



# The Peace Issue . . .

The Newsletter of Just Peace Queensland Inc

Issue No. 56

January 2019

**Just Peace Meetings:** all members and supporters are welcome at our meetings.  
**When:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month  
**Time:** Start @ 07:00pm  
**Where:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, QCU Building  
 Cnr Grey & Peel Streets  
 South Brisbane

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**The Peace Issue . . .**

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# Blessed are the Warmongers

By Paul Craig Roberts

December 28, 2018 "Information Clearing House" -

**A**s life on planet Earth enters its recorded year of 2019 the world has only one leader. He is Vladimir Putin, President of Russia. There are in office nowhere in the West any real leaders, only servants of the Oligarchy and vassals of the servants. Donald Trump intended to be otherwise and might yet break out of the orchestrated existence the military/security complex, Democratic Party and presstitute media have created for him.

Putin's humanity and self-control, has maintained peace despite Washington's aggression and provocative actions against Russia. It is Putin who has accepted insults that in the past would have resulted in war.

Putin has paid a price for his self-control. He has maintained peace at the expense of his standing in Russia, if a poll published on fort-russ.com is valid. According to the poll, Russians have "a lost sense of belonging to a great power." <https://www.fort-russ.com/2018/12/new-poll-66-of-russians-feel-nostalgia-for-ussr/>

According to the poll, a large majority of Russians regret the collapse of the Soviet Union. Capitalism has brought economic insecurity, and the loss of Russian territory has brought a sense of defeat.

On one hand, these Russian beliefs result from Washington's demonization of Russia and insulting behavior toward Putin. On the other hand, Putin and Lavrov's constrained responses to the lies and false accusations against Russia offend patriotic Russians. No American

government would have dared to treat a Soviet leader the way Putin has been treated. The Russians want Putin to stand up for Russia, to cease turning the other cheek, to cease referring to Russia's enemies as partners when it is completely obvious that the West is Russia's Enemy.

The Russian people are tired of the Russian government's toleration of Western-financed newspapers, NGOs, and political parties in Russia. Russia is for Russians, not for Western-financed traitors who tirelessly work to undermine Russia with Western money. Russia is accused falsely of interfering in Western political life, but it is the West that interferes in Russian political life with bags full of money.

The Russians are patriots, which is how they survived and defeated Hitler. Russians want a government that is nationalist, not globalist, and not a government overlooking provocations in hopes of being accepted as yet another Washington vassal. When a poll shows that 66% of those polled feel nostalgic for the Soviet Union, the message is clear that the Russian government's accommodation of the West is a failed policy.

As evil spreads its dominion over the West, it is no longer the peacemakers who are blessed. President Trump's desire to improve relations with Russia were rewarded by former CIA director John Brennan branding Trump a traitor. Trump's decision to withdraw US troops from their illegal and defeated purpose in Syria resulted in Susan Rice, a former national security adviser, declaring Trump to be a threat to US national security. None of Trump's

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enemies regard worsening relations with Russia to be a national security threat.

It is peace that is declared to be the threat. Even in Russia Putin's restrained response to provocations has lowered his approval rating.

To have peace so devalued in a world of hypersonic thermo-nuclear weapons is evil's triumph.

**Dr. Paul Craig Roberts** was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy and associate editor of the Wall Street Journal. He was columnist for Business Week, Scripps Howard News Service, and Creators Syndicate. He has had many university appointments. His internet columns have attracted a worldwide following. Roberts' latest books are *The Failure of Laissez Faire Capitalism and Economic Dissolution of the West*, *How America Was Lost*, and *The Neoconservative Threat to World Order*.

### ***The International Day of Peace in Brisbane***

At this 7<sup>th</sup> annual Peace Lecture Julian Burnside QC AO delivered a speech titled ***There can be no Peace without Justice***

Julian spoke about how peace within Australia is undermined by the policies of governments which does not value justice. His lecture explored this in relation to people with little power, the poor, refugees and the first peoples of our land.

Around 300 people came together at the Anglican cathedral in Brisbane St Johns. The Dean Peter Catt is contributing significantly to building community engagement and action around the important challenges we face to build a peaceful society based on justice for all.



IPAN affiliate Just Peace works with the United Nations Association Qld, St Johns, University of Qld

University of Griffith, and Rotary Peace Program.

## **EDITORIAL AND 2018 ACTIVITIES REPORT**

### ***Just Peace at 17 Years***

#### **Introduction**

*Just Peace* Queensland is now 17 years old. It was formed in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, when it became clear that the United States had launched its war on terror with extreme prejudice. The world became an even more dangerous place.

I am sure you all know of much of the violence that has spread across the world like a global Queensland bushfire, since that terrible day in 2001. *Just Peace* in Brisbane and hundreds of peace and anti-war movements across the world have been created since that day to attempt to curb the military insanity we see today.

But we do live in better times as well as worse times. For example:

1. Last year (2018) the United Nations celebrated 70 years as the mother of all peace organisations.
2. Europe (the EU anyway) has had 70 years of relative peace since 1945, after literally hundreds of wars fought there over three thousand years.
3. Closer to home, *Just Peace* has expanded its mandate over the past year, to work with even more groups of likeminded Australians, including unions, church groups, Rotary organisations, human rights and medical organisations – even political parties; all of whom have elements of their visions that are similar to the aims of *Just Peace*. We have helped to expand the work and membership of the Independent and Peaceful Australian Network (IPAN).

We shall show you some of the work we have accomplished, below.

We have consolidated our threefold strategy of:

- A. Providing reliable information to enable people to see alternatives to war and encouraging public dialogue and the collective learning that comes from that.
- B. Remaining financial and active members of several national and International peace organisations.
- C. Helping to build an Australia-wide network of groups and organisations

around the aim of developing a truly independent and peaceful Australian foreign policy – the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN). Whilst this has required a considerable input of time and energy from *Just Peace* members, as well as active members of other IPAN affiliates around the country, this work is bearing fruit. We are moving towards the situation where IPAN is the respected and authoritative voice in Australian public dialogue on foreign and defence policy issues.

#### **Major Focus in 2018**

1. IPAN (Independent and Peaceful Australia Network).
2. American influence on Australia's Foreign Policy.
3. *Just Peace* for Palestine.
4. Militarization of Australian society.
5. Australian Government's flouting of international law.

#### **Major Projects in 2018**

##### **Youth Voices on Nuclear Disarmament Workshop**

The workshop provided an opportunity for State, Private and Independent High School Students all coming from diverse backgrounds to be engaged, inspired and to act upon the important, serious global topic of Nuclear Disarmament. The workshop was conceived by Lenora O'Connor and organised by Ross, Annette, et al. The activities of the workshop have been captured on a 4 minute video shown here:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjUmw18hpEc\\_gJr1tuCOn8A](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjUmw18hpEc_gJr1tuCOn8A)

The project is planned for expansion in 2019 to other schools via Education Queensland.

##### **Women as Peace Negotiators**

Dr. Deb Jordan, a widely published professional Historian, under the auspices of *Just Peace*, has successfully applied for an Armistice Centenary Grant from the Department of Veteran's Affairs. The grant will

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be used to document the work of women as peace and security negotiators from early in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century to the end of the first Gulf War. The documents will be visualized in a 48-page educational booklet and a multi-panel mobile exhibition. These will be launched around mid-2019 to coincide with a century after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles between the Allied Powers and Germany.

#### **Outreach (JP (or its members) out and about):**

**Al Nakba.** May 15th KGS.  
<https://vimeo.com/3714871> for 58 min. documentary

**May Day Exhibit** and Stall 7<sup>th</sup> May at Brisbane Showgrounds

**U3A Participation:** Anita Reed ran an entire Peace Studies course. Ross, Annette, Anita and Vikki have given several talks and workshops on the work of Just Peace, IPAN and anti-war issues at U3A classes and events. These have attracted audiences of from 8 to 100 people.

**Primary schools in Queensland:** Margid Bryn-Burns worked with primary schools in Queensland to promote White Poppies and Peace issues including human rights and the work of the United Nations.

**UN Peacekeepers March and Service in Brisbane** May 29<sup>th</sup> “UN Peacekeepers: 70 Years of Service and Sacrifice.”

Involvement in **Anzac Legacy** Qld Museum permanent exhibition

The **Annual Peace lecture** in St John’s Cathedral.

**QUT Law students** forum on human rights and the need to sign the nuclear ban treaty

Joint organisation (with **RAC**) of the annual **Palm Sunday Rally for Peace and Refugees**

Involvement in various **Ngara Institute** events:

Helping a group of young people organise **March For Our Lives Gun Violence** rally on 24 March

Panel speaker (Ross G) at the **UQ**

**Psychologists for Peace** seminar in June

**JP Events in 2018**

#### **1. Public Forums or Politics in the Pub (PitP’s).**

- a. **February 13<sup>th</sup> Forum. Australia’s Illegal Wars.** Speakers James O’Neill and Maureen Todhunter
- b. **April 10<sup>th</sup> Forum: Jerusalem** Speakers Vikki Henry and Mike Henry
- c. **June 12<sup>th</sup> Politics in Pub. Nuclear Weapons Ban.** Daniele Viliunas, Lenora O’Connor, Anita Reed and Robin Taubenfeld.
- d. **August 10<sup>th</sup> Forum: Hiroshima Day.** Dr. Joseph Gerson and Donna Weeks.
- e. **October Politics in the Pub: United States and the Stalking of Venezuela.** Karla Orellana and Eulalia Reyes De Whitney.

#### **2. February 25<sup>th</sup> Concert: Anita’s Concert:** 2pm - 4pm Fundraiser for **Save the Children.**

**3. April:** International Global Day of Action on Military Spending – rally in Brisbane to protest the waste of money spent on the missiles used to bomb Syria.

**4. April 24<sup>th</sup> 2018 ANZAC Eve Vigil** Guest speaker – Dr. Deb Jordon.

**5. November 26<sup>th</sup>** Fundraiser at West End Garden Restaurant, with speakers **Liz Elliott** International author (*a New Way Now*), journalist, activist, yoga teacher, artist, cartoonist, and **Paul Guard** Paul’s parents, Jill and Roger Guard, were on the passenger plane MH17 shot down over Ukraine in 2014.

**6. 28 July Foreign Policy for Peace** forum (on the Federal Government Foreign Policy White Paper) at Griffith Eco-Centre

#### **Communications**

##### **Social Media**

Email: [justpeaceqld@gmail.com](mailto:justpeaceqld@gmail.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/JustPeaceQLD>

<http://www.justpeaceqld.org.au>

Just Peace YouTube channel: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjUmw18hpEc\\_gJr1tuCO8A](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjUmw18hpEc_gJr1tuCO8A)

#### **Publications**

**The Peace Issue**, Editor, Adrian Pollock

#### **Other Media**

**Flyers** designed by committee member **Rose Yule.**

**Video: Queensland Museum** Permanent (5 years) Exhibit: ANZAC Legacy – Maureen Todhunter and Ross Gwyther were interviewed for a short video that is shown at the exhibition on a continual basis.

**Radio:** Annette spoke at 4EB re Peace issues, highlighting the **\$97 million per day** spent on the military.

#### **Membership of Like Minded Organisations**

Just Peace is an active (and financial!) member of several peace-related organisations within Queensland, Australia and Internationally. These include:

**APAN** (Australia Palestine Advocacy Network).

APAN regularly meets politicians, organises educational trips to Palestine, and has a shop in Adelaide CBD selling products from Palestine.

**IPAN** (Independent and Peaceful Australia Network)

Conference (IPAN 2019) August 3rd and 4th in Darwin.

**UNAAQ** (United Nations Association of Australia (Queensland))

**ICAN** (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, Geneva) Launched in Melbourne and Vienna in 2007. Nobel Peace Prize, 2017.

**IPB** (International Peace Bureau, Berlin) Founded 1891. Nobel Peace Prize 1910.

**WORLD BEYOND WAR** (WBW, Just Peace is in the process of becoming an affiliate)

Annette Brownlie attended and spoke at the WBW sponsored International Conference Against US/NATO Military Bases, Dublin 2018.

**Organisations, People and Events that Just Peace regularly (mostly) supports:**

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Psychologists for Peace, Ngarra Institute, Griffith Asia Institute, Griffith University, University of Queensland, WILPF (Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom), Justice for Palestine, Falesteen: promoting Palestinian Arts and Culture, APHEDA, Quakers, Friends of the Earth, RAC, UNIONS (ACTU, MUA, CFMEU, ETU CWU (Communication workers) NTEU), St. Mary’s in Exile, International Women’s Day.

**Dear Members of Just Peace:**

The above activities of your organisation have been possible only with your support. You have kept the faith that **Just Peace** will remain committed to the aims of our group. This past year has been one of extraordinary activism in the face of significant changes to the militarization of our world. It is therefore even more urgent that we work together to provide reliable information to enable people to see



Just Peace members and supporters, GCOMS, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2018

**Future Events/Focus**

**Committee Meetings** Usually every 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday February to November 2019

**Public Forums** (Politics in the Pub events) March, May, July, September, and November. Every second Sunday.

**Anita Reed Concert** March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2019

**Film Forum - Film “A Bold Peace”** (Costa Rica! IMDB 7.9!). Mooted.

**Women as Peace Negotiators** Launch of booklet and exhibition in July, 2019.

**Youth Voices for Nuclear Disarmament.** The project is planned for expansion in 2019 to other schools via Education Queensland.

**IPAN 2019 Annual Conference, Darwin, 3/4 August, 2019.**

Best regards,

**Ross Gwyther and Mike Henry**  
(Co-Convenors, *Just Peace*)

*“All War Departments are now Defense Departments. This is all part of the doubletalk of our time. The aggressor is always on the other side.”*  
**George Wald** – a Nobel Prize winning American scientist who was a vocal opponent of the Vietnam War and the nuclear arms race

alternatives to war. This begins with education, especially in a time when so much is happening and so much is hidden from us.

The work carried out by *Just Peace* is exhilarating and rewarding. Please consider attending our General Meetings and Forums and joining a group to organise one of many Events we have planned for 2019.

For example, are you passionate about the history of Europe, South America or the Middle East? Do you know what Australia is planning in the area of weapons of war? What commitments has our country made to the United Nations? What is happening in the Central African Republic? How will climate change affect refugees, internally displaced peoples and wars? Would you like to see nuclear weapons banned?

There are innumerable issues that your organisation will be addressing in 2019. We would love to hear from you about your interests in promoting peace and justice through *Just Peace*.

Here’s how:

**Write:** PO Box 573 COORPAROO, QLD, 4151

**Email:** justpeaceqld@gmail.com

**Mobile:** 0410 132 021

**AUSTRALIA’S WAR FOOTING**

*The Best of 2018: Australia’s perpetual ‘war footing’.*

By **Henry Reynolds**

Posted on [31 December 2018](#)

*We should have paid more attention at the time. It was September 2013 and the Abbott government had just been sworn in. The new Defence Minister, Senator David Johnston, gave an interview to a Fairfax journalist which was reported on the front page of the Sydney Morning Herald. The content was truly extraordinary.*

**H**e declared that he wanted the forces to be ‘battle ready’ for future wars in the Middle East or South Asia, adding that he thought Pakistan was ‘highly problematic’. He observed that after fourteen years of involvement in overseas conflict the defence forces had ‘a strong fighting momentum that should not be lost’.

And indeed he said that he planned to maintain and ‘augment our readiness’ for future fights. With what appeared to be the impending withdrawal from Afghanistan it was essential ‘to maintain some interest for the troops. They’ve got to keep training, got to keep a level of readiness.’

Johnston’s sentiments were startling enough; the underlying assumptions were even more disturbing. He clearly took it for granted that there was a need for Australian military intervention on the far side of the world and that the country had the legal and moral right to do so whenever and wherever it pleased. Efficient and mobile forces needed wars to maintain morale. Anywhere, it seemed, would do. The army was ready for action and should be given its head while the Minister himself clearly wanted a war of his own.

As startling as the new Minister’s statement was, it was even more remarkable that it elicited no public response from anyone despite being the lead story in the *Herald*. Apparently neither Government nor Opposition felt there was anything exceptional in the comments. They were the new Minister’s first public comments. Presumably they were made in consultation with his department or at least with knowledge

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of the official briefing papers prepared for the incoming administration. As a long-time adviser to Prime Minister Abbott on defence policy and Shadow Minister for five years, he must have believed his first public briefing would sit comfortably with the outlook of the new government and of the wider defence establishment.

It raises that disturbing question: how could such a public display of war mongering, and that was clearly what it was, slip unremarked into public discourse? We have been at war since the beginning of this century. There is no end in sight. Government and Opposition are joined at the hip when matters of defence and security are concerned. And yet both major parties tell us over and over again that they believe in a rules-based international order. It must seem to outsiders a strange declaration from such a belligerent member of the community of nations, one where it is common to boast we punch above our weight and commemorate past wars with a fervour unmatched anywhere. What a chaotic world it would be if every other small and middle sized nation sent their armed forces across the world to fight as often as does Australia.

It is sobering to consider that Johnston's lust for war was actually prophetic. Just think where we are at the moment. We are clearly looking to increase our troops in Afghanistan in line with Trump's statement that American forces were about to return to kill terrorists. Turnbull chimed in with a declaration that we were 'very, very staunch allies' of the United States in the global war to defeat terrorism. Opposition Leader Shorten stood by his side saying he would back the government's decision, sight unseen, declaring:

Australians should know that my track record when it comes to national security and the deployment of the ADF has been to work with the government of the day because our ADF expects nothing less from the government and their opposition.

The wording was odd. Labor Party policy was determined by the expectations of the ADF? It was *their*



opposition? The tail now truly wags the dog? Opposition Shadow Minister Richard Marles was also supportive of the return to Afghanistan. But his wording was equally strange, declaring that 'we cannot afford to see Afghanistan lost and it is important that we focus on that'. Was Afghanistan ever ours to lose? It is all very troubling. Will we be fighting to avoid 'losing' Afghanistan for another twenty years? Clearly a Labor government is unlikely to change course and bring the ADF home.

But Afghanistan is not the only place where we have existing or potential commitments. A few weeks ago Turnbull declared his government was at the ready to become involved in Syria again. We continue to have a garrison of 800 troops in Iraq with no timetable for their return. The difficulty of bringing commitments in the Middle East to an end is powerfully illustrated by the Navy's involvement in the Persian Gulf and nearby waters. It began 25 years ago during the first Gulf War. It still continues. The official story is that it contributes to the stability of the region. Will it continue for another 25 years? The Middle East may never stabilize in a manner acceptable to the Americans or the Israelis. And having our war ships in the region surely means that we would inevitably be drawn into any future war between America and Iran. How could we possibly opt out?

Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, the Persian Gulf: but that is only part of it. The Government committed itself to involvement in any future war with North Korea. It has recently sent troops and Federal police agents to Mindanao along with surveillance aircraft, and a few months ago there were joint manoeuvres with the Philippines Navy in the Sulu Sea. Will it become another

place where Australia becomes involved in a highly complex situation where there are many contending parties and enduring, generation old tensions we know little about. How long and hard will we be willing to fight to prevent Mindanao from becoming 'lost'?

And then there is the South China Sea. Recently there was a 'robust' exchange between our ships and the Chinese Navy, Prime Minister Turnbull declaring that we would send our ships wherever and whenever we wanted to in international waters. But now we fly our new Orion surveillance aircraft out of Butterworth base in Malaysia on patrols over the South China Sea. We are about to begin flights over the Sea of Japan ostensibly to watch for sanction-avoiding activities by North Korea but clearly doubling up with surveillance of nearby China.

So clearly Australia punches above its weight. Whether we benefit from that behaviour is another matter altogether. The pitiful level of public debate about foreign and defence policy in the country allows us to avoid searching self-analysis. Government and Opposition advance in lock-step and the camp followers in Canberra's think-tanks tag along behind. Almost universally the practitioners engage in what might be called strategic solipsism. They judge Australia's international behaviour by different standards they apply to others. So while Admiral Turnbull can send his men off war steaming north with a clear conscience, he would be profoundly disturbed if the Chinese chose to sail south on regular patrols to assert their right of navigation close to our off-shore islands, down the outer fringe of the Barrier Reef and back and forth through Torres Strait. We react with outrage at intimations that China may send naval units to dock in Vanuatu while we intervene in Mindanao with army, navy and air force. Can there be any wonder that others are astonished at our unregarded hypocrisy?

**Henry Reynolds** is an eminent Australian historian.

**ENDING WAR***Ending War and the Centenary of the Armistice 2018*By **Deborah Jordan**

Manning Clark House

11 November 2018

*'Will they never fade or pass!  
The mud, and the misty figures endlessly  
coming  
In file through the foul morass,  
And the grey flood-water lipping the  
reeds and grass,  
And the steel wings drumming.*

...

*I have returned to these:  
The farm, and the kindly Bush, and the  
young calves lowing;  
But all that my mind sees  
Is a quaking bog in a mist- stark snapped  
trees,  
And the dark Somme flowing.'*

**T**he first point to make is that the poem 'The Farmer Remembers the Somme' was drawn from the official War Memorial website, and is often cited as Australia's finest war poem.

The second point is that Vance Palmer, although he enlisted in March 1918, got to Europe after the Armistice.

What I will speak to is the Armistice through the prism of Nettie and Vance Palmers' experience and understanding of the war, and the previous 5 years when Nettie was in Berlin and France, and Vance in London. Nettie was second generation university-educated 'advanced woman', a product of the Presbyterian Ladies College. Vance was the son of a primary school teacher with five elder sisters, and he worked on a pastoral station the only white man with 80 Indigenous people. As part of the lost generation, they were profoundly affected by World War 1. So too was their work right through to the period leading up to the cultural revival of the late 1960s, when Geoff Serle found we had come to maturity as a nation, and the Palmers were widely read and taught.

Manning Clark elevated Vance to the realm of the Gods. 'He was Olympian', Manning wrote; Nettie wanted 'a Byronic lover, a man who was both Apollo and Dionysus'. 'Everyone',

Manning Clark wrote, 'loved Nettie and told her everything'.

In *Loving Words Love Letters of Nettie and Vance Palmer 1909-1914*, my selection of their love letters that came out this year, we can see the lead up to the war, in their concerns about the rise of militarism, and armaments industry (Vance's friend is arrested in a demonstration about dreadnoughts); the strength of the labour movement with their massive strikes across Britain; the emergence of the powerful labour newspapers in Queensland and importance of Vance's mentor and friend Joe Collings; Vance's involvement in the Independent Labour Party and Peace gatherings in London; his work on Mexico and Ireland; and Nettie's translations from the French about international socialism and the proposed call for a general strike.

Vance's well-kept secret is revealed in *Loving Words* and is suggestive of the powerful forces opposing the Labour movement—but you will have to read the book to find out about that.

Nettie and Vance rejected warnings of war as warmongering, and they were in France, in Brittany on their honeymoon, when war was declared.

They were forced to return first to London with the collapse of mails, and finally Australia with the shifts in journalism and the decline of the progressive press. Vance served in the AIF from March 1918 to July 1919.

The main question I want to raise in this discussion about the effect of the Armistice in Australian history, is whether in fact we have the right day. Armistice is not the end of war, only the beginning of negotiations – Armistice is not Treaty.

One hundred years ago, when the German government approached United States, not the Allied Powers, to negotiate a settlement to end the war, the Australian people were euphoric. 'Peace without Victory' President Woodrow Wilson had called for. When the Germans signed the Armistice, it included a final statement 'In order to assure the execution of this convention under the best conditions, the principle of a permanent international armistice

commission is admitted.' Australians poured into the streets across the country.

Was it peace or was it victory?

This confusion was widespread. Vance recognised it in himself during his training in Victoria. He writes to Nettie:

*Words and phrases have become  
so abused and have got such a  
hold over people's minds that it  
seems impossible to sort them  
out at present. The speeches that  
I hear at meetings and  
receptions and all that kind of  
thing nearly sends me dilly.  
They're alright at the core but  
the incoherence and banality  
and utter meaningless of the  
phrases would make you weep.*

On Armistice Day in 1918 there was a huge procession, in Queensland, Vance's state of origin. The morning papers called it a Peace Procession; when the same photographs were used by the weekly conservative newspaper, it had become a Victory procession. The conservative papers called it spontaneous. The labour papers called it organised, and we can see from the picture just how well organised it indeed was.

On the other side of the globe there was neither peace nor victory—yet. The hard work began to negotiate a treaty to end the war, which was to end all wars. Months of deliberations followed in Paris as the leaders re-drew the boundaries of Europe in conference. Of all the leaders of the belligerent governments, only President Woodrow Wilson received delegations from the Women's International League, the powerful lobby group of women leaders from across the world headed by Jane Adams. He had listened to them earlier when he drew up his Fourteen Points Peace plan, a template for setting up a League of Nations, and negotiating a just peace. In 1915 they had sent him their 18 Final Recommendations to End the War and Foster Peace.

It was not only Vance who found the rhetoric of war and peace confusing, just as today the end of the war is often confused with the armistice.

This is another point that I want to raise that emerges from Vance and Nettie's letters as they discuss the suffragettes in  
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the lead up to the war. Nettie was at Black Friday, 1909, notorious for police sexualised violence. Vance attended the key suffrage rallies, witnessed the violence between police, men and the women and told Nettie how if men and women 'could all talk about the thing in that large-hearted generous spirit there would be less bitterness for future generations to live down'. 'Bitterness' between women and men for future generations? A bitterness that is being aired again in recent times. Vida Goldstein, Australia's premier feminist, was visiting London and she knew both Vance and Nettie's families, one of the few. 'Have you taken her out to lunch yet', Nettie would write from Berlin.

If we move forwards to 1919 and the negotiations to end the war, with the Paris conference to draw up the Peace Treaty, three Australian women leaders attended the parallel women's conference held in Zurich, in neutral Switzerland, so both German and French women delegates could attend. Vida Goldstein spoke out against the White Australia policy and opposed Prime Minister Billy Hughes' heavy handed rejection of the Japanese call to racial equality to be recognised in the League of Nations.

Vance was still in Europe in 1919 waiting for repatriation to Australia. Nettie and her two babies was in Melbourne living with her aunt Ina Higgins, a member of the Women's Peace Army, the key anti-war women's group in Australia. Military posturing of the Anzacs in London continued through to May 1919. The Armistice was automatically renewed every thirty days, while the leaders negotiated. Germany and the Bolsheviks were excluded.

Nettie wrote a poem about this time, (that is not remembered in the public record, although some of her motherhood poems written during the war are).

*There while the world was gray,  
Clear and gray and bereft,  
I saw brothers betray,  
Never a nation was left,  
Never a cause held sway.*

...  
*I saw bitterness kill  
Men and leaders of men*

Nettie's poem doesn't mention women's experience of war. And while the Armistice celebrations are important for acknowledging the experience and trauma of the ordinary Australian military soldier, I want to show you a different photograph of women. Through the Red Cross, 82,000 women worked unpaid and provided their own uniforms, dedicated to the service of the wounded. When the conservative newspapers called the Red Cross, the 'battalions of mercy', in July 1918, the consent of the Australian people for military conflict, I believe, was being withdrawn. Because of censorship of any material 'prejudicial to recruiting' in Australia we have few photos of specific anti-war mobilisation. The Armistice processions reinforced this withdrawal of consent.

On 29 April 1919, the final version of the Covenant of the League of Nations was adopted, and it became Part I of the Treaty of Versailles.

The Treaty of Versailles on the 28 June 1919 marked the official end of World War 1 for Australia. It marks the establishment of the League of Nations.

Official Peace celebrations were held on 19 July, 1919. Australia still had not repealed the War Precautions Act.

In 1919 back in Victoria, Vance wrote of 'that foolish adventure abroad' and refused to be part the glorification of war. Before the war he had sought to be a writer on the world stage, and he moved in the same circles as Charles Bean. After the war he and Nettie sought to enrich the national imaginary as freelance writers and journalists. Nettie was lucky: journalism could not identify gender so women were mostly paid the same rates as men. The Palmers faced a long struggle to re-establish themselves, part of the generation of dissenting intellectuals whose dreams and disillusion of the newly federated nation, meant their writing careers were predicated on their experiences of the war.

Nationalism was not the antithesis of internationalism, but of imperialism, said Vance.

When Adela Pankhurst told the nation that feminism was the opposite of militarism she may have been right.

Nettie criticised her faith in internationalism when Adela posited it as opposed to nationalism, foreseeing our crisis in the environment.

To conclude,

- there is widespread misunderstanding about the end of World War 1
- as the Palmers' foresaw, we need to take a cosmopolitan view of our nation in its international context and responsibilities, and the end of World War 1
- we need to recognise the Armistice as the first step towards the League of Nations and understand the importance of negotiation in ending World War 1.

I leave it to you to begin to re-think the importance of treaty to all Australians.

## ARMISTICE DAY

*Or, Making the World Safe for Big Oil*

By **Humphrey McQueen**

4 November 2018

**T**he guns fell silent on the Western Front at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month while they continued to blaze on the Eastern Front, in the Far East and – above all – throughout the Middle East as they still do.

Revolution in Berlin, and mutinous troops everywhere, cornered the Allies into offering terms less than unconditional surrender.

The German leadership played on the Allies's fear that the Second Reich would go the way of Czarist Russia and turn Bolshevik.

Having failed in July-August 1914 to block an inter-Imperialist war with the promised general strike, Europe's working people imposed a cease-fire,

The 'Peace' Treaty signed at Versailles in July 1919 did not usher in 'peace'.

The Reparations Clauses were war by other means, as von Clausewitz might have put it.

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The \$US33 billion debt laid a basis for the inflation of 1923 and its long-term effects on German politics towards the triumph of Nazism in 1933.

When the Germans did not meet the payment schedule, the French Army occupied the Ruhr in 1924.

**The White Armies**

Armies of Intervention in Russia included a clutch of Australian volunteers among British contingents into Arkhangelsk and Murmansk from the summer of 1918.

A more important front opened to capture the oilfields around Baku where Shell financed the White Armies.

Our Japanese ally didn't withdraw from Siberia until July 1922.

The U.S. Imperialists also sent in troops to support of the White Army, using the Red Cross as its stalking horse, as it had in Cuba after 1898.

Proletarian Councils of Action, especially in Scotland, scared off plans to send supplies against the Reds.

**The Middle-East**

The victors were set on imposing on the Middle East the 1916 Sykes-Picot-Sazanov agreement to divide the Ottoman Empire between the British, the French, the Italians and the Russians after the war.

The Bolsheviks exposed and repudiated its terms which survived as the blueprint for drawing more lines on maps to establish Syria/Greater Lebanon for the French, Iraq, TransJordan and Kuwait for the British, but no homeland for the Kurds.

On 2 November 1917, Britain's Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour had assured the leader of the British Zionist Federation, Baron Rothschild, of the Empire's support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Persia had been under British control since 1905 through Anglo-Persian Oil (now BP), initially upon a fortune extracted from the labour of

miners at Queensland's Mt Morgan gold fields.

Encouraged by Britain, the Greeks invaded Turkey and, by August 1921, were poised to enter Ankara.

During their debacle on October 1922, British Prime Minister Lloyd George, asked for Australian support to 'protect the war graves'.

Billy Hughes replied that the returned Diggers would much rather fight for the Turks than the Greeks whom they thought to be more pro-Hun than their enemy at Gallipoli.

**Sign here!**

Negotiating Peace Treaties dragged out till 1923 because the rival imperialists could not agree of how to divvy up the spoils but also because the locals had ideas of their own about how they were to be governed.

On 13 April 1919, British troops killed 379 unarmed protestors and wounded around 1,000 more in the Indian State of Amritsar.

Three weeks later, the Third Afghan War broke out, ending after the RAF bombed Afghan cities.

**Yanqui Dandy**

The U.S. military pulled back from Europe, with the Senate refusing to endorse the Versailles Treaty or to join the League of Nations.

Isolationism left Washington free for the Marines to intervene across Central and South America, gaining exclusive and highly favourable rights over Mexican, Colombian and Venezuelan oil.

The U.S. Navy prepared battle plans against the Royal Navy over access to Middle Eastern oil. By 1928, Britain had admitted Standard Oil to Iraq and Persia, whereupon the rivals set up a cartel.

As Field-Marshal Earl Wavell put it:

*'After "the war to end war" they seem to have been pretty successful in Paris at making "Peace to end Peace'.*

**HAIG**

**O**f the several criticisms levelled against Ernest Newman's four-volume biography of Richard Wagner was that it never mentioned that his patron, King Ludwig II of Bavaria, was mad.

Newman admitted that he had no expertise in diseases of the mind and therefore had not felt qualified to make a diagnosis.

Moreover, he offered this contrast as indicative of the difficulties that even the most expert must face.

Ludwig had been considered 'mad' because, instead of joining Bismarck's war-making, he had almost bankrupted his kingdom by sponsoring opera and building three palaces.

Douglas Haig, on the other hand, having convinced the British cabinet that he was the greatest military genius since Napoleon, presided over a strategy that ended in the deaths of more than a million of his countrymen. After the war, the cabinet rewarded him with a peerage and £100,000. Had Field-Marshal Haig claimed to be Napoleon, Newman mused, surely even Lloyd George would have had him committed to Dartmoor with the other criminally insane.

**Humphrey McQueen**

P.S. In 1921, a professor of philosophy, Norman Kemp-Smith, contemplated returning to belief in a Divine Providence because, as he put it, and not unreasonably, it was 'intolerable, impossible' to accept that the fate of Europe depended on Lloyd George.

*"The Germans and the dog were engaged in a military operation which had an amusingly self-explanatory name, a human enterprise which is seldom described in detail, whose name alone, when reported as new or history, gives many war enthusiasts a sort of post-coital satisfaction. It is, in the imagination of combat's fans, the divinely listless love play that follows the orgasm of victory. It is called "mopping up."*

**Kurt Vonnegut**  
**Slaughterhouse-Five**



**WHAT ARE THEY THINKING?**

*Australia and its Israel Embassy*

By James O'Neill

According to recent media reports, the Liberal candidate in the Wentworth (Sydney) by-election, former diplomat David Sharma said he “was open” to the idea that Australia’s embassy in Israel could be shifted from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. In a separate tweet he went further and said Australia “should consider recognising Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. The ostensible reason is that it would be following the lead of the United States.

In separate reports, Prime Minister Scott Morrison is said to be making an announcement in Canberra on 16 October also suggesting that Australia should follow the US lead.

Sharma did qualify his suggestion that Australia’s embassy shift to Jerusalem “should be looked at in the context of a two-state solution (to Israel-Palestine).

It is possible that both Sharma and Morrison have timed their statements to coincide with the by-election by making a pitch for the Jewish vote in that electorate. According to census data, Wentworth has 12.5 percent of its population professing the Jewish faith, a significant figure in electoral terms. That is the kindest interpretation that can be placed on their remarks.

More likely, it is yet another example of Australia blindly following the United States in adopting a policy that is clearly in breach of international law. The Guardian and other mainstream media outlets have noted that the American policy has thus far only been followed by Guatemala. No mainstream media outlet has raised the issue of such a policy being in breach of international law. The special status of Jerusalem has been completely ignored.

Jerusalem is an international city under United Nations protection, and has been so since Resolution 181 of 1947, which declared Jerusalem a “separate entity.”

In June 1980, UN Security Council Resolution 476 was unanimously passed (i.e. including the US), declaring that “all actions by Israel, the occupying power, which purports to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem have no legal validity and

constitute a flagrant violation of international law.”

UNSC Resolution 478, also passed unanimously, called upon all “States to refrain from the establishment of diplomatic missions in the Holy City of Jerusalem.” UNSC resolutions are binding on all States. There is no room for ambiguity here, and even if Sharma and Morrison (and the Australian media) choose to ignore this issue, that is not an excuse. It has to be presumed that the legal advisors to the government in the Department of Foreign Affairs are cognisant of the legal implications of the government’s proposed shift in policy.

Sharma’s qualification that such a move would be in the context of a two state solution is absolutely meaningless. The Israeli government is totally uninterested in such a development, as its actions since 1948 make abundantly clear. Its ongoing theft of Palestinian land, the blockade of Gaza, the daily shootings of Palestinian men, women and children and its complete ignoring of multiple General Assembly resolutions over decades are all symptomatic of a violent, apartheid regime for whom international law is just an impediment to fulfilment of the Yinon Plan for a Greater Israel.

That Australia should even contemplate moving its embassy to Jerusalem beggars belief. UNSC resolutions are binding on member states. The fact that the United States chooses to ignore international law comes as no great surprise, even when, as with the Jerusalem resolutions they were a party to their formulation and voted for them.

The latest suggestions about Australia moving its embassy to Jerusalem puts them in the same dubious company as the US and Israel, both serial violators of international law. Does Australia really want to be in that company? Its voting record in the UN on Israel-Palestine issues tends to answer that question in the affirmative. This latest disregard for international law is consistent with Australia’s disregard for its international obligations toward the treatment of refugees on Manus and Nauru. It therefore marks a continuing downward slide from its earlier proud role as a supporter of a principled

approach to foreign policy issues, and especially issues of international law.

This degradation of policy has not been matched with a reduction in the rhetoric of Australia’s professed belief in the “rules based international order.” The manifest hypocrisy of that position is now exemplified even more by the proposed shifting of the Australian embassy to Jerusalem. Australia’s policies are no more than a hollow sham.

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**RULES-BASED INTERNATIONAL ORDER**

*The rhetoric and the reality*

By James O’Neill

One of the most commonly used phrases by western politicians is their professed belief in the “International rules based order.” It is meant to convey their respect for international law and is invariably used in the context of criticising their enemies du jour, currently China, Iran and Russia who are supposed to epitomise the opposite of a rules based order.

Even the most casual observer of the geopolitics of the post World War Two period knows that the gap between the rhetoric and the reality is immense. Countries not within the privileged clique of Anglo American European imperialism know this full well and have made the appropriate adjustments to their own policies.

A series of recent events however, suggest that levels of Western hypocrisy have reached new and dangerous levels. At the beginning of October, the United States secretary of the interior Ryan Zinke suggested that the United States and its allies could force a change in Russia’s middle east policy by imposing a blockade, preventing the movement of ships into and out of Russian ports. It is unclear whether or not Mr Zinke fully appreciate the significance of what he is saying, even given the unlikely ability of the United States to actually enforce such a blockade.

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To mount a blockade requires the use of force. Such a blockade would not have the sanction of the United Nations Security Council and neither would it remotely come within the ambit of the self-defence provisions of article 51 of the United Nations Charter. In other words it would be a direct violation of international law. As an act of war against Russia, Russia would be entitled to take appropriate steps to defeat such an illegal intrusion into its sovereign territory, and take other such actions deemed necessary to defend itself. War would be the inevitable consequence of the United States government taking Mr Zinke's frankly insane advice.

In case one thought that was simply an example of the partisan stupidity and hubris characteristic of the American elites, more was to quickly follow. Two days after Zinke's suggestion, the United States ambassador to NATO, Kay Hutchison alleged that Russia was in breach of its obligations under the ballistic missile treaty, an allegation Russia denies. Hutchison went further however, in saying that if Russia did not cease its development of the missiles in question, the United States would "take out" Russia's missiles and the places where they were being developed.

The only way in which the United States could "take out" Russia's missile facilities would be by a missile attack, most probably with nuclear weapons. To describe that policy as lunacy would be a gross understatement.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> October, following an adverse ruling by the International Court of Justice, ruling in favour of Iran's complaint against the further imposition of sanctions by the US against Iran following the US withdrawal from the JCPOA (itself an example of unilateral disregard for international agreements to which it had been a party) the US announced that it was cancelling the 1955 Treaty of Amity with Iran. US Secretary of State Pompeo announced that it "should have been done 39 years ago" i.e. after the 1979 revolution overthrew the puppet regime of the Pahlavi family. One would need a microscope to detect evidence of "amity" during those 39 years. The hostility towards Iran is only explicable in terms of US support for the Israeli

government, itself a gross and continuing violator of International Law.

Less noticed at the time of the American spoiled child like response to the ICJ ruling was the US government also announcing that it was withdrawing from the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. This is one of the more important International legal instruments as it provides a mechanism for the peaceful resolution of disputes through compulsory procedures (among other important provisions). It is a key element of the 'rules based international order' to which the US professes allegiance.

One of the Vienna Convention's other key elements is the 1961 Optional Protocol which codifies the basic rules of international Law enabling diplomatic missions to operate without fear of coercion by the host State. According to the International Court of Justice, the very success of the Protocol depends on States observing international Law. The United States, which was one of the original drafters of the original Protocol, has now abandoned that central tenet of international Law.

A further recent illustration was the moving of the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The Palestinian Authority has petitioned the ICJ for a declaration that the moving of the embassy was a breach of international Law. It is likely to be successful.

The Palestinian claim also relies upon the aforementioned Vienna Convention, another element of which covers the location of foreign embassies. Those embassies are required to be located in the capital cities of the host country. Tel Aviv is the capital of Israel, not Jerusalem. Jerusalem is an international city with a unique status. That status was set by UNSC Resolution 181 of 1947 which designated Jerusalem as a "separate entity" under United Nations protection. The US voted in favour of that resolution.

UNSC Resolution 476 of June 1980 declared that "all actions by Israel, the occupying power which purports to alter the character and status of the holy city of Jerusalem have no legal validity and

constitute a flagrant violation " of Jerusalem's status. That resolution was passed unanimously and therefore included the United States. That resolution was reinforced by a further resolution (478), also in 1980, that called "upon all States to refrain from the establishment of diplomatic missions in the holy city of Jerusalem. Again the US voted in favour.

As recently as December 2016 a further UNSC Resolution (2234) stated that Jewish settlements in the occupied territories (occupied since 1967 in breach of international Law) "have no legal validity and constitute a flagrant violation of international law". The vote on that occasion was 14:0 with the US abstaining. Notwithstanding this history (and there are multiple other examples) the United States continues its unwavering political, military and financial support for Israel. The moving of the US embassy to Jerusalem is clearly a "flagrant breach " of international law, as the above UNSC Resolutions make unequivocally clear. It was also in accord with the wishes of the Israeli government. The silence of western governments is an implicit endorsement of this complete disregard of the rules based international order they purport to uphold.

Two recent pieces of legislation passed by the US represent further examples of where "rules" and "order" are interpreted solely in terms of the US national interest and show a cavalier disregard for the sovereign rights of other nations. The first of these was the Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) under which the US allocates itself the power to impose sanctions on individuals, companies and countries that have the temerity to conduct business relationships with countries of whom the US disapproves.

This has most recently been applied to European companies doing business with Iran. Notwithstanding the European Union enacting legislation to protect EU companies, such as France's Total, that oil giant has capitulated and others will undoubtedly follow. Such third party sanctions are manifestly in breach of international Law, including the WTO and GATT agreements.

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Such bullying may work for a period, but an increasing number of countries are frankly sick of it and are making alternative arrangements at an accelerating pace. For present purposes it is sufficient to note that such blatant commercial and geopolitical self interest does not sit comfortably with the rhetoric of support for a rules based International order.

A second example has been the passage through the US House of Representatives (it has yet to pass the Senate) is the Interdiction and Modernisation of Sanctions Act. This Act allows the US Navy to inspect Chinese, Iranian, Syrian and Russian ports. This Act is truly astonishing in its hubris. That it would involve hostile acts of war against the designated countries is self-evident. That it is also shows a profound contempt for the sovereign rights of those countries is similarly self-evident. It hardly needs to be added that it would also be a flagrant breach of international law.

That any attempt to actually put into practice would be met with, to put it mildly, determined resistance by the nation's affected, goes without saying. That such a situation carries with it enormous potential dangers is also obvious. Again, at the risk of repetition, it is simply impossible to reconcile this legislation and the policy intent that underpins it and other acts of aggression over the past many decades with any real concept of a rules based international order that truly serves International peace and respects the legitimate rights of sovereign nations.

The rhetoric of western political leaders therefore, when espousing their belief in the rules based International order is only explicable if one accepts that what they really mean is "our rules, our order and our interests are paramount. If you don't accept that, then sanctions, bombing, regime change and occupation will follow."

It would be naïve to expect any fundamental change in western policy. Indeed, as the US empire enters its sustained decline from hegemonic status its flailing and failing actions may intensify. Herein lies perhaps the greatest danger. What Eisenhower called the

"military industrial complex " in 1961 and warned of its dangers even then, has grown exceedingly rich in the intervening years. It does not take kindly to attempts to limit its influence. It needs to be recalled that President Carter wanted to withdraw US troops from South Korea 40 years ago. Trump has said similar things about Syria and Afghanistan. Neither are likely. If he pushes too hard he faces the same fate as Kennedy.

Arguably the best prospects for avoiding war lie in the ongoing and increasingly successful development of the alternative multi polar world being developed by Russia and China. In the meantime it would be a substantial advance if the rhetoric of the west about its belief in the value of international Law as the basis of relationships between nations was reflected in their actual behaviour.

### CASPIAN SEA AGREEMENT

*Symptomatic of Wider Geopolitical Changes*

By James O'Neill

**O**n 12 August 2018 the five littoral states to the Caspian Sea (Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan) signed an historic agreement governing the use of the Caspian Sea. The negotiations had been ongoing for more than 20 years. One of the issues was with the Caspian should be regarded as a sea (it is salty but completely enclosed) or a lake. If the former, then it would be governed by the international law of the sea. If defined as a lake, then the resources would be divided equally between the five States. In the event, the five nations agreed to accord it 'a special status,' neither lake nor sea. Whether this unique formulation will be recognised by non-littoral States is an open question.

There are several significant elements to the Caspian Sea Convention (CSC) that are worthy of note. The first aspect is the size of the resources at stake. The Caspian Sea basin is known to hold 50 billion barrels of oil in proven reserves, and nearly 9 trillion cubic metres of natural gas. To put that in perspective, the gas reserves are greater than the entire known United States reserves. The agreement signed on 12 August

gave each of the five states a 15 nautical mile exclusive territorial zone, plus a further 10 nautical mile exclusive fishing zone. The balance of the sea area was for common use. Its economic development would therefore be a joint exercise with the benefits equally shared. A Caspian Economic Forum was also established to determine, inter alia, the practical means and effects of such cooperation.

The second aspect of the agreement relates to security arrangements. All non-littoral States are forbidden to have foreign military bases. This is specifically directed at NATO, which continues its encroachment and attempted encroachment in all nations with proximity to Russia. Russia is the underwriter of security in the Caspian, a factor that increases its geopolitical strength viz a viz other nations, and in particular Iran that is looking increasingly to secure arrangements unaffected by the unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States.

Both Russia and China are developing closer economic and political ties with Iran. Both countries have made significant investments in Iranian infrastructure and resource development. Iran is also a pivotal State in China's Belt and Road Initiative. Neither Russia nor China are likely to tolerate overt aggression against Iran of the type advocated by some of the more extreme neocon elements of the US administration.

That does not preclude those same elements increasing the intensity of the hybrid warfare waged against Iran for many years, including overt support for the terrorist MEK group. Hybrid warfare is also the main means by which the US will seek to undermine China's Belt and Road Initiative, as overt warfare is now, as the Rand Corporation acknowledged recently, "unthinkable."

The leaders of Iran and Kazakhstan also held separate meetings, an object of which in part was to establish economic links bypassing the United States dollar. This also reflects a developing trend of a move away from the US dollar, the ramifications of which are potentially enormous.

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The third major consequence is in the links between some members of the CSA and related Eurasian organisations. Iran had earlier this year signed a free trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union, (EAEU) two of whose members, Kazakhstan and Russia are also parties to the CSC. Iran is an observer State (and likely full member soon) of the Shanghai Corporation Organisation. That organization's full members include CSC States Russia and Kazakhstan, as well as neighbouring Pakistan and fellow SCO observer State Afghanistan. A resolution of the long running Afghanistan war will require the co-operation of Afghanistan's Central Asian neighbours, all of whom are members of the SCO.

The CSC therefore represents a further step in the significant shift of geopolitical power to the Eurasian heartland. Although China was not a party to the CSC it is nonetheless the dominant economic power in the region, with close ties to the CSC signatories, particularly through the SCO, but also with non-member States such as Turkmenistan from whom it is a major importer of natural gas.

Although there are important differences between the Caspian Sea and the South China Sea, there are also lessons that can be drawn. Following the recent ASEAN meeting in Singapore, the ASEAN nations and China announced that they had agreed upon a new draft code of conduct for the littoral States of the South China Sea. Those negotiations had also been very lengthy.

The draft code of conduct underscores the importance of those nations most affected by the issues in dispute being the ones best able to formulate a resolution when they are able to do so. Those negotiations arguably have a better chance of success, absent the involvement of outside countries such as the United States and Australia. The actions and statements of those two nations demonstrate an inability to promote a peaceful resolution of the South China Sea issues, preferring instead a provocative and confrontational methodology.

The Caspian Sea Convention and the South China Sea code of conduct provide evidence that an alternative model is available.

### KIEV'S NEO-NAZIS

*Ho Ho!... Washington Bears Gifts for Kiev's Neo-Nazi Warmongering Regime*

By **Finian Cunningham**

December 25, 2018 "Information Clearing House" -

**O**h what a lovely big stocking-filler for the Kiev regime this week from Washington. Just in time for Christmas too, and only weeks after President Petro Poroshenko tried to incite a war with Russia from a naval provocation in the Kerch Strait.

First we had US government envoy Kurt Volker announcing this week that an additional \$250 million in military weapons were being packaged in Congress for Ukraine. Then the DC-based international lending institutions, the IMF and World Bank, signed off on multi-billion-dollar loans for Poroshenko's regime.

helping hand. And that's not seen as interference in a country's sovereign affairs?

Since the CIA-backed coup d'état in Kiev in February 2014 against the elected government of Viktor Yanukovych, it is estimated that the US has provided the cabal that seized power with up to \$1 billion in military aid. And those dubious gifts keep coming, with the envoy Kurt Volker this week announcing to a forum in Brussels that the US Congress is processing an additional \$250 million.

It doesn't seem to bother American lawmakers that the Kiev regime is dominated by Neo-Nazi demagogues and paramilitaries who worship Stepan Bandera and other Ukrainian collaborators in the Third Reich's Final Solution. Just recently President Poroshenko was photographed inspecting

**Neo-Nazi Militias**

- Many ultra-nationalist neo-nazi militias have organized to fight against Novorossiya
- The largest of these are Svoboda and Right Sector
- Many of these militias claim that they are fighting for an ethnic cleansing of Russians in Ukraine, and use videos of brutal executions to intimidate Novorossiya

US government-owned Radio Free Europe described the new financial loans as a "victory" for Poroshenko. The apparent investor confidence bestowed by the Washington-based "development agencies" will boost the incumbent president's re-election prospects in the forthcoming ballot in March. Up until recently, Poroshenko was trailing in opinion polls and looked set for a trouncing defeat in the election. How convenient that the IMF and World Bank – under the control of US government – should step up to the plate with a very big

Ukrainian special forces some of whom were donning insignia of the Third Reich's SS.

As Russian President Vladimir Putin pointed out in his annual press conference this week, the Kiev regime has been waging a war and a blockade against its own Ukrainian citizens in the eastern Donbas region for over four years, in which civilians continue to be killed on a daily basis.

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One reason why that war remains largely unknown in the West is because Western news media don't report on it. Or when they do, they distort with lies that Russia has "invaded Ukraine". This is similar to how the Western news media largely "forgot" to report on the war in Yemen, and when they have bothered to mention Yemen at all, they again distort by calling it a proxy war with Iran.

The Ukraine war against the ethnic Russian people of eastern Ukraine is driven by a rabid Russophobia subscribed to by the Kiev regime consistent with the exterminatory mentality of the Third Reich with whom their antecedents collaborated with during the Second World War.

The criminal recklessness of Washington knows no bounds. Just as President Donald Trump announces this week that he is pulling out American troops from Syria (illegally present there for the past four years), the same administration is stepping up its military involvement in Ukraine.

After the November 25 incident in the Kerch Strait when three heavily armed Ukrainian warships violated Russia's maritime border, one might have thought that the US backers of the Kiev regime would have prevailed upon it with caution not to incite Russia. Not a bit of it, it seems. The US is giving notice that it is increasing its already hefty military support. That amounts to a green light from Washington to the Kiev regime to continue its provocations.

The timing of the IMF and World Bank financing is also blatant, and equally reprehensible. The IMF said it had approved \$4 billion in new money for the Kiev regime, the first tranche of which will be disbursed by December 25, Christmas Day in the Western calendar! Together, the IMF and World Bank loans will enable the Kiev regime to seek taking on even more debt from other international sources, their approval acting as an endorsement of "sound economy".

Ukraine is already lumbering from huge national debts of around \$115 billion. The IMF and World Bank are therefore pushing the country into deeper arrears. No doubt that is part of the threadbare pattern of how Western

capital will strip the country of its resources and the populace thrown into debt slavery.

Nevertheless, grave legal questions arise. It is understood that the Bretton Woods institutions of the IMF and World Bank, officially affiliated with the United Nations, are forbidden from lending money to states which are in the midst of armed conflict. How is it then possible that those institutions are bank rolling the Kiev regime given the latter's horrendous assault on its own people in eastern Ukraine, its explicit affiliation with Neo-Nazi ideology, and its brazen attempts to provoke a war with Russia?

Furthermore, IMF lending was supposedly put on hold in 2017 because the Kiev regime was not complying with demands to crack down on corruption and implement political reforms. If anything the economic and political corruption in Ukrainian territory under the control of the Kiev regime has become an even bigger, more rampant problem. The IMF and World Bank announced their "financial goodies" this week without providing any evidence of purported conditional improvements.

This all makes for a grim prognosis over the coming months. The Kiev regime has no intention to go back to the 2015 Minsk accords which called for a negotiated political settlement in Ukraine. As Putin remarked recently, as long as the current cabal in Kiev remains in power then conflict will be the order of the day.

The US government and the Washington financial institutions are ensuring that the cabal remains in power with their generous rewards of military and capital injections. More disturbing is that the Kiev regime will feel emboldened to take its warmongering against Russia to an even more reckless level.

Father Christmas is supposed to reward good boys and girls. For Washington, the gifts are evidently doled out for a Neo-Nazi rogue regime with blood on its hands.

**Finian Cunningham** has worked as an editor and writer in major news media organisations, including *The Mirror*, *Irish Times* and *Independent*.

## FANCIFUL NOTIONS

*European armies, Trump and NATO*

By **Binoy Kampmark**

Posted Thursday, 29 November 2018

**T**he idea of a standing European army, one dedicated to the specific needs of Europe as opposed to being an annex of another power is far from new. In gestation alongside notions of European federalism and its defence have come the idea of a force filled with respective nation states that might have aims and ambitions different from those of Washington or Moscow. Critics of the idea are never far away.

The companion concepts of European integration and defence have not had a smooth ride in transatlantic relations. The twitchiness shown by various European leaders to the Trump administration's approach to European defence has become obvious. Trump's tactic here has been to pile scorn upon the European army idea while insisting that NATO members pay their dues. He is also counting on the Euro-sceptics who fear that such an army would see Brussels dictating the tune of conscription to member-states.

The Armistice Day commemorations supplied another political opportunity to talk about armies – as if we did not have enough of them already. Even if war should be avoided, the political leader will often find it irresistible to speak of preparedness for the next one. The catastrophic freight of the Great War of 1914-1918 is still weighing down nations, but talk of being armed and ready for the next conflict refuses to go away.

France's Emmanuel Macron, who finds himself in the doldrums of unpopularity at home, has embraced the idea of a continental army. To Europe 1 radio, he explained that the object of European security had been compromised by decisions made by the Trump White House. "When I see President Trump announcing that he's quitting a major disarmament treaty which was formed after the 1980s Euro-missile crisis that hit Europe, who is the main victim?"

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The question could have remained rhetorical, but Macron did not want to leave his audience in any nagging doubt: "Europe and its security." The stakes had changed, and the United States had become more unsettling problem than solid protector. "We have to protect ourselves with respect to China, Russia and even the United States of America." The comments were less directed at actual physical harm occasioned by traditional military combat than the skirmishes of the Internet waged on the digital frontier.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel is of like mind. To a meeting of the European Parliament, she outlined how a "real, true European army" had to be created "so that we can tackle issues immediately on the ground." Other powers could not be relied upon to achieve this task. "Only a stronger Europe is going to be able to defend its values and interest worldwide, and the times when we can rely on others are past."

These comments might have been ill-advised but entirely logical: the notion of immutable, friendly alliances remains a stretched one, and the interests of states can diverge with violent suddenness. Where there are problematic lies in the shift being insisted upon by Merkel and Macron: the idea that European "values" and its "identity" needs to be manifested in a standing army that might be both a guarantee of security and a promoter of Europe.

Given that much of Europe is in fractious dispute over the nature of such values, and what imperils them, this project is already stuttering before it finds form, an inchoate aspiration rather than a genuine prospect. The wisdom of the sometimes sound and often diabolical Austrian diplomat of the Napoleonic era, Klemens von Metternich, comes to mind: coalitions and "all fraternizations" need a "strictly determinate aim" to unite them less they disintegrate.

Trump's response was predictably adolescent in its fuming quality. Macron "has just suggested that Europe build its own military in order to protect itself from the US, China and Russia.

Very insulting, but perhaps Europe should first pay its share of NATO, which the US subsidizes greatly!"

The view of shoring up Europe's own defence in the absence of the United States is viewed as inconceivable for generations of politicians on the continent. To do so in the absence of the excuse of keeping a US presence in Europe – NATO - is also seen as so improbable as to be unnatural. Both Merkel and Macron insist that such an armed force would be a "supplement" to NATO, not its replacement nor its counter.

There are also operational matters. Arguably, only Britain and France have deployable forces in actual instances of conflict, but they are, in the main, annexes of US-led operations. In a manner heavy with condescension, strategists enthused by a continued role of a large hegemon in European affairs simply insist that Europe cannot go it alone, needing the gusts of wind from across the Atlantic to keep matters flying. One such member of this fraternity of thought is Michael Shurkin of the RAND Corporation. "By and large, all of them [the European powers] have militaries designed to work as a coalition run by the US."

Dependency is, however, a condition that sits uneasily. It seems an echo of charity; those who receive it are bound to, at some point, seek an alternative. Even before Trump's coming to power, thought was being given to the future of European defence. A collection published in 2016 by the European Union Institute for Security Studies as part of its Chaillot Paper series is one such example. The authors acknowledge the issues of a common external security policy (CSDP), which sees far more convergence between European states than a common defence policy. CSDP, in any case, "suffers from a lack of commitment and a lack of resources, within its scope shifting increasingly towards border monitoring and training purposes." What Merkel and Macron are suggesting is moving Europe towards a previously shunned idea of territorial defence.

Analysts such as James R. Holmes of the Naval War College see a European army as making good sense. He does so from two perspectives: a suspicion of

Russia, to which he attributes jaw dropping powers of embargo in any future conflict with Europe; and the declining influence of the United States. Numbers of US personnel based in Europe are small relative to the Cold War deployment: some 62,000 or so. The American merchant fleet has been depleted in terms of numbers.

The structural matters of such an army are so vague as to be considered untenable. "The EU is not a country, it is not a state" remarks François Heisbourg, an adviser to the Foundation for Strategic Research in Paris. No army, he claims, can exist without an executive branch. The former British Prime Minister David Cameron has also previously argued that "suggestions of an EU army are fanciful: national security is a national competence".

But armed forces filled with the nationals of other states have been typical of the Blue helmets of the United Nations, though their deployments a sketchy record. Given the chaos of a Europe gazing over a yawning chasm, a single army is the last thing on the lips of Europe's citizenry. Trump might have to do more to push European leaders towards a more coherent security front.

**Binoy Kampmark** was a Commonwealth Scholar at Selwyn College, Cambridge. He currently lectures at RMIT University, Melbourne and blogs at *Oz Moses*.

## THE KOSOVO BLUNDER

### *Moves Towards a Standing Army*

by **Binoy Kampmark**, 16 Dec 2018

**T**here never is a time not to worry in the Balkans. The next conflict always seems to be peering around the corner with a malicious enthusiasm, eager to spring at points of demagogic advantage and personal suffering. The centrepieces of future disaster in the region tend to be Kosovo and Bosnia. The former is now intent on formalising military arrangements, thereby fashioning a spear that will be able to be driven deep through the heart of Serbian pride.

On Friday, the Assembly of Kosovo passed three draft laws with overwhelming numbers that it would form an army. (Serbian lawmakers

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boycotted the session.) The current Kosovo Security Force of 3,000 lightly armed personnel is to become somewhat more formidable: 5,000 active troops backed by 3,000 reservists in the next decade. This move was brazenly chest beating in nature, an assertion that security, as provided by the 4,000 NATO troops forming KFOR (the Kosovo Force), was inadequate and, more to the point, to be bypassed altogether.

It also came as a calculated assault, timed to bruise Serbians in Kosovo – numbering some 120,000 – and politicians in Belgrade, suggesting a marked change from negotiations some three months prior. Then, it seemed that a land swap offer was in the making, one that would have reflected the relevant though tense ethnic composition in the region: the Preševo Valley in southern Serbia, predominantly Albanian, would join Kosovo; Serbia would re-establish dominion over the majority ethnic-Serb area of Kosovo to the north of the River Ibar.

Things subsequently soured. Kosovo had already agreed to raise a 100 percent tariff on imports from Serbia, a move that is economically insensible but parochially clear. Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj justified the action by blaming Belgrade's efforts to foil his bid in admitting Kosovo to Interpol. Aggression from Belgrade was cited on all fronts: from the seething Deputy Prime Minister Enver Hoxhaj; from the foreign ministry ("abusive" lobbying by Serbia was cited); and from the prime minister himself.

To have such an army will be another feather in the cap of Kosovo's aims to consolidate its sovereign credentials and sever the umbilical cord with Belgrade. The danger here, as ever, is how the ethnic Serbs, backed by their indignant patrons, will respond. Haradinaj's caper here is to claim that the forces will be "multi-ethnic, in service of its own citizens, in function of peace, alongside other regional armies, including the Serbian Army, in having partnership for peace." His officials also insist on a modest role for the new army, one dedicated to "search

and rescue operations, explosive ordnance disposal, fire fighting and hazardous material disposal." Nothing, in short, to have kittens over.

The region is already suffering a form of legal schizophrenia, one designed by the legal and security arrangements more befitting an asylum than a functioning state. Countries in Europe facing their own separatist dilemmas have been steadfast in not recognising Kosovo. Unsurprisingly, Spain is foremost amongst them. In January, the Spanish foreign ministry expressed the view that Kosovo be kept out of any plans for Western Balkans enlargement. "The concept of 'WB6' does not fit the enlargement dynamic. Kosovo is not part of the enlargement process and has its own differentiated framework."

In reality, the Kosovar Albanians know they can count on much support within European ranks: the appetite for protecting Serbian interests was long lost during the Balkan Wars of the 1990s. Lauded defenders became demonised butchers. Kosovo assumed the form of a pet project, one to be nurtured by Western European and US interests under the fictional tent of humanitarianism. Invariably, Serbia sought support from Russia and China, both of whom steadfastly rejected the 2008 declaration of independence from Serbia.

For Serbian president Aleksandar Vučić, speaking in Trstenik on Thursday, "Kosovo and Metohija is to us great torment, especially because of Pristina's move and the announcement of the formation of an army, which is neither based on law nor on Resolution 1244." Serbia's foreign minister, Ivica Daičić deemed the formation of any such army "the most direct threat to peace and stability in the region."

Such instances are open invitations to violence. The Kosovo authorities are keen to wave the red flag; Serbian authorities risk running at it with frothing intensity. There is also a fear that this move has received conventional prodding, this time from the United States. "Everything Pristina is doing," according to Vučić, "it is obviously doing with the support of the United States. They have no right under international legal document to form armed formations; to us, that's illegal, and we will inform the public about further steps."

The assertion is not without foundation. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) is clear that the guarantor of security in the region be KFOR. "Hence," goes a statement from a spokesman for the UN Secretary General, "any restriction to the discharge by KFOR of its security responsibilities would be inconsistent with that resolution." But the bad behaviour of small entities such as Kosovo often takes place at the behest of greater powers, and US ambassador to Kosovo Philip Kosnett has openly stated that it was "only natural for Kosovo as a sovereign, independent country to have a self-defence capability."

Lieutenant Colonel Sylejman Cakaj, who had cut his milk teeth on fighting Serbia as a commander of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in 1999, seemed to have drunk a juice heavy with political overtones. "We are all seeing a geo-strategic changes in the world, towards the creation of a somewhat new world order. I believe it is necessary that following the consolidation of its statehood, Kosovo has its army too... the one that we are entitled to as representatives of the people, to be in control of our country." The shudder amongst ethnic Serbs at such remarks is palpable, and the fear here is whether Belgrade will catch a terrible cold.

The response from NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg was more one of remorse than decisive anger. "I regret that the decision to initiate a change of the Kosovo Security Force mandate was made despite concerns expressed by NATO." The "level of NATO's engagement with the Kosovo Security Force" would have to be re-examined.

While patriotic foolishness should never be discounted in any factor in the region, the Kosovo Albanians have been emboldened. The wait-and-see game about whether Serbian forces are deployed to protect Kosovar Serbs is afoot. As former Serbian military commander Nebojša Jović warned with thick ominousness, "What they [the Kosovo Albanians] should know from our history is that there was never a 'small war' in these territories. Every

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**TRUMP V/S MATTIS***Watch Out When Men of War Come to the Rescue*

The exiting defence secretary has been presented as the restraining hand tugging at the sleeve of Trump – the one man who could stop Nero burning Rome

By Robert Fisk

December 28, 2018 "Information Clearing House" -

**W**hen a general popularly known as James “Mad Dog” Mattis abandons a really mad American president, you know something has fallen off the edge in Washington. Since the Roman empire, formerly loyal military chiefs have fled crackpot leaders, and Mattis’s retreat from the White House might have the smell of de Gaulle and Petain about it.

De Gaulle was confronted by an immensely powerful hero of the people – the Lion of Verdun – who was, in his dotage, about to shrug off the sacred alliance with Britain for Nazi collaboration (for which, I suppose, read Putin’s Russia). The decision was made to have nothing to do with Petain, or what Mattis now refers to as “malign actors”. De Gaulle would lead Free France instead.

Mattis has no such ambitions – not yet, at any rate – although there are plenty of Lavals and Weygands waiting to see if Trump chooses one of them for his next secretary of defence. Besides, history should not grant Trump and Mattis such an epic panorama.

After all, no Trump tweet could compare with Petain’s 1916 “We’ll get them!” (“*on les aura*”) slogan, and the dignified, cold and fastidious de Gaulle would never have lent himself to the rant Mattis embarked upon in San Diego in 2005: “You go into Afghanistan, you got guys who slap women around for five years because they didn’t wear a veil. You know, guys like that ain’t got no manhood left anyway. So it’s a hell of a lot of fun to shoot them. Actually, it’s a lot of fun to fight. You know, it’s a hell of a hoot. It’s fun to shoot some people. I’ll be right up-front with you, I like brawling.”

And Mattis was happy to “brawl” with the Iranians politically, though equally content to let the Saudis do the fighting

for him – in Yemen, at least. In 2017, he chose Saudi Arabia to announce that “everywhere you look if there is trouble in the region, you find Iran.” He even thought that “Iran is not an enemy of Isis”, a statement that demonstrated either ignorance or falsehood. No wonder he later became enamoured of Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman.

But now he has entered a new pantheon. Suddenly the man of war, the US marine general who found it “a hell of a lot of fun” to shoot Afghan misogynists and liked “brawling”, has become a peacemaker. He was the restraining hand tugging at the sleeve of the insane Trump, the one man who could stop Nero burning Rome. He was “the sanest of Trump’s national security team”, according to Paul Waldman in *The Washington Post*. He was “an island of security”, announced Amos Harel in Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*.

All this is part of the querulous school of journalism that believed – after Trump’s insanity was made manifest – that the military could control the man in the lunatic asylum. The idea was that while Trump might set light to the world, those trusty generals, veterans of America’s wars for democracy – Afghanistan and Iraq, to be sure – could protect us all from the ravings of a democratically elected president. It’s a grim and dangerous tale in which we have all colluded, especially the Arabs. Better a General Nequib or a Colonel Nasser than corrupt old King Farouk; much safer a Field Marshal Sissi than an unbalanced Muslim Brotherhood man like Mohamed Morsi; more secure (as it seemed in 1969) with a forward-looking Colonel Gaddafi than an effete King Idris.

For there is something both initially attractive and deeply immoral in the idea that the warlords can turn into saviours – this notion does apply to Petain too, of course – and that those who have shed blood must be uniquely gifted with the ability to make peace or produce a just society. Not for nothing, only three months ago, did Mattis publicise his constant reading of Marcus Aurelius’s *Meditations*. “The reason I kept a tattered copy in my rucksack to pull out at times,” he told US military cadets in Virginia, “was it allowed me

to look at things with a little distance.” All Americans should read this book, was his message, “especially in Washington DC, with all the political ‘heave and ho’ that I try to keep the department of defence out of.”

But the real message was surely slightly different. The austere philosopher-emperor of second century Rome – who ruled when the empire covered more territory than ever before in its history – believed in a rather bleak world of duty and service and near-agnosticism; in reality far from Mattis’ Catholic upbringing. Marcus Aurelius spent much of his life waging war – including the Roman-Parthian conflict which destroyed Ctesiphon only a few miles from Baghdad – and his son was the blood-boltered Commodus (famously killed by Russell Crowe in *Gladiator*).

Generals always seem to keep “tattered” copies of the classics in their rucksacks, rather like First World War soldiers. Harold Macmillan lay wounded in a shell hole at Delville Wood, reading Aeschylus’s *Prometheus* for 12 hours. But Mattis?

His career, so far, seems to have a faint parallel with Ariel Sharon, the notoriously ruthless and vain Israeli general who, after being held “personally” responsible for failing to prevent the massacre of up to 1,700 Palestinian civilians by Israel’s Lebanese Christian allies in 1982, was feted as a peacemaker when he died. Sharon – the “Bulldozer” or the “Butcher” depending on whether you listened to the Israelis or the Arabs – was the most important proponent of the Israeli colonisation project in the West Bank (which only speeded up after his withdrawal of Jewish colonies from Gaza) and ended his days after a stroke sent him into an eight-year coma.

But his death was greeted as that of a potential saviour. He helped to sabotage the 1993 Oslo “peace process”, yet on his death David Cameron was to speak of Sharon’s “brave” decision to achieve peace, while Bill and Hillary Clinton said that it had been “an honour to work with him”. John Kerry talked of how Sharon “sought to bend the course of history towards peace”. Sharon did not, (continued on Page 17...)



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so far as we know, read Marcus Aurelius. But, so we are told, he liked to listen to violin sonatas.

Yasser Arafat, on the other hand, started off in the west – and in its media – as a Palestinian super-terrorist leader in Beirut who, once he joined in the doomed charade of Oslo, became a peacemaker. He who had once drawn the sword, offered the world the gun or the olive branch, and was going to make the lion sit down with the lamb, etc. But once the Americans, especially Bill Clinton, had persuaded everyone that Arafat had rejected the final Camp David “peace offer”, Arafat became, yet again, a super-terrorist, or “Israel’s Bin Laden”. That was Sharon’s description.

And so the PLO leader, hated then loved then hated all over again, endured months under siege in his mock-capital of Ramallah, died in Paris and was refused burial in Jerusalem. Here was a man, surely, whose body must have been turning even before it was laid in his grave. Gaddafi had a similar track-record. A terrorist when he shipped weapons to the IRA, he was kissed by Tony Blair and became a peacemaker, then reverted to being a bloodthirsty tyrant, after which David Cameron and his chums decided to bomb him. He even wrote a preposterous pseudo-philosophical *Green Book*.

So with all these military folk seeing war and peace, praised as defenders of Israel or “Palestine” or America or Arabism – after holding guns in their hands or olive leaves or copies of the Aurelius *Meditations* or listening to violin sonatas or reading their own turgid prose – it’s probably a good idea to hold off on generals for a while. We’ve had a flurry of them running for cover from Trump in the past two years, all keen on service and duty and supposedly “restraining” the crackpot-in-chief before they throw in their hand. In the real world, the politicians are supposed to restrain the generals. Not the other way round.

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## US RAGE FOR ENDLESS WARS

*Threatens World Peace in 2019*

By **Stephen Lendman**

January 01, 2019 "[Information Clearing House](#)" -

**W**ashington’s hegemonic aims, under Republicans and undemocratic Dems, represent the greatest threat to world peace and humanity’s survival.

At his annual marathon Q & A news conference last week, Vladimir Putin warned about possible nuclear war, a growing threat because of Washington’s reckless geopolitical agenda, including withdrawal from the Iran (JCPOA) nuclear deal and INF Treaty, as well as its reluctance to negotiate extending New Start (April 2010) on reducing and limiting strategic weapons, expiring in February 2021 if not renewed.

Based on bad advice from regime hardliners, Trump falsely called New Start a bad deal favoring Russia. It’s nothing of the kind. It’s even-handed, shifting things to less war and more peace globally.

Last October, John Bolton called for withdrawing from New Start. He convinced Trump to abandon the JCPOA and INF Treaty. He advocates greater US toughness against all sovereign independent countries.



Before becoming Trump’s national security advisor, he urged terror-bombing Iran and North Korea, sanctions not enough, he said, diplomacy “a waste of time.”

He claimed “Iran will not negotiate its (nonexistent) nuclear (weapons) program.” He urged “military action like Israel’s 1981 attack on Saddam Hussein’s Osirak reactor in Iraq...”

He said “(t)he way to end (North Korea’s nuclear program) is to end the North.”

New Start calls for reducing the number of strategic nuclear missile launchers by half. It limits the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 1,500.

It also limits the number of ICBMs, submarine-launched ballistic missile launchers, and nuclear capable heavy warplanes.

It calls for satellite and other monitoring, as well as annual on-site inspections to assure both sides comply with terms agreed on.

Bolton, Pompeo, and other Trump regime hardliners want restraints on its weapons development and deployments eliminated, part of Washington’s permanent war agenda.

They want all nations worldwide colonized and controlled, Russia, China, and Iran transformed into US vassal states their main objective, eliminating the only challenges to Washington’s aim for global hegemony.

Its geopolitical agenda “could lead to the destruction of civilization as a whole and maybe even our planet,” Putin warned, adding:

“We are witnessing the breakup of the arms control system,” heightening the threat of possible nuclear war by accident or design.

Putin stressed that Moscow has no intention of “gaining unilateral advantages. We aren’t seeking advantages. We are trying to preserve the balance and ensure our security.”

The US “need(s) an (invented) external threat to cement NATO unity...As for ruling the world, we know where the headquarters trying to do that (is) located, and the place isn’t Moscow.”

Trump was co-opted straightaway in office by dark forces controlling him – preventing any chance for improved US relations with Russia, things increasingly moving ominously in the opposite direction.

As for US reluctance to extend New Start, Putin called it “very bad for the whole of humankind, because it would take us to a very dangerous area.”

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Last October, Putin stressed that Russia wants world peace. He has no intention of ordering a preemptive attack on another country with nuclear or any other weapons.

It's prepared to retaliate strongly against an aggressor state, saying "(o)ur concept is a response to a preemptive strike. For those who know, there's no need to explain what it is, but for the uninitiated I will say it again."

"(W)e are ready and will use nuclear weapons only when we make sure that someone, a potential aggressor, strikes at Russia, at our territory."

"The aggressor must know that retribution is inevitable, that it will be destroyed. And we, the victims of aggression, will go to heaven as martyrs, while they will simply die, because they will not even have time to repent."

Putin understands that no matter how much Trump may favor normalizing US/Russia relations, his hands are tied by Russophobic regime hardliners and nearly the entire Congress.

If the US deploys short and intermediate-range, nuclear warhead capable missiles near Russia's border, they'll be targeted by the country's military, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov explained, saying:

Putin "meant what he had already explained many times. The thing is that the withdrawal from the INF Treaty may potentially entail the deployment of short and medium-range missiles in Europe..."

"The deployment of those missiles there and the possibility of them being aimed at Russia would lead to a situation in which Russia will have to target its missile arsenal at them to create parity."

Trump regime hardliners seem hellbent on an arms race, Russia, China and Iran their primary targets, including enormous amounts of money spent on upgrading and deploying the Pentagon's nuclear capabilities.

Russia is preparing to effectively counter the enormous threat Washington poses to its security – at a small fraction of the Pentagon's budget.

Its super-weapons exceed America's

best, including its Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle, capable of traveling at over 19,000 miles per hour, able to carry multiple nuclear warheads aimed at separate targets, capable of trajectory changes in flight.

The US has nothing able to intercept it, rendering its missile defense systems useless.

Pursuing world peace is the only sensible course. The alternative risks destruction of all life forms on earth.

Stephen Lendman can be contacted at [lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net). His newest book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III." [www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html](http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html)

### SYRIAN VICTORY

#### *Syrian Army To Regain North Eastern Territory - Political Isolation Ends*

By Moon Of Alabama

December 28, 2018 "Information Clearing House" -

**T**he fallout from U.S. president Trump's decision to retreat from Syria develops as expected.

Trump had announced a rapid draw down of U.S. troops in Syria. Later he spoke of a controlled process that would allow Turkey to take over the U.S. occupied areas in northeast Syria. That plan, probably initiated by National Security Advisor John Bolton, is totally unrealistic. Such a wide ranging occupation, which would be resisted by many powerful forces, is not in Turkey's interest. Nevertheless, the Turkish president Erdogan will use the threat of a Turkish invasion to press for a

dismantling of the Kurdish YPG forces which the U.S. trained and equipped.

This morning the Syrian Arab Army (red) announced that it entered Manbij, west of the Euphrates. It established itself on the contact line between the Turkish supported forces (green) and the U.S. supported Kurdish YPG (yellow). The Syrian flag was raised in Manbij city. The move comes after U.S. troops and their Kurdish proxy forces voluntarily retreated from the area. Manbij was threatened by the Turkish military and its Jihadi proxy forces. To prevent a Turkish onslaught, the local armed groups, who collaborated with the U.S. military, invited the Syrian army to take over. This pattern will repeat elsewhere.

A Kurdish delegation is currently in Russia to negotiate a further take over of the U.S. occupied northeastern provinces of Hasaka and Qamishli by Syrian government forces. The Kurds still hope for some autonomy from the Syrian government that allows them to keep their armed forces. But neither Damascus, nor anyone else, will ever agree to that. There will only be one armed force in Syria, the Syrian Arab Army. It is possible though, that some Kurdish units will be integrated within it.

A Turkish delegation is also in Moscow and tomorrow Erdogan will visit there. Russia spoke out against the U.S. plan to let Turkey take Syria's northeast or even parts of it. Erdogan will not get Russian or Iranian support for any such move. Moreover, he will be pressed to leave the other areas of Syria Turkey (continued on Page 19...)





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currently occupies. U.S. troops are for now expected to continue the occupation near the Euphrates where the fight against remnants of the Islamic State is ongoing. They won't stay long. Trump successfully insisted, against the wish of his military, to completely pull out of Syria. The people who argue against the move are, not coincidentally, the same people who furthered the rise of Islamic State. After Secretary of Defense Mattis resigned over the issue further efforts by the military to delay the retreat will likely be futile.

To cover the withdrawal from Syria the U.S. military established two new bases in Iraq. These are also blocking positions designed to prevent over land traffic between the Levant and Iran. It is unlikely that the U.S. will occupy those bases for long. The Iraqi parliament is already moving to again throw out all U.S. forces from its country.

The military moves come along new political ones which reestablish Syria as a pivotal Arab state.

Yesterday the United Arab Emirates reopened its embassy in Damascus. Bahrain will follow next. Kuwait will reopen its embassy in January. Oman never closed its embassy in Damascus. Of the Gulf countries only Qatar, allied with Turkey, and Saudi Arabia have yet to announce a revival of their relations with Syria. Before the war on Syria started, the UAE and other Gulf countries financed several large investment projects in Syria. These will be revived and help the country's economy back onto its feet. Egypt is expected to follow the move of its Gulf sponsors.

Underlying the UAE move is a strategy of countering Turkey's neo-ottoman ambition. Syria is (again) seen as the bulwark that protects the larger Arabia from Turkish marauders. It signals to Turkey that any attempt to take over more of Syria will be resisted by the Gulf states and possibly even by Egypt's army. Egypt is, together with Russia, mediating between the Kurds and the Syrian government.

The Arab move is also perceived as a counter to Iranian influence in Syria. In this it will fail. Syria was rescued from the all out attack on it by Iran's intervention. It was the Iranian General

Soleimani who convinced Russia to commit troops to Syria. It was Iran that spent billions to prop up the Syrian government while the Gulf Arabs spent even more to take it down. Syria will not forget who are its foes and who are its real friends.

Air traffic connections from Damascus to Arab countries are coming back. Last week a direct connection with Tunisia was revived. In January Gulf-Air, the official airline carrier for Bahrain, will again offer flights from Damascus. The Arab League, which in 2012 kicked out Syria, will invite it back in. Syria may well accept the offer, but only in exchange for a large compensation.

An Israeli air attack on Syrian military installations on December 26 largely failed. The Israeli jets fired some 16 stand-off bombs from Lebanese air space. They cowardly hid behind two commercial airliners which were on their way from the Gulf to Europe. This made it impossible for the Syrian air defense to directly attack the Israeli jets. Most of the Israeli projectiles were destroyed by the Syrian short-range air defenses. A Syrian missile was fired against Israel proper. It was a reminder that new rules of engagement, as announced, have been established. Attacks on Syria will be replied to by direct attacks on Israel. The missile shot ended the Israeli attack.

Israel, like others, will learn that any further attacks on Syria are futile and will only lead to effective retaliations. The war on Syria, while not yet over, is drawing down. Syria's political isolation is ending. Those who insist on continuing it will in the end lose out.

This article was originally published by "[Moon Of Alabama](#)"

*"In the matter of war, ask this question to yourself and to your own fellow countrymen: Have you ever seen any politician in your country without legs, without arms, without eyes after war? No! You can't see such a thing because honourless politicians always stay in the safe ports while they send others to the zone of death!"*  
— Mehmet Murat ildan

## THE WHITE HELMETS

*Organ Theft, Staged Attacks: UN Panel Details White Helmets' Criminal Activities*

Corporate media yawns

by **Eva Bartlett**

December 26th, 2018

**U**tter silence. That is the sound of Western corporate media days after a more than one-hour-long panel on the White Helmets at the United Nations on December 20.

Journalists were present, so the silence isn't due to lack of access. And in any case it was live streamed on the UNTV channel, and remains available on You Tube for keen observers to watch.

More likely, the silence is due to the irrefutable documentation presented on the faux-rescue group's involvement in criminal activities, which include organ theft, working with terrorists — including as snipers — staging fake rescues, thieving from civilians, and other non-rescuer behaviour.

On the panel was one of corporate media's favourite targets to smear, British journalist Vanessa Beeley, who gave a fact-based lecture on her years of research into the founding, funding and nefarious activities of the White Helmets, research which includes numerous visits to White Helmets centers, countless testimonies from Syrian civilians, and even an interview with a White Helmets leader in Dara'a al-Balad, Syria.

Maxim Grigoriev, the director of the Foundation for the Study of Democracy (a member of the UN's Global Counter-Terrorism Research Network) spoke at length, detailing some of the over 100 eyewitnesses his foundation has conducted interviews with.

These include over 40 White Helmets members, 15 former terrorists, 50 people from areas where terrorists and WH operated, with another over 500 interviewed by survey in Aleppo and Daraa.

Among testimonies presented by Grigoriev were numerous accounts of the White Helmets' involvement in organ theft. A head of nursing in

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Aleppo is cited as seeing the body of his neighbour who had been taken by the White Helmets to Turkey for "treatment". "I lifted the sheet and saw a large wound cut from the throat to the stomach... I touched him with my hand and understood there were clearly no organs left."

Another interviewee said: "A person receives a minor injury, is rescued... and then brought back with their stomach cut open and with their internal organs missing."

The interviews with civilians, White Helmets and terrorist members themselves put to rest NATO's and their lapdog media's explanations that in the White Helmets there are a few bad apples but in general these are humanitarian rescuers.

For example, a Syrian civilian, Omar al-Mustafa, is cited as stating:

"Almost all people who worked in nearby White Helmets centers were al-Nusra fighter or were linked to them. I tried to join the White Helmets myself, but I was told that if I was not from al-Nusra, they could not employ me."

Still more testimonies detail staged fake rescues and staged chemical attacks. Omar al-Mustafa was cited as stating:

"I saw them (White Helmets) bring children who were alive, put them on the floor as if they had died in a chemical attack."



White Helmets boss denies terror links, spreads whataboutism in contentious RT interview

The testimonies incriminate not only the White Helmets organization, but also the doctors who, in 2016, Western

corporate media fawned over. According to one interviewee, Mohamed Bashir Biram, his attempt to take his father to a White Helmets affiliated al-Bayan hospital, failed. He said: "Since my father was not a fighter, the doctors in the hospital refused to help him and he died." But in 2016, the Western media was praising the same valiant doctors, in their crescendo of war propaganda around Aleppo.

Many other independent journalists have corroborated aspects of what the panelists — also comprising Syrian journalist Rafiq Lotef, and Russian and Syrian Representatives to the UN, Ambassadors Vassily Nebenzia and Bashar al-Ja'afari — described in detail.

In my own visits to eastern Ghouta towns last April and May, residents likewise spoke of organ theft, staged rescues, the White Helmets working with Jaysh al-Islam, while an Aleppo man likewise described them as thieves who steal from civilians, not rescuers.

**Copy-paste corporate media silence**

Journalists present at the panel were not interested in asking follow-up questions on organ theft, staged rescues, or any of the content presented, unsurprisingly, instead asking questions about other Syrian issues.

A CBS journalist didn't have a single question about what had just been presented, although CBS has previously repeatedly reported on the White Helmets. But their reporting, like most in corporate media, spun the transparent propaganda that is corporate media coverage of the group.

Four days after the UN panel, to my knowledge, not a single corporate media

outlet has covered the event and its critical contents.

This is in spite of the fact that the Western corporate media has been happy to propagandize about the White Helmets for years, and to attack those of us who dare to present testimonies and evidence from on the ground in Syria which contradicts the official narrative.



The 'other' Omran: Aleppo civilians expose MSM lies and child exploitation

Russian Syrian, and Lebanese media did report on the panel, and of course if Western corporate journalists ever do bother to mention it, they will ignore the incriminating evidence presented by panellists and instead accuse Russia of bullying the White Helmets.

Prior to the panel, a number of publications came out with articles echoing one another, and in fact echoing claims already repeatedly uttered about a "Russian disinformation campaign" against the White Helmets.

That's right, that's the best they've got.

'Big bad Russia' tarnishing the pristine image of the White Helmets, a theme rerun ad nauseum over the last year or two, and one which I addressed in early January 2018 when I was under attack for questioning the White Helmets.

In my rebuttal to a mid-December 2017 Guardian smear, I pointed out that it was not Russia which began looking into the White Helmets' affiliations, funding, and role in the propaganda war, but two independent North American researchers.

Canadian journalist Cory Morningstar in September 2014 exposed the role of (continued on Page 21...)



(continued from Page 20...)

the New York based PR firm, Purpose Inc, in marketing campaigns for the White Helmets.

And as I wrote, *“In April 2015, American independent journalist revealed that the White Helmets had been founded by Western powers and managed by a British ex-soldier, and noted the ‘rescuers’ role in calling for Western intervention—a No Fly Zone on Syria.”*

These, and the subsequent numerous investigations by Vanessa Beeley, including on the ground in Syria, taking countless testimonies of Syrian civilians on the matter of the White Helmets, far precede any Russian media reporting on the group.

That Russian media and bodies have since done their own investigations does not equate to a “disinformation campaign”, but rather doing the job corporate media are clearly incapable of, and unwilling to do.



Absurdities of Syrian war propaganda

Why haven't the media written about the panel, or as per the corporate media norm, issued yet more smears against panellists?

They haven't because they are cornered, and while they can always try their standard juvenile character smears and libel, they cannot refute the facts, the countless testimonies which corroborate yet still more testimonies taken by independent journalists over the years.

Or as Ambassador Nebenzia said:

We understand why #WhiteHelmets are being defended by #Western capitals.

They do not hide that they provided substantial financial support to this organization and instrumentalized it to pursue political goals under humanitarian cover. It's logical to protect your asset.

Last week, it came out that German reporter for *Der Spiegel*, Claas Relotius, winner of the German Reporter Award 2018, had falsified a number of his articles. One article on the fakery noted Relotius had, “confessed to have fabricated at least 14 of 55 articles,” including a “story about a Syrian boy who believed he triggered the civil war in the country with his graffiti, an article that won the German Reporter Prize just three weeks ago but which was made up.”

Former German journalist, Udo Ulfkotte, in 2014 reached his tipping point and admitted to having for years lied for Western, anti-Russia interests, admitting to making propaganda against Russia after having been bribed by billionaires, and by the Americans, to

“not to report exactly the truth.”

As 2018, a year of staggering corporate media fake news, draws to a close, so do the last vestiges of credibility of media lauding the White Helmets.

Given the scandalous depth of their lies, it is unlikely corporate journalists will have an Ulfkotte moment and admit to their manifold deceptions.

But it doesn't really matter, because more and more, Western corporate media, and the propaganda construct known as the White Helmets they support, are becoming irrelevant.

First published at [RT](https://www.commondreams.org/further/2018/12/30/after-year-grief-and-death-we-are-here-and-we-will-never-leave).

**Eva Bartlett** is a Canadian freelance journalist and activist who has lived in and written from the Gaza Strip, Syria, and Lebanon. Her writings can be found on her blog, In Gaza.

This article was posted on Wednesday, December 26th, 2018

### WE WILL NEVER LEAVE

Sunday, December 30, 2018

*After A Year of Grief and Death, "We Are Here and We Will Never Leave"*

By **Abby Zimet**, staff writer



Gazan protests. Guernica-like photo by Emanuele-Satolli, one of TIME's best photos of 2018. Front photo by Mohammed Zaanoun/ActiveStills

**W**ith Palestinians facing staggering losses amidst the increasingly flagrant ethnic cleansing campaign that is the Occupation, many view 2018 as the year Israel went finally, openly, blatantly authoritarian and apartheid. The low points and war crimes were many. The Knesset passed a nation-state law that encodes apartheid by affirming the right to national self-determination as “unique to the Jewish people”; it also declares the armed, violent squatters of Jewish settlements, illegal under international law, “a national value” to be encouraged. Another new travesty - moving Israel's embassy to Jerusalem - joined other longtime calamities: brutal nightly raids, random arrests of young and old, demolitions of scores of homes, most notably in the key Bedouin village of Khan al-Ahmar in the West Bank. Most grievously, there was Israel's sickening and often deadly use of force against unarmed Palestinians - largely during Gaza's months-long Great March of Return protests - insisting on their right to exist.

(continued on Page 24...)



**US MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX**

*Our Poor, Defenseless Military Industrial Complex*

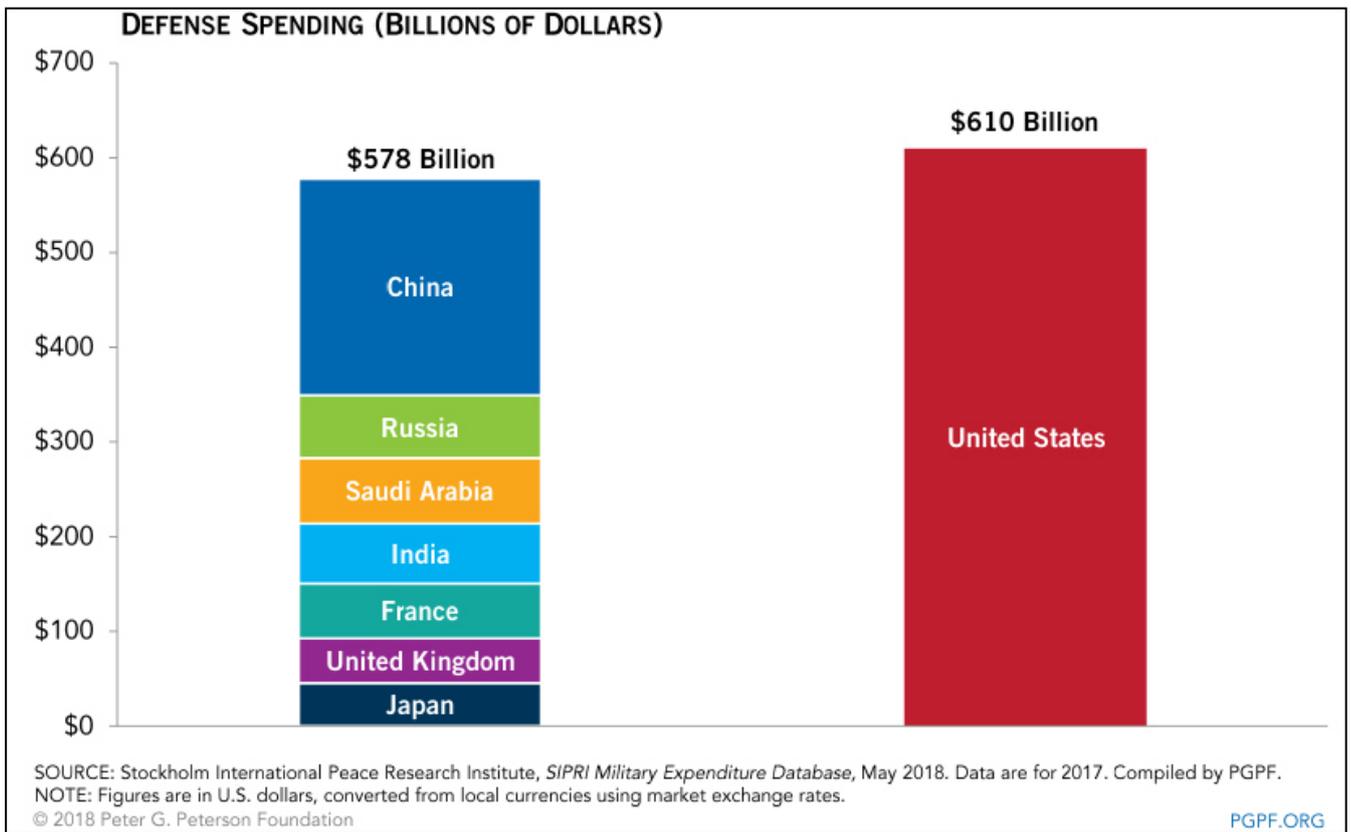
Media decry 'inadequate' US military budget that rivals rest of world combined

By Alan MacLeod

Spending Mr. President” (*Wall Street Journal*, 11/29/18), Senate and House Armed Services committee chairs James Inhofe and Mac Thornberry claimed the military is in “crisis” after “inadequate budgets for nearly a decade,” and that “any cut in the Defense budget would be a senseless step backward.”

of a blue-ribbon panel that called for continuous hikes in military spending:

“If the United States had to fight Russia in a Baltic contingency or China in a war over Taiwan, Americans could face a decisive military defeat,” the report warns. “These two nations possess precision-



December 23, 2018

It is a sign of our times that our media attempt to decipher future government policy by analyzing the president’s tweets, like some bizarre game of telephone. Throughout November, there was speculation of a coming reduction in military spending, and when Donald Trump took to **Twitter** (12/3/18) to describe the \$716 billion budget as “crazy,” media took this as confirmation.

The prospect of a cut to the military elicited a storm of condemnation across the media landscape. The **National Review** (11/17/18) wrote that “cutting the resources available to the Pentagon is a bad idea,” noting that, “for decades, America has short-changed defense” meaning “America’s ability to defend its allies, its partners, and its own vital interests is increasingly in doubt.” In an article headlined “Don’t Cut Military

More centrist outlets concurred. **Forbes Magazine** (11/26/18) began its article with the words, “The security and well-being of the United States are at greater risk than at any time in decades,” recommending a “sensible and consistent increase” to the budget. **Bloomberg** (19/11/18) recommended a consistent increase in military spending of 3 percent above inflation for five to ten years, while **Reuters** (12/4/18) noted the increased “risk” of a lower military budget.

What exactly was this “risk” that media were so worried about? Max Boot, neocon fellow of the Council on Foreign Relations—who apparently still supports the Iraq War and demanded ones in Syria and Libya, while arguing that America should become a world empire—articulated the risk in the **Washington Post** (12/12/18). Describing a reduction in military spending as “suicide,” and claiming the US is in a “full-blown national security crisis,” he cited the work

strike capabilities, integrated air defenses, cruise and ballistic missiles, advanced cyberwarfare and anti-satellite capabilities, significant air and naval forces, and nuclear weapons—a suite of advanced capabilities heretofore possessed only by the United States.”... So we’re in deep trouble. We are losing the military edge that has underpinned our security and prosperity since 1945.

Thus, the crisis is that the US could not be assured of destroying the Russian military in a Baltic war or the Chinese in the South China Sea. It is important to note that these necessary wars of defense would not be happening in Maine or California, but thousands of miles away, on the doorsteps of our geopolitical rivals. Boot presents these wars on the other side of the world as impossible to avoid—“if the US had to (continued on Page 23...)”



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fight”—continuing a tradition of presenting the US as stumbling or being reluctantly dragged into wars against its will, that we at FAIR (6/22/17) have cataloged.

In reality, more than half of all US discretionary spending goes to the military, and its war-related spending is a much larger percentage of its budget than in comparable countries—3–5 times as much as Canada, Germany or Japan. In fact, the US spends almost as much on its military as all other countries in the world put together, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, and has around 800 (official) foreign military bases, placed on every inhabited continent of the world.

Even these figures do not include military pensions and veterans’ healthcare, or nuclear weapons, and therefore the true total is possibly greater than all other countries combined. Military spending is approaching the highest in recorded history of any country, and the increase in military spending Trump approved last year alone would be enough to make public colleges and universities across the US free to all.

Considering the problems of unemployment, poverty, climate change and infrastructure in the US, perhaps tooling up for an intercontinental war against two nuclear-armed superpowers is not the most effective use of trillions of dollars. That reducing a \$716 billion war budget can be presented as a threat to the nation, and that “defense” can refer to wars in Taiwan or the Baltic, illustrates the depth of the media’s imperial mindset, and goes to show President Dwight Eisenhower’s warning about the power of the military industrial complex went unheeded.

The media needn’t have worried, as the military industrial complex usually gets its way. President Trump, “with the help of Senator Inhofe and Chairman Thornberry,” according to the Defense Department (London **Independent**, 12/10/18), agreed to *increase* the military budget after all, to \$750 billion. A lot of people are going to get rich—not least of all Senator Inhofe, who quietly purchased tens of thousands of dollars in Raytheon stock after he met

with Trump (CNN, 12/13/18). Raytheon is the world’s largest producer of guided missiles, and is sure to reap a huge windfall from the spending boom.

This whole affair illustrates the important and worrying links between the media, “defense” contractors and politicians. But at least the terrible risk to the United States has been avoided. Those defenseless Air Force Generals and Defense contractors can finally sleep easy at night.

This article was originally published by "FAIR"

### END OF KOREAN WAR?

#### *Is Korea’s Cold War About to End?*

The media is missing the real story on the peninsula. If that gives Koreans space to lead, maybe that’s not such a bad thing.

By **John Feffer**

November 14, 2018.

**R**emarkable changes are taking place on the Korean peninsula.

The two Koreas are actually starting to demilitarize the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Just in the last couple weeks, they have taken down 22 guard posts, demined the Joint Security Area, and established a no-fly-zone about the peninsula’s dividing line. They’ve pulled back from confrontation along their maritime boundary. North Korea has shut down its coastal artillery units and the two sides have discussed a plan to reduce the large number of artillery positions near the border.

One key indicator of the seriousness of these changes: speculators are driving up the price of land near the border on the South Korean side. Even in a slow-motion reunification scenario, this farmland will become increasingly valuable.

The two Koreas have also revived plans to reunify economically, step by step. At the third inter-Korean summit, the leaders of the two countries agreed to relink, finally, the railroad as well as roads and to restart the shuttered Kaesong industrial complex, which married North Korean labor with South Korean capital and managerial skills. Also on tap is the resumption of tourism projects that have brought large

numbers of South Koreans to select locations in the north.

All of this has been met with deafening silence in the United States. Worse, the big Korea news this week is, once again, about what the perfidious North Koreans are doing to *reinforce* the Cold War, not dismantle it.

But maybe this silence is a good thing.

#### **Much Ado about Missiles**

A new study by Beyond Parallel, a project of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC, has made headlines with its revelations of a network of hidden missile bases in North Korea. The report identifies 13 out of 20 undeclared ballistic missile operating bases and, in the first of a projected series, provides considerable detail about one of these at Sakkanmol.

The report confirms what many skeptics have long maintained: North Korea is not serious about dismantling its nuclear complex. NBC’s article on the report includes this ominous quote from retired Gen. Barry McCaffrey:

*It looks as if it is a political charade, and it’s a dangerous one. In the short term, North Korea is the most consequential threat to U.S. national security we’re facing....They have nuclear weapons, they have delivery systems, they are not going to denuclearize. So I think the outcome of all of this is we’re loosening the economic constraints on these people and we’re kidding ourselves.*

That all sounds convincing. Except that all of this news coverage neglects to point out the obvious.

North Korea never promised to eliminate its missile program.

The negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang have focused on the nuclear complex – just as the negotiations did between Iran and the United States that culminated in the 2015 nuclear deal. Missiles are not nukes. Even if an ultimate deal addresses Pyongyang’s missile program, the two sides are nowhere near signing an agreement. So, North Korea is not violating anything, not going back on its word, not engaging in

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any kind of charade. It's not as if the United States has altered its security posture in the region, outside of cancelling a couple military exercises.

Moreover, this missile complex is nothing new. According to the Beyond Parallel report, the base at Sakkanmol hasn't had any serious upgrade since 2011. True, it's a secret base. But North Korea hasn't provided an inventory of its nuclear or missile complex. Secrecy, as anyone in the CIA or NSA can tell you, is an indispensable part of military strategy. For a country that is so clearly outgunned like North Korea, secrecy is one of its asymmetric advantages. Indeed, no one knows if the country can deliver whatever nuclear weapons it might have.

The base at Sakkanmol, meanwhile, is for short-range missiles. So, the major target would be South Korea. But the South Korean government is not up in arms over the report. "There is nothing new," said a government spokesman, since North Korea "has never signed any agreement, any negotiation that makes shutting down missile bases mandatory."

The Beyond Parallel report contains much useful research. It's the media coverage of the report that's problematic. Journalists are missing the real news of the two Koreas dismantling Cold War structures on the peninsula in favor of information that reinforces the narrative that North Korea is ultimately untrustworthy.

### How to Help Korea

Donald Trump is focused on getting a Nobel Peace Prize for nearly consummating his love affair with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. The foreign policy community in Washington, DC — along with the U.S. media and punditry class — is focused on proving itself right that the current peace efforts are a chimera. Members of Trump's administration, like National Security Adviser John Bolton, have adopted a wait-and-see attitude: They believe that Trump will eventually realize the folly of his overtures, which will create a policy vacuum that they will rush in to fill with their regime-change strategies.

Don't expect much of a difference now that the Democrats control the House. The party has roundly criticized Trump's

summitry and has consistently pushed for more sanctions, not fewer.

In this dismal context, watching the two Koreas inch incrementally closer together is like sitting in the audience of a performance of Romeo and Juliet. You know the ending, and it's far from happy.

So, is there any way of altering the current script to avoid a tragedy?

Here's the good news: It wouldn't take very much to push the U.S.-North Korean negotiations forward. All the Trump administration has to do is offer to reduce some economic sanctions in exchange for a specific ask, for instance an inventory of North Korea's nuclear arsenal and complex.

This might seem like Arms Control 101. Unfortunately, the U.S. position has been all-or-nothing, not give-and-take. That's the subtle shift that has to take place before any further, substantial dismantlement of the Cold War on the Korean peninsula can take place. And given the pushback from the foreign policy community, Congress, and even members of Trump's own administration, this shift will likely have to come from the president himself.

It's a terrible thing to have to depend on Donald Trump for anything. But if the White House can reduce one of the principle barriers to inter-Korean reconciliation, then Koreans themselves can continue to change the facts on the ground — step by step, without international fanfare — in such a way that outsiders will have to follow the Korean lead rather than the other way around.

By the time journalists have figured everything out what's going on, perhaps the two Koreas will have managed to end the Cold War, not just rhetorically but physically — and without getting permission from their patrons.

Instead of a preemptive attack, it will be preemptive peace. In this chaotic and increasingly frightening world, that will surely be something to celebrate.

**John Feffer** is the director of Foreign Policy In Focus and the author of the dystopian novel *Frostlands*.

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The shameless oppressors announced it: An Israeli colonel warned any Gazan effort to "violate Israel's sovereignty" would be "answered with a determined response." And it came. This year, according to the U.N., Israel killed at least 295 Palestinians, 60 of them children; there is no evidence any was armed. Over 29,000 were injured by live ammunition, rubber bullets and tear gas, including 7,000 children - the highest number since 2005. Roughly 1,500 people suffered "devastating, disabling wounds" needing long-term care; they included 111 limbs lost, 20 of them children's, and 19 people paralyzed by spinal cord injuries. Israel also killed three health workers, including 20-year-old Gaza medic Rouzan al-Najjar; another 546 were injured. Under Israel's siege, Gazan hospitals quickly ran out of vital drugs, fuel, electricity. And arrests, torture, abuse went on: Israel arrested 5,700 Palestinians, including 175 women and 980 children as young as three. 2018, writes Juan Cole, "was the year Israel finally went completely rogue...It is now formally an Apartheid state." The beleaguered Palestinians, of course, are still there. Their cry and their message: "Sumud, steadfastness."



Blocking demolition efforts in Khan al-Ahmar. **Photo** by Oren Ziv/972 Magazine



Photo by Mohamad Torokman/Reuters

**FILM REVIEW: THIS ISLAND EARTH****THIS ISLAND EARTH (1955)***Anti-Semitism, Hollywood and HUAC in the 1940's and 1950's*by **Michael P Henry**July 19<sup>th</sup> 2017

**T**he 1956 black and white horror film, "Invasion of the Body Snatchers" is often interpreted as a warning to Americans of the dire dangers of communism. For the average cinemagoer however the message was undoubtedly lost, as the film was devoid of "reds" or "commies". And in any case the author of the original story, Jack Finney, denied any anti-communist intention. There have been dozens of blatantly anti-communist films made in Hollywood of the 1950's whose message is crystal clear.

All these anti-communist films were produced over the period when the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC, created in 1938) was persecuting civil servants, writers, actors, film producers and organisations for harbouring or associating with communists or suspected communists. HUAC evolved inexorably from the 1930 Hamilton Fish committee set up to investigate in detail communist activities in states and cities across the nation.

Communism - in which the community and/or the State owns all property, services and means of production; and promised a classless society - has been an anathema to America since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century. It was embraced by many sections of society in post WWI Europe who were the victims of exploitation or oppression. For this reason Jews in Europe and America felt that communism offered some respite from centuries of anti-Semitism. In addition some Jews would have been aware that several leaders of the Russian Revolution, including Leon Trotsky, had Jewish ancestry. For these and other reasons many Jews were caught up in HUAC's net flung wide over communists and communist sympathizers.

One of HUAC's theatres of investigation was Hollywood, where, as the first chairman of HUAC Martin Dies infamously complained: "there were too many Jews". Scores of witnesses brought before HUAC were charged with contempt of Congress when they denied being

communists and/or took the Fifth Amendment. The famous Hollywood Ten group of writers and directors, six of whom were Jewish, was jailed and blacklisted from working in Hollywood. But many Jewish film bosses including Louis B. Mayer (MGM) and Harry Cohn (Columbia), fearing blacklisting themselves, publicly declared that they would never employ a communist.

In this environment of fear and suspicion, blatant anti-Semitism was finally and severely censured as detracting from the work of exposing the real enemies of America. Anti-Semitism went underground in Hollywood. The 1955 film "**This Island Earth**" is one of the best and most subtle of all anti-Semitic films of the 1950's.

The film tells the story of the inhabitants of the planet Metaluna. Their people look quite human except for an enlarged brain inside their bulbous skulls. The civilization of the highly intelligent Metalunans is being annihilated by the superior atomic weapons of Zagon (on another planet). The Metalunans frantically search the Universe for help in obtaining uranium, with which they hope to fend off the bombardments from the Zagons. They find that this technical assistance is available on Earth and once there, they enlist the expertise of Americans Cal Meacham and Ruth Adams, both highly qualified physicists, who are close to being able to convert cheap and easily available elements into uranium. The Metalunans, Exeter and his superior, "The Monitor", kidnap Meacham and Adams to their planet in the hope of finalizing the uranium technology. But the Americans have been fooled. The Metalunans have other plans for Earth:

*The Monitor: Then you know that shortly we can expect Zagon to commence and sustain an all-out attack. Our ionization layer must be maintained until our relocation is affected.*

*Dr Cal Meacham: Relocation? To where?*

*The Monitor: To your Earth.*

*Exeter: A peaceful relocation. We hope to live in harmony with the citizens of your Earth.*

*Dr Ruth Adams: In harmony!*

*The Monitor: Our knowledge and weapons would make us your superiors, naturally.*

But before the "relocation" can be effected the planet Metaluna and all of its inhabitants are destroyed entirely. Zagon is victorious.

The anti-Semitism hidden in this film represents Zagon as Germany under Adolph Hitler. Indeed in the film the German scientist on Earth is Adolph Engelborg. Metaluna - on the point of being annihilated by Zagon - is clearly meant to be represent a group of Zionists searching for a "national home for the Jewish people." It is shocking that the Metalunans are portrayed as ruthlessly seeking to take over Earth in order to establish once again their old civilization. This is the nature of the anti-Semitism that forms the sub-text of so many Hollywood movies that were made during the HUAC witch hunts before and after WWII. The producers wrote in a 'final solution' to the Metalunan problem, in which they are all ultimately destroyed. After all - in Hollywood of the 1950's - Earth, and in particular, Americans - would never tolerate oppression by an alien species.

Just a minute.....just a minute.....I've just picked up a fault in the script of the movie. Or perhaps this is another anti-Semitic reference. There is something about those Metalunans. They are extraordinarily like humans aren't they? With a few changes in their anatomy which I have mentioned above. Perhaps this civilization is meant to represent descendants of a group of humans that left Earth eons ago and settled on Metalu...Oh, no, that can't be right...Let me think.....this is more like the truth: The Metalunans must be humans that left Earth before it was destroyed by global warming followed by a nuclear winter, sometime in the future, say 2100 AD. They stopped briefly on the Moon where an immense resource base had been constructed, anticipating just such a pair of catastrophes. They continued to refine interstellar travel from there, then set off for a long, long journey to other star systems, arriving on Metaluna. Metaluna was already populated by a primitive race of creatures, which they  
(continued on Page 28...)



**POETRY**

**THE SHADOW ON THE STAIRS**

There's a shadow, on the stairs, in a park in Japan,  
a shadow in a place where there once was a man.  
He left only a shadow, vaporised by the bomb,  
disappeared without trace, all his body gone.

He was my grandfather! He was that man!  
He used to walk through that park I was told by my gran.  
My mum, gran and I lived. We were not there that day,  
but with Gran's dying mother who lived far away.  
I'm Australian now, married to an Aussie man,  
and just visit Japan special times when I can.

You still see the shadow of his walking stick too, on the stair,  
from the A-bomb exploding, dropped into clear air.  
It destroyed the whole city, tens of thousands of lives,  
with bad burns, and sire sickness for those who survived.

Only nuclear bombs can demolish *so* much.  
Catastrophic that bomb, incredible that such  
a terrible thing was let loose on people,  
dealing death to so many, leaving others so feeble.

Yet leaders today still make boldly their threat  
to use nuclear weapons, so why don't they get  
How cruel it is to treat humans like that?  
They suffered like we would, don't want our city bombed flat.

There've been false alarms that nuclear missiles were sent,  
sometimes a near thing with a war to prevent,  
So all nuclear arms are a danger to the world,  
by mishap, or leaders who threats wildly are hurled.

We don't want more shadows like Grandad's on the stairs.  
I still feel his presence when I'm standing there.  
We don't want another horrific day  
of killing and suffering in such a sad way,

with a nuclear cloud drifting where the winds blow,  
and a nuclear winter when nothing will grow.  
It's all too ghastly to even think about,  
unless we get the leaders to throw nuclear arms out.

An important man said "Governments will not agree.  
It will have to be people who help them to see."  
They've banned landmines already, of that we all know.  
They can do it with nuclear, and momentum now grows.

There's a treaty can be signed banning nuclear  
so of nuclear weapons there would then be no fear.  
And if nuclear powers disarm, and *trust*, try to repair,  
there'll be no more nuclear shadows ANYWHERE, anywhere.

© Anita Reed, 2018

**I CAN SEE YOUR SKY EXPLODING**

I can see your sky exploding, falling overhead  
Killing all your hopes and dreams, filling you with dread  
Killing all your sons and daughters, babies in their beds  
I can see your sky exploding, and I can see the dead

I can see your sky exploding, I can feel the fear  
I can feel the pain and anguish, resistance drawing near  
I can feel your endless sorrow, I can see the tears  
I can see your sky exploding, all the way from here

I can see your sky exploding, I can tell you're lost  
I can feel your righteous anger held at a great cost  
As they destroy all your homes and schools, and burn up  
all your mosques  
I can see your sky exploding, I can see your loss

I can see your sky exploding, I know that you can too  
Smoggy clouds of smoke and dust where it used to be so  
blue  
I can see the people running, frightened and confused  
I can see your sky exploding, and I don't know what to do

I can see your sky exploding, I can feel the fright  
I can see the soldiers coming, trampling your rights  
I can hear the dogs of war, barking as they bite  
I can see your sky exploding, lighting up so bright

I can see your sky exploding, but no one else can see  
Everyone surrounding me is blinded by TV  
I can feel your raw emotion, for I have empathy  
I can see your sky exploding, though it isn't me

**Brian David Hazel Apr 2016**

This poem is dedicated to every war-torn country that has  
been ravaged by imperialism

**War Never Changes**

The sky is falling  
The people are hiding  
The jackboots are on their way  
A mother is calling  
A child is crying  
Uncertain they'll live through the day  
The tanks, they are treading  
Across sovereign borders  
Some soldiers are dreading  
Their inhumane orders  
Though they have an advantage  
This war can't be won  
And that "collateral damage"  
Is somebody's son  
The victims of war  
Are the poor and the sick  
Slaughtered like cattle  
For the wealthy and rich

**Brian David Hazel Jan 2016**



### STRATCOM MANIACS

Published on Tuesday, January 01, 2019

By **Common Dreams**

**'What Kind of Maniacs Are Running This Country?': Pentagon Rings in New Year With Joke About Dropping Massive Bombs on People**

"Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you [Stratcom], the stoic guardians of several thousand nuclear missiles who definitely don't think raining death and destruction from above is some kind of joke."

By **Jon Queally**, staff writer

**W**hile people across the world celebrated the dawning of the New Year overnight, the U.S. military thought it would be funny to celebrate and make light of one of the things they do best: dropping massive bombs on people and places.

"Oops, bad call,' say the bros responsible for civilization-ending nuclear weaponry."

—Derek Johnson, Global Zero

In a since-deleted, U.S. Strategic Command (StratCom), which controls the nation's strategic missile systems and coordinates offensive nuclear capabilities worldwide, joked that while people in New York City enjoyed the dropping of "the big ball" during the countdown to midnight, "we are ready to drop something much, much bigger."

Beneath the message was a video (see below), as the *New York Times* describes it, of "a B-2 stealth bomber soaring across the sky before releasing two GPS-guided bombs that exploded into a giant ball of fire after hitting the ground below."

While Stratcom deleted the tweet after about three hours—issuing an apology that the message "was in poor taste & does not reflect our values"—plenty of people had already taken screenshots of the message:

Among the reactions of outrage on social media, Walter Schaub, former head of the Office of Government Ethics, simply asked: "What kind of maniacs are running this country?"

He was far from alone.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Derek Johnson, executive director of the anti-nuclear weapons group Global Zero, "I



A B-2 Spirit stealth bomber as shown in STRATCOM's New Year video. (Photo: Twitter / US Strategic Command)

present to you @US\_Stratcom, the stoic guardians of several thousand nuclear missiles who definitely don't think raining death and destruction from above is some kind of joke." Johnson then added:

Here's a tweet that contains a full version of the video Stratcom deleted:

But as writer Dani Bostick advised the Pentagon in her reaction to the post: "Maybe a little more 'Happy New Year!' and a little less 'Watch... our powerful bombs of mass destruction.'"

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*"As I looked at the stains on the coral, I recalled some of the eloquent phrases of politicians and newsmen about how "gallant" it is for a man to "shed his blood for his country," and "to give his life's blood as a sacrifice," and so on. The words seemed ridiculous. Only the flies benefited."*



**Eugene B. Sledge**



United States Strategic Command deleted this tweet after about three hours.



(continued from Page 15...)

time there was a conflict in Serbia, Kosovo and Metohija, it turned into a war on a bigger scale and none of us here want this.”

**Binoy Kampmark** was a Commonwealth Scholar at Selwyn College, Cambridge. He lectures at RMIT University, Melbourne and can be reached at: [bkampmark@gmail.com](mailto:bkampmark@gmail.com).

This article was posted on Sunday, December 16th, 2018

(continued from Page 25...)

proceeded to systematically destroy. Over the following millennia the new Metalunans developed technology to travel back in time. They knew that only three planets existed in the Milky Way which had developed life – Metaluna, Zagon and Earth. And their own planet was being destroyed by Zagon. Thus the Metalunans must be returning (back in time) to the intact Earth of their ancient ancestors. In their minds perhaps that justifies their ambition to reclaim Earth as their own.

Just a thought.

**Claimer:** “This Island Earth” is one of my favourite movies. Don’t ask me why.

**Disclaimer:** This is a work of fiction and non-fiction. Certain events, incidents and interpretations are either the products of the author’s imagination or used in a fictitious manner.

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**\*\* This newsletter is copied with the assistance of the office of Senator Claire Moore \*\***

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**Editorial Thank you.** Thank you also to all those Just Peace members who sent in articles, and other contributions and suggestions. We try to use as much of this material as we can. But we reserve the right to edit articles where necessary to fit the layout of the newsletter. Such editing will be done in a way that, hopefully, doesn’t change the essence of the articles. The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the individual members of Just Peace.

First they came for the Communists  
but I was not a Communist -  
so I said nothing.  
Then they came for the Social Democrats  
but I was not a Social Democrat -  
so I did nothing.  
Then they came for the trade unionists  
but I was not a trade unionist.  
And then they came for the Jews  
but I was not a Jew -  
so I did little.  
Then when they came for me  
there was no one left  
who could speak out for me.  
  
Pastor Martin Neimoller, 1937