

Self-confessed 'old Leftie' Murray Horton has spent 40 years fighting the system. He talks to MARTIN van BEYENEN.

# The last radical

**M**urray Horton, the old radical dinosaur, laughs at the sobriquet. He is used to labels, and over the years he has been called much worse including a long-haired, bloody, no-hoping comic by people of his father's generation and "rag-tag rabble-rousing Mickey Mouse" by the Socialist Action League. While Horton has always defied easy pigeon-holing, as he nears 60, he can almost be called respectable.

He owns his own well-maintained, mortgage-free home (once painted for \$500 by peace campaigner Owen Wilkes), is married to Becky, whom he met at a conference in the Philippines, has a real job, and his never-luxuriant long hair and beard have gone.

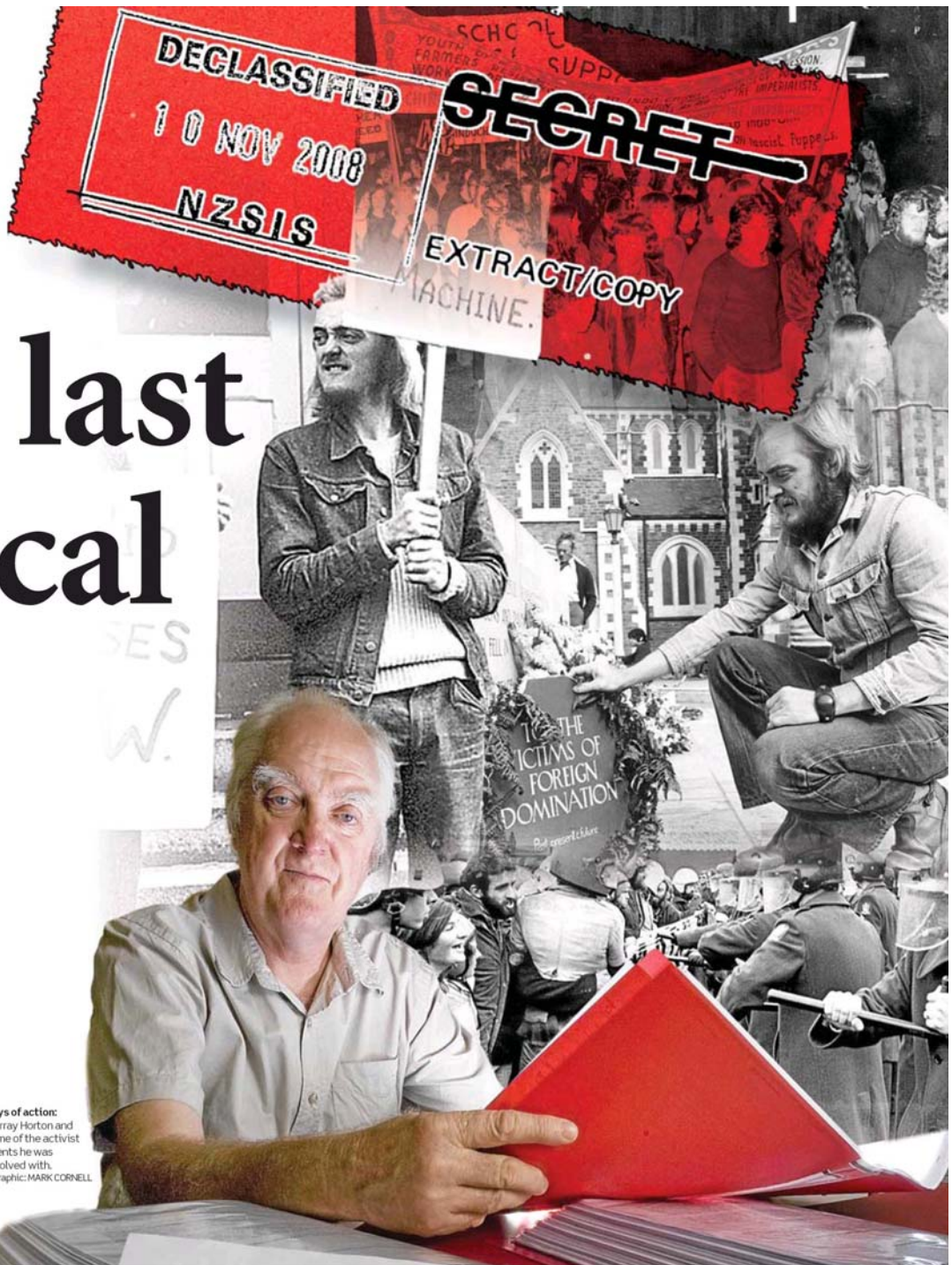
Like most other sensible people, he gets "pl... off" by the "T....." racing around in cars. He watches television, follows sport in the papers, is a keen rugby fan (although he only watches free-to-air) and even subscribes to *Time* magazine.

But bourgeois hallmarks are misleading because Horton is much more than a living remnant from the era of radicals who scandalised and infuriated the staid and conformist New Zealand society of the 1970s.

The last demonstration he organised was only in January last year and last month saw him on the streets marching against the Israeli action in Gaza. He remains an effective lobbyist as the paid organiser, since 1991, of the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (Cafta) and the Anti Bases Campaign (ABC).

Although he has sometimes appeared as the Don Quixote of modern protest he is far from irrelevant, having figured prominently in the campaign stopping the Christchurch City Council from selling off part of the port.

**Days of action:** Murray Horton and some of the activist events he was involved with. Graphic: MARK CORNELL



>> To D2

Press, p.D2

# The last radical

» From D1

A former associate, whose sensitive position within the higher echelons of the public service prevent him from being named, says Murray Horton is an immensely effective campaigner who has played a significant part in dissent in New Zealand.

"He is a key part of that network which includes people like John Minto and Jane Kehey that keeps a certain perspective on New Zealand society alive and well."

His current income at \$14 an hour is paid by pledges from about 50 people who are members of Cafca and ABC, the ironing being, as he delights in pointing out, that there is an old Lefie surviving entirely on the free market.

Both Cafca, which announces its Roger Award on March 2 for the worst transnational company in New Zealand, and ABC have their roots in the highly charged protest movement of the late 60s and early 70s when Horton was regarded as an affront to all right-thinking people.

His ideas have matured but he still regards himself as a radical.

"The fact I've achieved some security doesn't mean my social and political ideas have changed. I'm not an anarchist any more, but underlying all my work is a deep unease at the capitalist political and social system. I'm a socialist. I don't think capitalism and democracy are necessarily synonymous."

The glory days of protest and challenge featured a number of notable radicals but most have evolved into mayors, businesspeople, academics and cabinet ministers. Not Horton though. As former protest icon Tim Shadbolt says in his recent autobiography, *A Mayor of Two Cities*: "Murray Horton ... is probably the only protest leader from the 60s who remains continually active today as he campaigns against foreign control of New Zealand resources."

"I can do it," Horton says, "because the house is freehold, my wife works and I don't have any children." Recently Horton has been able to shake another label - that of "security threat". The

shedding of his danger-to-the-public status was confirmed by Security Intelligence Service (SIS) director Warren Tucker this week.

The SIS has been releasing personal files as part of its new archives policy to aid "the proactive declassification of historical records".

Horton has applied for his personal SIS file, a request acknowledged by Tucker in a polite and friendly letter in which he responds to Horton's question about whether he is still "a person of interest".

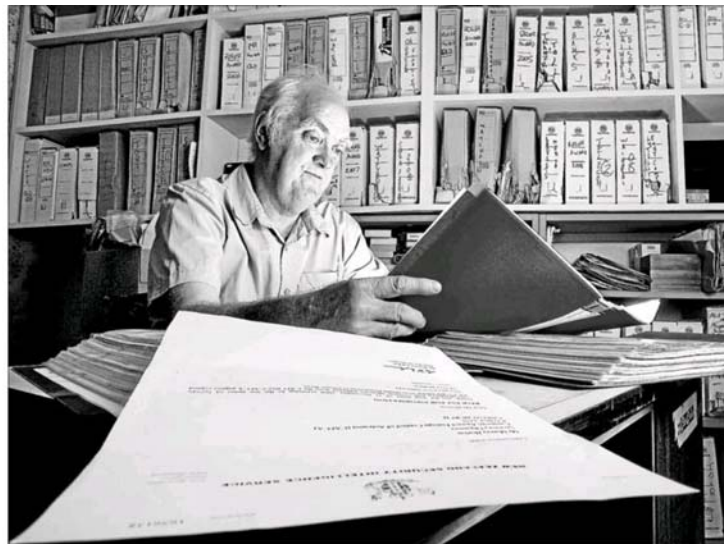
"The answer is that you are only of interest as long as you are interested in us. You have campaigned publicly for the abolition of this Service but you have never encouraged unlawful activity such as sabotage, subversion or terrorism. We do not believe you would ever consciously act against the security of New Zealand and New Zealanders. You are therefore not a person of 'security interest' to the NZSIS."

Tucker's letter is accompanied by a copy of the SIS's Personal Particulars Form which instructs that Horton, in 1972, was a slight, sallow-complexioned male of slight build who "stoops in walk", had a wispy beard and often wore "blue denim fatigues".

The file note was made when Horton was 21 and when he had already been convicted for trespassing in Army buildings in Christchurch and for offensive behaviour involving a New Zealand flag and a police car.

The emerging SIS files are a reminder of the vigorous hotbed of insurrection Christchurch appeared to be in the early 70s as the counter culture hit and protest focused on the Vietnam War and sporting contacts with South Africa.

In Christchurch the tradition of challenge to orthodoxy already had a foothold through Jack and Elsie Locke, New Zealand's most famous communist couple, and the Leftist economist at Canterbury University, Wolfgang Rosenberg, a refugee from Nazi Germany. But the new wave of protest



On the record: Activist Murray Horton with SIS files. Photo: JOHN KIRK-ANDERSON

was as much cultural as political and Christchurch, mainly thanks to Horton and a few others, punched above its weight.

Most former radicals have only hazy memories of that time, but Horton's (by the cadres) recall is extraordinary. Not only does he remember basic facts and dates but he is full of asides and footnotes.

Succinctness is not one of his strong points - as the SIS itself noted on the Cafca file, he "likes the sound of his own voice".

Horton clearly remembers sitting on a bus in his last year at Shirley Boys' High, and thinking "by the time I'm 18, I want to live with a woman and be a leading light in a radical movement". He achieved both. At 18 he was booted out of home by his fed-up father (his mother, who suffered severely from mental illness died when Horton was 21).

"The last straw for him came when I was arrested, for the first time (protesting the 1970 visit of United States Vice-President Spiro Agnew) and he got rung late at night by the cops to say that I was in custody in the Auckland Police Station. When I arrived home soon afterwards, he presented me with an ultimatum: 'Get a haircut, get a job, get married, get out of this stupid outfit with whom you're involved or get out by Wednesday'."

"I got out by Wednesday. My crying mother gave me the taxi fare and held the door open."

His group also latched a plan to kidnap the Ranfurly Shield (it was displayed in shops) and to threaten to return it piece by piece unless the imminent All Black tour of South Africa was called off.

As well as a soft spot for the oddball and misfit, Horton had a good eye for getting maximum effect from a symbolic protest gesture which was sometimes called carnival anarchism.

He doesn't necessarily disagree with the description, but says the idea was mostly just to attract attention.

"We had to do something unusual, noisy, dramatic. It's what I have done for years. If you're regarded as that young bastard, as odd and an outsider, you have to do something to make the insiders take notice."

The PYM's most controversial stunt revolved around Anzac Day. At the Cathedral Square service in 1970, Horton and another PYM member marched up, with some trepidation, to the war memorial, under the scornful gaze of medal-bedecked war veterans and laid, next to the more conventional wreaths, a poster showing photographs of dead Vietnamese babies. It said: "To the victims of fascism in Vietnam".

Christchurch mayor Ron Guthrie, a decorated returned soldier who lost a leg during the North African campaign, threw the poster onto the ground, propelling the stunt into a national event.

An uproar ensued in which PYM got significant support.

**The police are just foot soldiers for the state. It's hard to hate in New Zealand.**

Murray Horton

always very independent."

Horton, who has never belonged to a political party, lacked the Che Guevara looks sported by smiley Tim Shadbolt, but he was a powerful speaker and good debater. The PYM flourished on the hard soil of antagonism to and from the returned servicemen and rugby-dominated New Zealand of the time.

According to a history of New Zealand anarchism by Toby Boraman, *Rabble Rousers and Merry Pranksters*, the Christchurch PYM was "an amazingly dynamic protest group".

"From 1969 to 1971, monthly, if not weekly, demonstrations were the norm," Boraman wrote.

"It braved with police, burnt US flags at demos, marched against police brutality, the Vietnam War and the Security Intelligence Service, cut down the goolposts on Lancaster Park before a trial rugby match ..."

Horton was busy. The hard work was going in. For instance helping to man the two-handed bush saw to topple the Lancaster Park goolposts in 1970 was "bloody hard", he remembers.

His group also hatched a plan to kidnap the Ranfurly Shield (it was displayed in shops) and to threaten to return it piece by piece unless the imminent All Black tour of South Africa was called off.

As well as a soft spot for the oddball and misfit, Horton had a good eye for getting maximum effect from a symbolic protest gesture which was sometimes called carnival anarchism.

He doesn't necessarily disagree with the description, but says the idea was mostly just to attract attention.

"We had to do something unusual, noisy, dramatic. It's what I have done for years. If you're regarded as that young bastard, as odd and an outsider, you have to do something to make the insiders take notice."

The PYM's most controversial stunt revolved around Anzac Day. At the Cathedral Square service in 1970, Horton and another PYM member marched up, with some trepidation, to the war memorial, under the scornful gaze of medal-bedecked war veterans and laid, next to the more conventional wreaths, a poster showing photographs of dead Vietnamese babies. It said: "To the victims of fascism in Vietnam".

Christchurch mayor Ron Guthrie, a decorated returned soldier who lost a leg during the North African campaign, threw the poster onto the ground, propelling the stunt into a national event.

An uproar ensued in which PYM got significant support.

Horton, whose father Donald served in North Africa where he was captured by the Germans and sent to an Italian prison-of-war camp, has no regrets.

"Anzac Day was highly politicised in those days," says Horton. "It glorified war and was used as a platform to support involvement in Vietnam. We need to have an ongoing self-examination of where we fit into other people's wars."

The Christchurch PYM was the main organiser of the protest against the US Air Force satellite tracking station at Mt John near Tekapo in 1972. In his book, Boraman calls it one of the most spectacular protests in New Zealand history.

"The site soon resembled a bloody war zone as police assaulted protesters on the mountain top with police dogs causing many gaping wounds. One protester was bitten on the penis."

Horton's comments now are more about how exhausted he was, climbing up the wrong side of the mountain, but he remembers someone realising on the way down from the top that all the official vehicles were still there with only one way out. The Mt John "rock festival" was born. Huge rocks were levered onto the road along with thousands of stones and boulders.

Although dogs were never used against protesters again, not even during the Springbok tour, an escalation of violence was always on the cards. Horton was opposed and says he had nothing to do with the firebombing of the US consulate in Christchurch in 1973 which earned anarchists Marg Matheson and Neil Riehmüller, an Australian, jail sentences.

"I supported revolutionary causes overseas where armed struggle was a means of defence against regimes wanting to murder you," Horton says.

"It's very easy to start that sort of thing (shootings etc) when things get hot and emotional. Just look at the Springbok tour which only lasted eight weeks, but it was quite a common conclusion on both sides that if it had gone on longer someone would have been killed."

If the "state violence" had been more general, some protesters might have decided to shoot "the next policeman", he says.

"That sort of stuff was certainly thought about, but if you are involved in protest movement it's important you retain the moral high ground or at least moral parity. Guerrilla warfare is counter-productive. It gives the state the excuse to have a massive crackdown and it's also counter-productive from a political point of view because it's elitist."

"Only a few people are involved and it becomes a spectator sport for the rest of the country."

Given the potential for violence was there, was the SIS justified in spying on Horton and his cohorts?

He disagrees.

"That's a question for the police. This was only a tiny number of people, none of whom I knew personally, and they were used as an excuse to cast a very broad net."

It seems also that Horton was far too warm-hearted and interested in people to elevate principles or policy beyond abrasive protest.

Apart from the early days when he did resist being smacked in the face by the police, the battle has not been personal.

"The police are just foot soldiers for the state. It's hard to hate in New Zealand. Warren Tucker - I don't hate him and I hope he doesn't hate me. I actually had his ex-brother-in-law visiting me here on Friday and I've met two of his siblings and two of his kids. Maybe if I had spent 30 years in prison, I'd have reason to feel bitter."

Horton finished his BA in 1973 and in 1974 edited the student newspaper *Canza* which was staffed entirely by non-students. After a spell in Sydney, where he got involved in protesting against the sacking of the Whitlam government, he returned to New Zealand to be arrested over an unpaid fine.

Wolfgang Rosenberg paid it for him, and Horton, feeding indelbted, got a job at the railways so he could pay him back.

He stayed for 14 years spending most of his time in the railways' household-removals business. His father thought he was wasting his abilities, but Horton says he thoroughly enjoyed the work.

"What was I qualified to do? I could have been a teacher but I made a conscious decision not to use my talents to serve a system I did not agree with. I had made a decision I was going to be a political activist all my life and did not want to be a hypocrite saying 'let's sacrifice everything' while sitting on an academic salary."

He did not lack for stimulating conversation at work, where he was nicknamed Pol Pot. He was made redundant in 1991.

"I was the work's stirrer, but I found that if you stood up for what you believed in those sort of jobs, people respected you."

While he worked at the railways, he continued writing, travelling, organising and protesting, not always taking the lead role he did in the early days. During the Springbok tour he was no more than a foot soldier. "For the first time, I did my stint of battling the cops". Red Squad thugs outside Lancaster Park, then at half time ran all the way to my (father's) flat to watch the second half of the game with him on TV."

Horton finds no shortage of things to be outraged about. Many of the causes he took to the street for in his youth have become the new orthodoxy, but he could never stop fighting the system even if he wanted to, he says. "As you get older there are all sorts of new issues like the health system and savings. I can't put my head in the sand. I'm always prepared to say 'the Emperor has no clothes'."



Demonstration days: Anti-US base protesters in 1972. Bill Rosenberg is at far left; Murray Horton is second from left.

Article rank | 14 Feb 2009 | The Press

# The last radical

Murray Horton, the old radical dinosaur, laughs at the sobriquet. He is used to labels, and over the years he has been called much worse including a long-haired, bloody, no-hoping commie by people of his father's generation and "rag-tag rabble-rousing Mickey Mouse" by the Socialist Action League. While Horton has always defied easy pigeon-holing, as he nears 60, he can almost be called respectable.

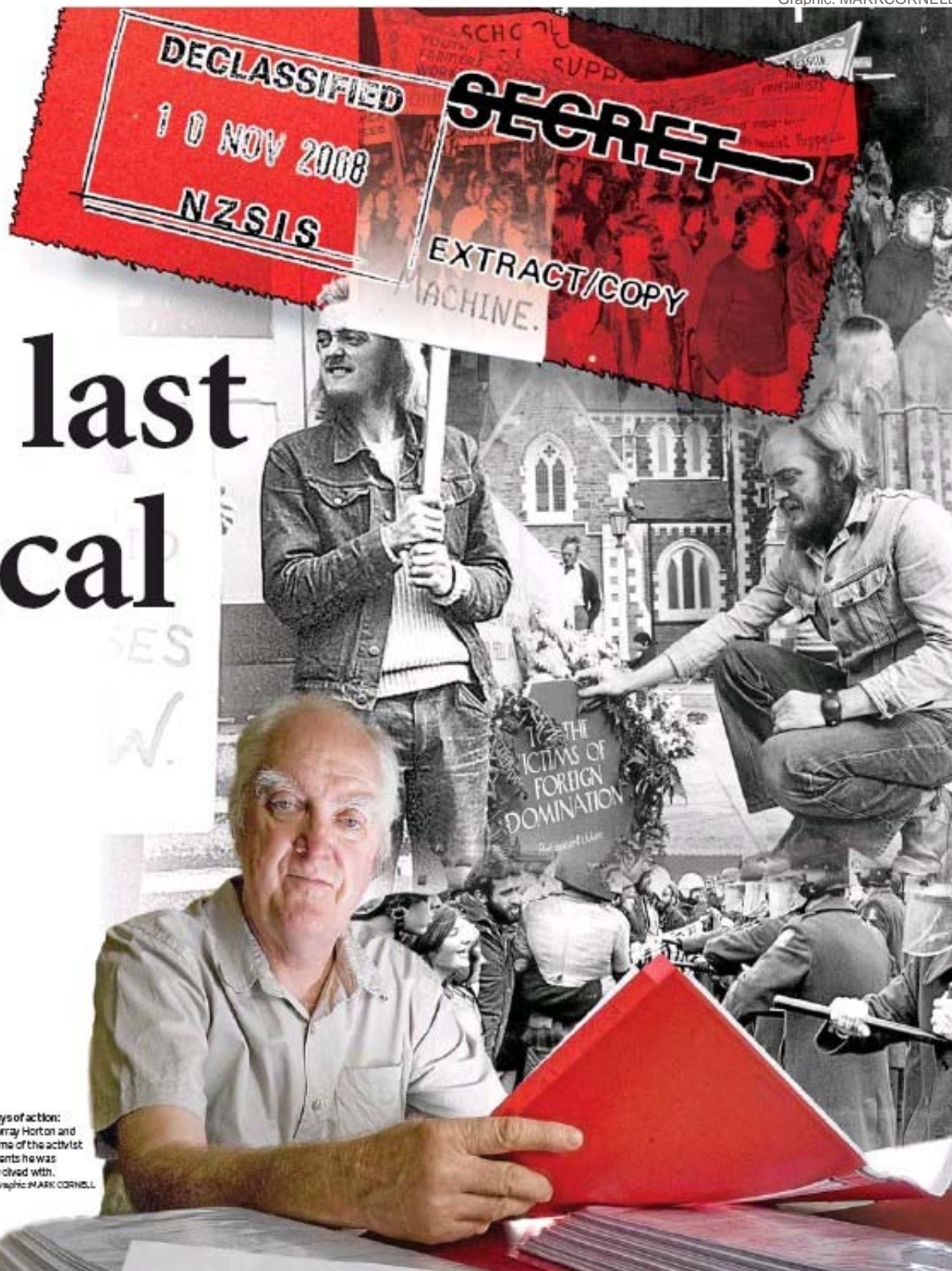
Graphic: MARK CORNELL

ld  
rt  
rs  
am.  
VEN.

# e last ical

he at  
sed to  
sars he  
worse  
oping  
ation  
house"  
orton  
is he  
ctable.  
\$500  
d job,  
beard  
gets  
fin  
ort in  
gh he  
scribes  
ding  
ing  
d  
1970s.  
d was  
h saw  
e  
fective  
91, of  
4 of  
ed as  
is far  
xently  
urd  
e port.

Days of action:  
Murray Horton and  
some of the activist  
events he was  
involved with.  
Graphic: MARK CORNELL



---

He owns his own well-maintained, mortgage-free home (once painted for \$500 by peace campaigner Owen Wilkes), is married to Becky, whom he met at a conference in the Philippines, has a real job, and his never-luxuriant long hair and beard have gone.

Like most other sensible people, he gets "p.... off" by the "f ....." racing around in cars . He watches television, follows sport in the papers, is a keen rugby fan (although he only watches free-to-air) and even subscribes to Time magazine.

But bourgeois hallmarks are misleading because Horton is much more than a living remnant from the era of radicals who scandalised and infuriated the staid and conformist New Zealand society of the 1970s.

The last demonstration he organised was only in January last year and last month saw him on the streets marching against the Israeli action in Gaza. He remains an effective lobbyist as the paid organiser, since 1991, of the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (Cafca) and the Anti Bases Campaign (ABC).

Although he has sometimes appeared as the Don Quixote of modern protest he is far from irrelevant, having figured prominently in the campaign stopping the Christchurch City Council from selling off part of the port.

Printed and distributed by NewspaperDirect | [www.newspaperdirect.com](http://www.newspaperdirect.com), US/Can: 1.877.980.4040, Intern: 800.6364.6364 | Copyright and protected by applicable law.

Article rank | 14 Feb 2009 | The Press

# The last radical

A former associate, whose sensitive position within the higher echelons of the public service prevent him from being named, says Murray Horton is an immensely effective campaigner who has played a significant part in dissent in New Zealand.

Photo: JOHN KIRK-ANDERSON



**On the record: Activist Murray Horton with SIS files.**

"He is a key part of that network which includes people like John Minto and Jane Kelsey that keeps a certain perspective on New Zealand society alive and well."

His current income at \$14 an hour is paid by pledges from about 50 people who are members of Cafca and ABC, the irony being, as he delights in pointing out, that here is an old Leftie surviving entirely on the free market.

Both Cafca, which announces its Roger Award on March 2 for the worst transnational company in New Zealand, and ABC have their roots in the highly charged protest movement of the late '60s and early '70s when Horton was regarded as an affront to all rightthinking people.

His ideas have matured but he still regards himself as a radical.

"The fact I've achieved some security doesn't mean my social and political ideas have changed. I'm not an anarchist any more, but underlying all my work is a deep unease at the capitalist political and social system. I'm a socialist. I don't think capitalism and democracy are necessarily synonymous."

The glory days of protest and challenge featured a number of notable radicals but most have evolved into mayors, businesspeople, academics and cabinet ministers. Not Horton though.

As former protest icon Tim Shadbolt says in his recent autobiography, *Mayor of Two Cities*: "Murray Horton . . . is probably the only protest leader from the '60s who remains continually active today as he campaigns against foreign control of New Zealand resources."

"I can do it," Horton says, "because the house is freehold, my wife works and I don't have any children." Recently Horton has been able to shake another label – that of "security threat". The shedding of his danger-to-the-public status was confirmed by Security Intelligence Service (SIS) director Warren Tucker this week.

The SIS has been releasing personal files as part of its new archives policy to aid "the proactive declassification of historical records".

Horton has applied for his personal SIS file, a request acknowledged by Tucker in a polite and friendly letter in which he responds to Horton's question about whether he is still "a person of interest".

"The answer is that you are only of interest as long as you are interested in us. You have campaigned publicly for the abolition of this Service but you have never encouraged unlawful activity such as sabotage, subversion or terrorism. We do not believe you would ever consciously act against the security of New Zealand and New Zealanders. You are therefore not a person of 'security interest' to the NZSIS."

Tucker's letter is accompanied by a copy of the SIS's Personal Particulars Form which instructs that Horton, in 1972, was a slight, sallow-complexioned male of slight build who "stoops in walk", had a wispy beard and often wore "blue denim fatigues".

The file note was made when Horton was 21 and when he had already been convicted for trespassing in Army buildings in Christchurch and for offensive behaviour involving a New Zealand flag and a police car.

The emerging SIS files are a reminder of the vigorous hotbed of insurrection Christchurch appeared to be in the early '70s as the counter culture hit and protest focused on the Vietnam War and sporting contacts with South Africa.

In Christchurch the tradition of challenge to orthodoxy already had a foothold through Jack and Elsie Locke, New Zealand's most famous communist couple, and the Leftist economist at Canterbury University, Wolfgang Rosenberg, a refugee from Nazi Germany. But the new wave of protest was as much cultural as political and Christchurch, mainly thanks to Horton and a few others, punched above its weight.

Most former radicals have only hazy memories of that time, but Horton's (he was called Horton rather than Murray by the cadres) recall is extraordinary. Not only does he remember basic facts and dates but he is full of asides and footnotes.

Succinctness is not one of his strong points – as the SIS itself noted on the Cafca file, he "likes the sound of his own voice".

Horton clearly remembers sitting on a bus in his last year at Shirley Boys' High, and thinking "by the time I'm 18, I want to live with a woman and be a leading light in a radical movement". He achieved both. At 18 he was booted out of home by his fed-up father (his mother, who suffered severely from mental illness died when Horton was 21).

"The last straw for him came when I was arrested, for the first time (protesting the 1970 visit of United States VicePresident Spiro Agnew) and he got rung late at night by the cops to say that I was in custody in the Auckland Police Station. When I arrived home soon afterwards, he presented me with an ultimatum: 'Get a haircut, get a job, get married, get out of this stupid outfit with whom you're involved or get out by Wednesday'.

"I got out by Wednesday. My crying mother gave me the taxi fare and held the door open."

He moved in with his girlfriend, Christine Bird, asking for a bed for two weeks and stayed 18 years. Although living in sin invited scorn, Horton remained straight-laced in other respects, never indulging in the drugs, commune living and free love which has epitomised the spirit of the times.

In conformist New Zealand anyone different was stomped on, and Horton, with his army great coat, given to him by his Irish Catholic neighbour who used it to keep his car engine warm, and his long hair, was a target.

"I would get guys stopping me in the street asking 'Are you a f . . . ing girl? Are you a queer?' "

Revolution was just around the corner, however. After a background in the Radical Students Alliance at Canterbury University, Horton became one of the leading lights in the much more active Progressive Youth Movement (PYM) which consisted mainly of young workers. In Auckland, the PYM was an offshoot of the New Zealand Communist Party, but in Christchurch the group was less doctrinaire.

Horton was a natural leader, says a colleague of the time who asks not to be named because "I'm not really a radical now".

"He had a great sense of humour and was great at the bold statement. He had to be pulled back sometimes but he could always laugh at himself. He was always very independent."

Horton, who has never belonged to a political party, lacked the Che Guevara looks sported by smiley Tim Shadbolt, but he was a powerful speaker and good debater. The PYM flourished on the hard soil of antagonism to and from the returned servicemen and rugbydominated New Zealand of the time.

According to a history of New Zealand anarchism by Toby Boraman, Rabble Rousers and Merry Pranksters, the Christchurch PYM was "an amazingly dynamic protest group".

"From 1969 to 1971, monthly, if not weekly, demonstrations were the norm," Boraman wrote.

"It brawled with police, burnt US flags at demos, marched against police brutality, the Vietnam War and the Security Intelligence Service, cut down the goalposts on Lancaster Park before a trial rugby match . . ."

Horton was busy. The hard work was going in. For instance helping to man the two-handed bush saw to topple the Lancaster Park goalposts in 1970 was "bloody hard", he remembers.

His group also hatched a plan to kidnap the Ranfurly Shield (it was displayed in shops) and to threaten to return it piece by piece unless the imminent All Black tour of South Africa was called off.

As well as a soft spot for the oddball and misfit, Horton had a good eye for getting maximum effect

from a symbolic protest gesture which was sometimes called carnival anarchism.

He doesn't necessarily disagree with the description, but says the idea was mostly just to attract attention.

"We had to do something unusual, noisy, dramatic. It's what I have done for years. If you're regarded as that young bastard, as odd and an outsider, you have to do something to make the insiders take notice."

The PYM's most controversial stunt revolved around Anzac Day. At the Cathedral Square service in 1970, Horton and another PYM member marched up, with some trepidation, to the war memorial, under the scornful gaze of medal-bedecked war veterans and laid, next to the more conventional wreaths, a poster showing photographs of dead Vietnamese babies. It said: "To the victims of fascism in Vietnam".

Christchurch mayor Ron Guthrey, a decorated returned soldier who lost a leg during the North African campaign, threw the poster onto the ground, propelling the stunt into a national event. An uproar ensued in which PYM got significant support.

Horton, whose father Donald served in North Africa where he was captured by the Germans and sent to an Italian prison-of-war camp, has no regrets.

"Anzac Day was highly politicised in those days," says Horton. "It glorified war and was used as a platform to support involvement in Vietnam. We need to have an ongoing selfexamination of where we fit into other people's wars."

The Christchurch PYM was the main organiser of the protest against the US Air Force satellite tracking station at Mt John near Tekapo in 1972. In his book, Boraman calls it one of the most spectacular protests in New Zealand history.

"The site soon resembled a bloody war zone as police assaulted protesters on the mountain top with police dogs causing many gaping wounds. One protester was bitten on the penis."

Horton's comments now are more about how exhausted he was climbing up the wrong side of the mountain, but he remembers someone realising on the way down from the top that all the official vehicles were still there with only one way out. The Mt John "rock festival" was born. Huge rocks were levered onto the road along with thousands of stones and boulders.

Although dogs were never used against protesters again, not even during the Springbok tour, an escalation of violence was always on the cards. Horton was opposed and says he had nothing to do with the firebombing of the US consulate in Christchurch in 1973 which earned anarchists Marg Matheson and Neil Riethmuller, an Australian, jail sentences.

"I supported revolutionary causes overseas where armed struggle was a means of defence against regimes wanting to murder you," Horton says.

"It's very easy to start that sort of thing (shootings etc) when things get hot and emotional. Just look at the Springbok tour which only lasted eight weeks, but it was quite a common conclusion on both sides that if it had gone on longer someone would have been killed."

If the "state violence" had been more general, some protesters might have decided to shoot "the next policeman", he says.

"That sort of stuff was certainly thought about, but if you are involved in protest movement it's important you retain the moral high ground or at least moral parity. Guerilla warfare is counterproductive. It gives the state the excuse to have a massive crackdown and it's also counter-productive from a political point of view because it's elitist.

"Only a few people are involved and it becomes a spectator sport for the rest of the country."

Given the potential for violence was there, wasn't the SIS justified in spying on Horton and his cohorts? He disagrees. "That's a question for the police. This was only a tiny number of people, none of whom I knew personally, and they were used as an excuse to cast a very broad net."

It seems also that Horton was far too warm-hearted and interested in people to elevate principles or policy beyond abrasive protest.

Apart from the early days when he did resent being smacked in the face by the police, the battle has not been personal.

"The police are just foot soldiers for the state. It's hard to hate in New Zealand. Warren Tucker – I don't hate him and I hope he doesn't hate me. I actually had his ex-brother-in-law visiting me here on Friday and I've met two of his siblings and two of his kids. Maybe if I had spent 30 years in prison, I'd have reason to feel bitter."

Horton finished his BA in 1973 and in 1974 edited the student newspaper *Canta* which was staffed entirely by nonstudents. After a spell in Sydney, where he got involved in protesting against the sacking of the Whitlam government, he returned to New Zealand to be arrested over an unpaid fine.

Wolfgang Rosenberg paid it for him, and Horton, feeling indebted, got a job at the railways so he could pay him back. He stayed for 14 years spending most of his time in the railways' householdremovals business. His father thought he was wasting his abilities, but Horton says he thoroughly enjoyed the work.

"What was I qualified to do? I could have been a teacher but I made a conscious decision not to use my talents to serve a system I did not agree with. I had made a decision I was going to be a political activist all my life and did not want to be a hypocrite saying 'let's sacrifice everything' while sitting on an academic salary."

He did not lack for stimulating conversation at work where he was nicknamed Pol Pot. He was made

redundant in 1991.

"I was the work's stirrer, but I found that if you stood up for what you believed in those sort of jobs, people respected you."

While he worked at the railways, he continued writing, travelling, organising and protesting, not always taking the lead role he did in the early days. During the Springbok tour he was no more than a foot soldier. "For the first test, I did my stint of battling the cops' Red Squad thugs outside Lancaster Park, then at halftime ran all the way to my (father's) flat to watch the second half of the game with him on TV."



Horton finds no shortage of things to be outraged about. Many of the causes he took to the street for in his youth have become the new orthodoxy, but he could never stop fighting the system even if he wanted to, he says. "As you get older there are all sorts of new issues like the health system and savings. I can't put my head in the sand. I'm always prepared to say the Emperor has no clothes."

Printed and distributed by NewspaperDirect | [www.newspaperdirect.com](http://www.newspaperdirect.com), US/Can: 1.877.980.4040, Intern: 800.6364.6364 | Copyright and protected by applicable law.