US State of California has unanimously passed a resolution in support of a fair trial in a neutral venue for the five Cuban political prisoners in the United States.

According to the National Committee to Free the Five, Berkeley is the first city to pass such a measure. The resolution also called for the Five to be accorded the same family visitation rights, humanitarian concerns and equal treatment under the law as any other prisoner in the United States.

The five – Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, René González and Fernando González – were convicted in June 2001 and sentenced the following December to terms of 17 years to double life imprisonment in a Miami federal court.

Gloria La Riva, of the National

Committee to Free the Five, said that the Cubans "were railroaded in a biased trial on false charges of espionage and related crimes". She said that their only "crime" was to defend the people of Cuba by monitoring the activities of right-wing terrorist groups that operate freely in southern Florida.

"It is outrageous that while the US government is allegedly waging a 'war on terrorism', it is imprisoning Cubans who were trying to stop deadly attacks on their country".

The National Committee to Free the Five said that the resolution came after more than two months of discussion. Following referral to the Peace and Justice Commission for further consideration, the resolution was returned to the full City Council with a strong recommendation from the Commission for adoption of the resolution.

Alicia Jrapko, a lead organiser of the National Committee, told reporters that "the passage of the resolution by the Berkeley City Council is a big step forward in the struggle" to win justice for the Five.

"The case of the Five and the injustice done to them is becoming known all over the world and here in the United States, we believe that the action of the Berkeley Council will stimulate similar efforts in cities across the country." ☪

Sydney

Hands off Cuba! Public Meeting

Saturday 28th June 6.30pm

CFMEU Building
10-12 Railway Parade, Lidcombe
(opposite Lidcombe railway station)

Speakers and special video on the "Five's case"

Entry by donation
Food and drink available

Supported by:

Amigos De Cuba, Australia Cuba Friendship Society (ACFS),
Committee in Solidarity with Cuba – Western Suburbs,
and other groups

Legal centre to lose funding

A famous philosopher once said: "To merit the right to influence men who are struggling... one must first participate in the struggle".

Here we are in 2003, and the struggle continues. However, the end result will be determined by how we, as a community, participate in it.

On August 3, 2003, the funding for the Hawkesbury Nepean Community Legal Centre (HNCLC) Aboriginal Legal Access Project comes to an end.

The question then, is what are

we prepared to do, as a sector, as a community, as individuals, to save it?

This project has been successfully operating for almost four years through Hawkesbury Nepean Community Legal Centre.

The success has come through the employment of an Aboriginal worker to work within the community.

Due to the domestic violence component of the project, the worker is female. She has been trained in legal issues and gained a Diploma in National Indigenous Legal Studies from Tranby College, Glebe (Sydney).

Without this project, many

people would not have had their issues heard, let alone resolved.

Aboriginal people need Aboriginal workers to assist them with their legal problems and to walk them through the troubled spots in their life.

The effects of colonisation run deep, and only through government and community commitment can these affects be addressed and reduced.

Commitment comes with providing resources to keep projects like the Aboriginal Legal Access Project alive and functioning to help the community.

However, this is not the only project facing a funding crisis.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community access officer position at Hawkesbury City Council and the Aboriginal women's resource worker position at the Women's Cottage also have no funding beyond August.

Why is this even a possibility in a local government area that boasts one of the fastest-growing Aboriginal populations?

Are we to assume that our commitment to notions of equity and reconciliation is merely rhetoric?

In the months leading up to the end of funding, we are asking you in the community to lend your support – we need our voices in this process to be loud and united.

Hawkesbury Nepean Community Legal Centre is planning

action to help highlight the importance of gaining ongoing funding for these projects.

There will be an open day on Friday (June 20).

If other services would like to be involved and offer their support to stop the closure of this very successful project, please call Melissa Stubbings, Aboriginal legal access worker, or Tracy Leahy, co-ordinator of Hawkesbury Nepean Community Legal Centre, on (02) 4588 5618.

**Melissa Stubbings and
Gina Vizza
Hawkesbury Nepean
Community Legal Centre,
NSW**

People's Government is possible

The last few words in the editorial of The Guardian (4-6-03) said that many people would ask the question "is this possible (a people's government) or is it just a pipe dream?"

Well to those who ask this question I will answer – what condition was Russia in in 1917 when the people took power.

It was mainly still feudal peasantry, wrecked by years of war.

Now let us go forward a mere two decades, a mere half breath in history time!

Where had Russia come to by 1937? She was equal to England, France and Germany (with centuries of history behind them) and was challenging the USA for the position of top state in the world.

And that was no pipe dream. That was what a freed and unfettered working class could achieve in a mere 20 years – and starting behind scratch at that.

The working class is capable of miracles when freed from its capitalist shackles. If it could take charge now before more capitalist destruction we could turn the world into a veritable Garden of Eden.

I have never accepted that Russia "collapsed" and that communism was dead. Just wishful thinking by the capitalists. It has been their pipe dream ever since 1917.

The socialist movement was temporally brought to a halt – received a setback when Russia – due to an all-out economic and cultural frontal assault aided by treachery from within (and weakened by the hot war against Germany and the Cold War waged by the USA) was forced to halt its forward march.

But socialism is the future history and no contemporary King Canutes can stop the waves of history.

**B Appleton
Killcare Hts, NSW**

Sydney

Exhibition Isle of Refuge

Highlights the plight of asylum seekers in detention centres in Australia and the South Pacific.

**Ivan Dougherty Gallery
until 19 July**

Artists: Gordon Bennett, George Gittos, Tim Johnson, Karma Phuntsok, Chris O'Doherty aka Reg Mombassa, Sue Saxon, Anne Zahalka, Laurens Tan, My Le Thi, Albertina Viegas, Savanhdy Vongpoothorn, Guan Wei, Mahmoud Yekta



Gordon Bennett Watch Tower 2002

Culture & Life

Freedom of Disinformation

No one knows the value of propaganda and subversion better than imperialism. For decades US imperialism has been hiring the best and brightest from the country's colleges, stuffing their heads with propaganda about America's manifest destiny to overthrow tyranny and protect democracy, and then turning them loose to subvert governments the US regarded as hostile.

by Rob Gowland

These otherwise bright boys and girls, inspired by noble ideals, are told how important it is to promote freedom of information and how wicked it is to interfere with that.

Of course, in imperialism's lexicon, "freedom of information" means freedom to disseminate *disinformation*. But they are not told that.

So they add cunning techniques for promoting "freedom of information" to their other clever ideas for dealing with the "enemies of democracy": weakening a country's economy, destabilising its government, causing a run on its currency, setting up "independent" trade unions, fomenting dissent among intellectuals, etc.

Ironically, real tyrants usually get along well with imperialism. But if one of them, like Saddam Hussein for example, chooses to follow an independent line that does not accord with imperialism's wishes, then the full panoply of "anti-tyrant" techniques can be brought into play against the errant leader.

For the most part, however,

the "anti-tyrant, pro-democracy" armoury is reserved for use against democratically elected regimes whose only offence is to take up an anti-imperialist position. One thinks of Slobodan Milosevic in Yugoslavia or Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe.

Or Fidel Castro in Cuba. It doesn't matter how many elections Fidel Castro wins, or by how much, nor how manifestly popular he is with the mass of the Cuban people, US imperialism will still label him a dictator and do everything possible to bring down his government.

Most Cubans voted in their last elections. Barely more than half the US electorate bothered to vote.

Most Cuban voters supported the alliance of Party and non-Party candidates led by the Communist Party. Bush had to resort to blatant and ill-concealed fraud to "win" his last election.

But it is Cuba that is called "undemocratic" and "a dictatorship". By the US leadership, that is.

Labelling Cuba (or Zimbabwe or Yugoslavia) with epithets like these is merely one of the techniques refined by the bright boys and girls we mentioned earlier. Say it loudly enough and often enough, and in the right context, and you will find plenty of people to believe you.

It's not a new technique, of course. Bright US college grads did not invent it. Hitler used it years before. He called it the "technique of the big lie".

These days, they are more sophisticated, using lies of every description. As on the question of democracy in Cuba, imperialist propagandists still call black white and white black whenever it suits them. And it suits them often.

But they also tell an awful lot of half-truths, creating totally erroneous impressions without being able to be accused of actually lying. It's dishonest, but hey, it's in a good cause: facing down Communism or defending democracy, so what are you beefing about?

One technique was to establish committees in target countries: committees to defend free speech, to oppose the "secret police", to form

"free trade unions". These committees would usually involve a small number of disgruntled citizens who were not averse to currying favour with imperialist countries in return for publicity, finance and the sense of power that comes from having "powerful friends".

Another is to actually interfere in the political processes of the target country by supplying money, advice, material and even personnel to opposition political forces. This technique can sometimes go hand in hand with the one in the preceding paragraph.

In Cuba, imperialism is supporting not only "independent trade unions" but "independent libraries", "independent teachers" and even some type of "independent religious" organisation. (Watch for Baptists trying to smuggle Bibles into the country in future.)

The "independent libraries" are the creation of US-based Cuban émigré Robert Kent, who heads up a US outfit called "Friends of Cuban Libraries" (FOCL). The FOCL claims to have 21 "independent libraries" in Cuba. This compares unfavourably with the socialist

Government's system of 400 public libraries and 6,000 school libraries.

Before the 1959 socialist revolution, the majority of Cubans were illiterate and there were only 32 libraries in the whole country. Today, 97 percent of Cubans are literate, the highest rate in the Western hemisphere, *higher than in the USA*.

In a report to the American Library Association (ALA), Ann Sparanese, a New Jersey librarian, noted that "Cubanet openly brags of its 'independent libraries project' in Cuba headed by leaders and officers of dissident political parties whose declared aim is to overthrow the Cuban government".

Cubanet is a "non-profit" organisation "seeking to foster free press in Cuba". It has a website and claims to report from Cuba through an "independent journalist" on the island. It is funded by the US Congress's centre for subversion, the farcically-named National Endowment for Democracy. In addition it gets funds from the equally subversive US Agency for International Development and "anonymous" donors.

In July 2000, two bona fide

kempkes 03
union-art.com



Vieques celebrates departure of US Navy

May 1, 2003, marked the beginning of a new era for the people of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques. On that date the land was officially transferred from the Department of the Navy to the Department of the Interior, ending 62 years of bombing and shelling as the main military training site, the "crown jewel" of the US Navy's Atlantic Fleet.

by David Cline

I travelled to Vieques for the Celebration with a six-person Veterans For Peace delegation. For more than three years, US veterans have worked together with Puerto Rican veterans and community groups on this cause and wanted to share in the joy of this important victory.

The Celebration For Peace For Vieques began on the evening of Wednesday, April 30 and continued throughout the weekend. The main stage was located at the former main gate of Camp Garcia across the street from the Peace & Justice Camp, which has maintained a constant presence there since the death of security guard David Sanes in April 1999.

His death, by errant US bombs, re-ignited a mass civil disobedience movement that swept Vieques and all of Puerto Rico as well as many communities in the United States.

The stage was decorated with a huge banner showing a hand holding the Puerto Rican and Vieques municipal flags releasing a dove of peace. On the night of April 30, thousands gathered, waiting for midnight to celebrate the Navy's departure. Speakers talked about the struggle and the sacrifices made by so many (over 4000 were arrested and jailed in the civil disobedience campaign) and as the clock approached midnight the excitement grew.

At 12 midnight, flares were shot into the air and the crowd surged toward the gate, once the dividing line where Viequeses couldn't cross. The gates came crashing down and people with wire cutters began taking down the fences. People waving Puerto Rican flags climbed on top of the guard post, a cinderblock building that had once been the base for military police operations. Soon others pulled out

sledge hammers and began demolishing the cinderblock building, a symbol of the despised military occupation.

Members of Vieques Horsemen for Peace began riding through the once off limits land, shooting flares and roman candles skyward and shouting victory slogans. Several abandoned Navy vehicles were discovered, overturned and set afire.

At this point, Puerto Rican police were ordered to "restore order" and although there were no violent confrontations or arrests, the police had to retreat several times as the overwhelming crowd threw water to cool them down.

The following day this incident was played up by the news media with one Spanish language paper running a cover photo of a burning vehicle with the headline "They Burned The Peace".

The truth is that the majority of people who tore down the gates and guard house and burned the vehicles were local residents celebrating their liberation.

It is ironic that when Germans tore the Berlin Wall down, it was hailed as an act for freedom, when US tanks pulled down Saddam Hussein's statue in Baghdad, in a staged "popular" demonstration, it was billed as "liberation", yet when Viequeses celebrated the end of over 60 years of continuous US military bombing and tore down symbols of that oppressive presence, it was called criminal vandalism.

Throughout the remainder of the weekend, celebrations took place at the liberated former base entrance. Vendors' stalls lined the road like a country fair with rallies and presentations taking place each day and concerts each evening featuring traditional bomba, salsa, reggae, rock and rap music.

One day there was a Grand



Long struggle – a protest in 1999 demanding the US Navy get out of Vieques

March from the town square in Isabel Segundo. On another, Ecumenical services were held to commemorate the victory of peace. On Sunday, veterans held a ceremony.

I was asked to go with those who had placed a large white cross on the bombing range after the death of David Sanes in April 1999 in the first act of civil disobedience, to the bombing range now silent but still contaminated and littered with unexploded bombs, and helped put up another cross commemorating the victory.

Another service was for Angel Rodriguez Cristobal, a Vietnam veteran who had been arrested in earlier (1979) protests and was murdered in a Federal Prison in Tallahassee, Florida.

The Navy's departure is just the first big step in a continuing struggle on Vieques. The Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques

(CDRV) has long advocated a program of four Ds: Demilitarization, Devolution (return of the land), Decontamination, and Development (a sustainable economy for the benefit of the people).

Some of the former military land is now open to the people as a wildlife preserve and as public beaches but many people still have land claims against the Navy and two-thirds of the island remains in the possession of the Interior Department, not the government or people of Puerto Rico.

The clean-up of the land and restoration of a safe environment will also remain a major focus of concern and activism. A recent study by the Health Department found a 27 percent greater cancer rate on Vieques as well as elevated levels of asthma, diabetes and hypertension, compared with the rest of Puerto Rico.

The bombing ranges are still

littered with unexploded ordinance and are heavily polluted from many years of the build-up of RDX (Cyclonite) explosives from conventional bombs. Quantities of Napalm and Depleted Uranium were also used there.

The Victory for Peace for Vieques is something to cherish, especially in these dark times of war and repression both at home and abroad. Vieques shows that a determined and united people, using mass civil disobedience can overcome even the most powerful of forces.

VIVA VIEQUES LIBRE!

David Cline is the National President of Veterans For Peace and a co-ordinator of Vietnam Veterans Against the War. He participated in the civil disobedience both on Vieques and in Washington, DC. He is a disabled Vietnam veteran and lives in Jersey City, New Jersey. ☪

"Maintaining imperial order"

continued from page 7

"No system of missile defenses can be fully effective without placing sensors and weapons in space ... US armed forces are uniquely dependent upon space." (PNAC)

"The US Space Command foresees that in the coming decades, ... an adversary might also share the same commercial satellite services for communications, imagery, and navigation...The space 'playing field' is levelling rapidly, so US forces will be increasingly vulnerable." (PNAC) (Italics are quote from US Space Command)

"For US armed forces to continue to assert military preeminence, control of space – defined by Space Command as 'the ability to assure

access to space, freedom of operations within the space medium, and an ability to deny others the use of space' – must be an essential element of our military strategy." (Emphasis added)

"As Space Command also recognizes, the United States must also have the capability to deny America's adversaries the use of commercial space platforms for military purposes in times of crises."

"But, over the longer term, maintaining control of space will inevitably require the application of force both in space and from space, including but not limited to anti-missile defenses and defensive systems capable of protecting US and allied satellites; space control

cannot be sustained in any other fashion, with conventional land, sea or airforce, or by electronic warfare." (Emphasis added) (PNAC)

Nuclear weapons

"Shutting the country down would entail both the physical destruction of appropriate infrastructure and the shutdown and control of the flow of all vital information and associated commerce so rapidly as to achieve a level of national shock akin to the effect that dropping nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki had on the Japanese. Simultaneously, Iraq's armed forces would be paralysed with the neutralization or destruction of its capabilities." (JINSA)

This does not rule out the use, development or testing of nuclear weapons. *Rebuilding America's Defences* (PNAC) is quite categorical on this question. The maintenance of a moratorium on nuclear tests is "an untenable situation" it says.

"... there may be a need to develop a new family of nuclear weapons designed to address new sets of military requirements, such as would be required in targeting the very deep underground, hardened bunkers that are being built by many of our potential adversaries." (Emphasis added)

"US nuclear superiority is nothing to be ashamed of; rather, it will be an essential element in preserving American leadership

in a more complex and chaotic world." (Emphasis added) (PNAC)

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