



# The Peace Issue . . .

The Newsletter of Just Peace Queensland Inc

Issue No. 54

August 2017

**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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No war is inevitable until it breaks out.  
~A. J. P. Taylor

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# Talisman Sabre confuses strategic thinking

by Mack Williams

25 July 2017

*The recent joint US-Australian Talisman Sabre joint military exercise has added further confusion to the challenge of determining sensible Australian strategic thinking. US talk of a joint expeditionary force to combat IS terrorism in SE Asia camouflages an attempt by senior US military to draw Australia into a much closer US embrace.*

**T**he recent large scale joint US-Australian military exercise, initially around Darwin and later in and off the North Queensland coast, has been heralded by the military hierarchy in both countries. According to Admiral Harris (PACOM) saw it as providing "endless opportunities...to innovatively prepare for regional and global security challenges". Ironically the level of our cooperation and interoperability failed to agree on the spelling of the exercise name – Talisman Saber or Sabre ! Not to mention the fun Mad Men would have had marketing its product – "Up-gunned Expeditionary Strike Group"!

The undoubtedly valuable experience of realistic gaming (including in cyber warfare) enjoyed by all participants camouflaged the fundamental question of where and against whom realistically such a military operation could be contemplated by Australia? Not to mention the huge cost of the exercise. A quick glance around the map of our neighborhood to the north, west and east fails to answer this question. Which in turn illustrates just how confused much of our strategic thinking has become.

The relentless intervention into the domestic Australian foreign policy debate by a chain of top US military officers – starting with Admiral Harry Harris (several times) through to Marine Lt. General David Berger – has stirred the pot with their pep talks – seemingly without any corrective response from either main political party. A common thread has been pressure for Australia to join the US in Freedom-of-Navigation operations around Chinese installations in the South China Sea – which has been echoed repeatedly in some of the "strategic thinking in Canberra". Berger, the latest, went a step further by urging Australia to commit forces to a joint expeditionary force with the US Marines to combat "IS militants" in SE Asia ! He asserted that Australia's neighbours would need assistance to 'successfully stop the threat posed by IS-inspired militants'

To take first the "war" on terrorism in SE Asia. The US still fails to understand that US military intervention has never proved to be successful in counterinsurgency operations at least since the failed Vietnam war – whether it be in Afghanistan, Iraq or Syria or in the SE Asian region. All leaders in ASEAN are painfully aware of that fact. The US historical experience in Mindanao and more recently certainly should have been enough of a lesson for the US about the inability of foreign forces prevailing in these situations. Let us also not forget that the communist insurgency in Malaysia only finally collapsed when China withdrew its support for the insurgency. Berger's call for a joint expeditionary force to be ready to intervene against IS in SE Asia

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is so out of touch. The last any of ASEAN countries (as the Philippines even continues to show) would want would be US and Australian military boots on the ground. And this force would clearly be under US command and control with some token Australians in the line.

As for the South China Sea (SCS), one year on from The Hague ruling in the case brought by the Philippines it is timely to analyze calmly its actual meaning and how China and claimant states have reacted to it. Singapore academic Lynn Kuok has just published in *Foreign Affairs* an excellent concise article (“Progress in the South China Sea”) which bears close reading by all interested parties. Kuok explains that ASEAN claimants and Indonesia have always emphasized that their concern has been resources rights rather than freedom of navigation – unlike the US (and Australia?) for which the latter has been the main concern and key to its wider containment of China goal. She points out that the tribunal was never meant to resolve the navigation issue or the lawfulness of China’s island building. The real significance of the tribunal’s decision was to clarify resource rights.

And there have been a few (albeit limited) developments on both fishing and oil and gas exploration to which China, so far, has kept its actions if not its words broadly within the letter of the ruling. So which of “the war on terrorism”, Chinese activities in the South China Sea, or North Korea should be the priority for our planning (and joint exercising) – especially given the modest military resources at our disposal? To a significant degree the three issues are not complementary and indeed could be contradictory. For example, China with its own serious domestic counter-terrorism issues could prove to be a valuable partner in the “war on IS” in SE Asia. Likewise China has already proved to be a (if not “the”) key player in resolving the North Korean problem.

And where does Talisman Sabre fit into the above? The likelihood of any need for such a complex offensive operation of that scale anywhere in in

SE Asia or the South Pacific is so slim as to be realistically non-existent. The expeditionary force’s name may be enough of a deterrent! One cannot imagine seriously of a situation in which any Indonesian Government would ever contemplate inviting such a joint US-Australian force to land on its shores or even welcome an uninvited incursion. And much the same could be said of the rest of ASEAN. All the more because Admiral Harry’s exhortation to “find new ways to enable our (sic) joint and multinational combined forces to be faster, more precise, more cost effective and – most importantly – more lethal”!

Nor would this juggernaut be necessary or appropriate should military action against China in the South China Sea ever be contemplated. The most constructive assistance to our SE Asian neighbours would be for Australia to seek ways to assist them in the protection of their resources rights in the SCS rather than gunboat diplomacy of freedom-of-navigation kind. The relevance to any joint military action against the Chinese mainland does not merit thought. Military action against North Korea certainly cannot be ruled out completely even though most observers continue to see it as unimaginable, if only because it needs to remain on the table for the crucial bluff poker which now appears to be the current game in play. But even if the military option were ever to be activated the military scene would be just so different in scale, weaponry and process.

Perhaps the most concerning aspect is the way this exercise has muddied the strategic waters for Australia by allowing the stretch of the “war on terrorism” to Southeast Asia to allow US military planners to point us down the slippery track into joint or combined military operations in a region where we have so much of our own national interests at stake and which may not always be consistent with those of the US. Recent inferences in some of the comments by Foreign Minister Bishop that any concerns for Australia about the foreign policy directions of President Trump are being mitigated by her texts with Secretary of State Tillerson are far from reassuring. Though he has travelled widely, Tillerson has yet to demonstrate that he has a clear vision for US foreign policy and a strong policy team behind him.

Of course, we have to work with what we have got. But as the continuing dramas inside the White House persist in confirming, there really is only one person that counts in the present US administration – a determinedly unpredictable President. Australia surely must not allow our forces and strategic policy directions in this vital area be held hostage to that. And it would be helpful if Australian policy makers on both sides were not to stand idly by but to disabuse the US military brass of a likely Australian interest in much of the above.

**Mack Williams** is a former Australian Ambassador to the Philippines and Republic of Korea. He is a graduate of the Royal College of Defence Studies College in London.

#### GRANDMOTHERS ARRESTED

*Grandmothers arrested over Talisman Sabre protest in Central Queensland*

**Kim Stephens**

**Published:** July 14 2015 - 1:29PM

Three grandmothers have been arrested by military police in central Queensland, after allegedly staging a peaceful protest at a military training camp.

The trio, dubbed “Quaker grannies” by the protest group Peace Convergence, allegedly set up a tea table at the Australian Defence Force’s Shoalwater Bay training area on Monday afternoon, as part of a protest against the biennial stationing of the US military’s Talisman Sabre exercise at the camp.

In a statement, Queensland Police Service said they were advised by ADF military police that a number of women had blockaded an entrance to the training area near Byfield about 12.30pm Monday.

Three women, aged 71, 69 and 65, were arrested by military police and were handed over to local police, allegedly after repeatedly refusing requests to leave.

The trio has each been charged with Commonwealth trespassing offences.

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**EDITORIAL: ELECTIONS**

**T**he horrors of the First World War began when Britain and Germany went to war on 4 August 1914, and both Prime Minister Joseph Cook and Opposition Leader Andrew Fisher, who were in the midst of an election campaign, pledged full support for Britain.

A month later, on September 11<sup>th</sup>, Australian troops first saw combat when they landed in Rabaul to take possession of German New Guinea. All of us have read of the immense enthusiasm amongst Australians for that first flush of imperial service. Yet less well known is that only a month later, on 21<sup>st</sup> October of that year, Victorian socialists, and leaders of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council and of five Victorian trade unions, met to establish the Australian Peace Alliance.

The organisations signing up were Trades Hall Council, Federated Clerks' Union, Federated Storemen and Packers' Union. Free Religious Fellowship, Peace Society, Victorian Socialist Party, Society of Friends, Australian Timber Workers' Union, Melbourne Typographical Society, Congregational Union of Victoria, Women's Political Association, Australian Freedom League, and the Australian Builders' Labourers' Federation.

Their aims were

- (1) To bind together all the forces in Australia that are sympathetic to the establishment and maintenance of peace by means of international arbitration and such other methods as may be favoured.
- (2) To create a central council in each State of all organisations which are in sympathy with the objects of the alliance.
- (3) To co-operate wherever possible with international peace and kindred organisations in other parts of the world.
- (4) To advocate the following platform:
  - (a) The establishment of an effective and permanent international arbitration court elected on a democratic basis, including women delegates;
  - (b) The setting up of adequate machinery for ensuring democratic control of foreign policy;

- (c) The general reduction of armaments and the nationalisation of their manufacture;
- (d) The organisation of the trades unions and workers' associations, with a definite view of ending war;
- (e) The termination of the present war at the earliest possible moment, and the following principles to govern the terms of peace

- (1) No province or territory in any part of the world shall be transferred from one Government to another without the consent by plebiscite of the population of each province.
- (2) No treaty, arrangement, or under taking shall be entered upon in the name of Great Britain without the sanction of Parliament. Adequate machinery for ensuring democratic control of foreign policy shall be created.
- (3) The foreign policy of Great Britain shall not be aimed at creating alliances for the purpose of maintaining the "balance of power," but shall be directed to the establishment of a concert of Europe and the setting up of an international council, whose deliberations and decisions shall be public.
- (4) Great Britain shall propose, as part of the peace settlement, a plan for the drastic reduction of armaments by the consent of all the belligerent powers, and to facilitate that policy shall attempt to secure the general nationalisation of the manufacture of armaments, and the prohibition of the export of armaments by one country to another
- (5) The universal abolition of conscription or compulsory military training

Along with the Women's Peace Army, also established in 1914, the Australian Peace Alliance was the vehicle for organising the two great victories of peoples movements in that era – the two defeats of Prime Minister Hughes conscription referendums in 1916 and 1917. Whilst the Peace Alliance was disbanded after 1917, the Women's Peace Army became the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom – still organising actively today 100 years later.

Anniversaries are useful for reminding us of the struggles, the victories and the defeats of previous eras. But they are also useful for giving us the inspiration to continue working for a better world. Over the past few years Just Peace members have been centrally involved in establishing a new national alliance around peace – the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network. Already over 40 organisations, community groups, peace groups, church groups and trade unions, have affiliated.

**Whilst the forces against us appear at times overwhelming, it is clear that the majority of everyday people respond positively to the ideas we raise in community discussions and amongst their own members.**

**As the wonderful Indian novelist and political activist Arundhati Roy has said, "Remember this: We be many and they be few. They need us more than we need them."**

**Ross Gwyther**

*(continued from Page 2...)*

They are scheduled to appear in the Rockhampton Magistrates Court on Tuesday morning.

According to Peace Convergence, the group is part of the biennial protest against the Talisman Sabre that aims to highlight the cost of the Australian-US military alliance.

"I am a concerned Australian citizen who doesn't want my taxes to fund war in which so many innocent people are killed with so little accountability," group spokesman Sam Quinlan said.

The protesters' aim is to disrupt military training exercises and to engage with soldiers and the military to send a message of peace.

In a separate incident, ADF military police also arrested two people inside a training area near Samuel Hill on Monday.

A 41-year-old man and a 50-year-old woman were charged with trespassing and are also scheduled to appear in Rockhampton Magistrates Court on Tuesday morning.

*From Brisbane Times*

**JUST PEACE ACTIVITIES**

Over the past 4 months the Just Peace has worked with the United Nations of Australia Association Qld, WILPF, GAI, UQ and the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network on the following activities.

**June 17<sup>th</sup>**

WILPF, Just Peace, FOE and Believing Women for a Culture of Peace (BWCP) were the principal organisations who organised the Brisbane Ban the Bomb Rally. This was an internationally coordinated action to celebrate the UN treaty declaring nuclear weapons to be illegal. Senator Scott Ludlam, Senator Larissa Waters, Dr Danielle Villiunas were amongst the speakers.

**July 13<sup>th</sup>**

UNAA Ambassador for nuclear disarmament Professor Ramesh Thakur spoke at the public forum at Griffith University Southbank campus. The event was jointly organised by UNAAQ, Just Peace, Griffith Asia Institute and UQ. Ramesh argued that the non proliferation treaty was essentially defunct, arguing the importance of the treaty agreed to by 130 nations in June this year.

**Independent and Peaceful Australia Network**

Organising for the 2017 national conference has been underway for the past 6 months with the conference happening in Melbourne on the weekend of the 8-10<sup>th</sup> IPAN. Over the past 5 years IPAN has achieved significant gains in bringing over 50 organisations together making for a more effective movement for peace.

**Upcoming events**

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September - Annual Brisbane Peace Lecture – Henry Reynolds on “Australia’s Unnecessary Wars” in St Johns Cathedral

October 7<sup>th</sup> - national day of action to oppose Australian engagement in the Afghanistan war. Details to be confirmed.

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> November - Just Peace AGM - Fund-raising event with guest speakers and Chinese luncheon.

**Annette Brownlie**

**TRIBUTE TO WILLY BACH**

**Willy Bach** joined *Just Peace* shortly after the attack on the world trade towers in New York in 2001. A number of us in Brisbane had worked together during the campaign for nuclear disarmament in the early 80’s and saw the need to come together again to provide a community voice for peace. We called our first campaign Our Grief is not a cry for war.

Willy was amongst the first to answer the call and an original member of *Just Peace* Qld and served on the management committee until 2016.

We got to know Willy intermittently from 2002 onwards as he and partner Rowan pursued their academic and political interests around the world. We followed the communications from Uganda to Laos and to Costa Rica.

Willy had a commitment to a safe, peaceful and sustainable future for all. He saw the importance of community engagement in politics being a member to the Australian Greens as well as the peace movement.

He was acutely aware of the impact of war on serving members of the armed forces and was a member of Veterans for Peace. He played a significant role in bringing to Australia Vince Emanuele an American veteran of the Iraq war. Vince is an amazing young man who has turned his PTSD into an advanced knowledge of the politics of war and Willy saw the value in supporting opportunities for Vince’s story to be heard.

Photographs and essays on both Willy and Vince were featured in an exhibition at the State Library of Queensland titled Peace and Quiet.

During the last years of his life Willy was invited to join influential think tanks such as Australians for War Powers Reform and Australia in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. He also completed his thesis on The Secret War in Laos.

In December last year Willy spoke at a public meeting on his thesis. We saw photos of a fit young British soldier (Willy) in the jungles of Thailand clearing land for the US to secretly use as they conducted the war against the people of Vietnam.

Willy Bach was a supremely unique and inspiring human being. All who knew him and all of us in *Just Peace* have experienced and great loss of a true friend.

**Annette Brownlie**

**EULOGY FOR FRANCES KENDALL**

*Given at her funeral on July 7<sup>th</sup> 2017*

by **Mike Henry**, *Just Peace*:

I speak of Frances on behalf of the human rights organisation known as *Just Peace* Queensland, to which she belonged for perhaps ten years.

The members of *Just Peace* who knew her – and not all of us did – held her in the highest esteem and had inspiring conversations with her.

Inside the *Just Peace* committee, Frances took charge of writing minutes, carrying out assigned tasks, carrying out tasks that were not assigned and fearless in communicating with leaders of all kinds throughout Australia and indeed, the world. No politician was safe from her electronic pen which she wielded with enormous persuasion and force. Alas several Prime ministers and foreign ministers and defence ministers were generally at a loss to provide satisfactory answers to her incisive questions.

**Emails:**

Formal meetings of *Just Peace* are not always the best times to exchange personal pleasantries. With Frances I found that email was a good time and place for those.

But Frances sometimes had computer problems:

Hi, Mike, sez Fran. I've been trying to send those email addresses to you for days but my computer kept breaking down. The ones I have are badly typed in that they are typed on a line which makes it impossible to tell whether the dots and dashes are above lines or under them or even whether they are there at all

We would let her know of unplanned events:

Okay. See you there, mate, sez Fran typically in reply. But not always could she make it:

This sounds lovely, Michael, sez Fran. Unfortunately, I've buggered my leg and I don't think I'll be able to get there. Have a wonderful time.

*(continued on Page 5...)*



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To Fran I once wrote: Please find attached a bare bones but extensive calendar of Just Peace activities for 2015 with some specific dates unconfirmed.

Cheers, Mike. "AMAZING. WELL DONE, PEOPLE" sez FRAN in reply.

Hi Fran, sez I,

Amazing? What's so amazing? It's not amazing. How come you are amazed? I'm not amazed. No one else is amazed. Is there something I missed?

Love, Mike.

MAD BUGGER!!!!!! sez Fran in reply to me. Upper Case with six exclamation points attached.

Finally Frances wrote asking to be taken off the membership list:

Gosh, Michael sez Fran. I'm not very well today but that's not my excuse. I think if it's time, you should take me off your membership list. I won't be coming to meetings any more. Turning 80 does make a difference. I hope everything goes well with Just Peace.

Hi Frances, sez I,

With great reluctance I shall pass your wishes on to the committee. I have missed you at our meetings for many, many months. You always provided the highest standard of professionalism and a source of creative ideas that contributed to the vitality that *Just Peace* enjoys today. I also enjoyed the many barbed insults we traded with each other, a tradition I have tried to maintain without you, but with no success.

Turning 80 what?

Frances was her own person. A seeker and finder of truth.

Fran often said: *Dream always of a peaceful, warless, disarmed world.*



## CHINA'S "SPY SHIP"

*China's "Spy Ship" off the Queensland Coast: A Comment*

by James O'Neill\*

In July of this year the Australian Navy was engaged in the biennial naval exercise code named Operation Talisman Sabre. This exercise is conducted jointly with units of the US Navy and Marines and occasionally joined by other nations. This year, military forces from New Zealand, Canada and Japan as well as the US were part of the exercise. It is the largest exercise of its type that Australia participates in.

This year the exercises took place off the North Queensland coast in the Coral Sea. In previous years the exercises have included practising the blockading of the Malacca Straits, a narrow waterway through which more than 70 percent of China's water borne trade passes and is particularly vital for oil and gas imports. To therefore describe the exercises as "no threat to China" as Euan Graham of the Lowy Institute did, ([www.lowyinstitute.org](http://www.lowyinstitute.org) 24 July 2017) is plainly nonsense.

The difference with this year's Operation Talisman Sabre exercise is that it was monitored by an Auxiliary General Intelligence (AGI) Type-815 ship of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). The reporting of this event in the local media was instructive.

The ABC ([www.abc.net.au](http://www.abc.net.au) 22 July 2017) quoted unnamed Australian defence officials as saying that the ship's presence was "unfriendly" and "provocative". A further comment from Dr Graham quoted by the ABC described the deployment of the Chinese ship as "an alarming development".

A report of the Australian media reaction in China's government outlet Global Times ([www.globaltimes.cn](http://www.globaltimes.cn) 24 July 2017) quoted further unattributed reports in the Australian media as saying the ship's presence was "aggressive" and "worrying".

A few basic facts have been obscured or omitted in what was

fundamentally a media beat up of the story. The first is that the Chinese ship was at all times operating in international waters. It was perfectly entitled under international maritime law to be operating in those waters.

Secondly, the basic principle at issue is what is commonly referred to as 'freedom of navigation', a right that both the US and Australia loudly proclaim is their entitlement in the disputed waters of the South China Sea.

The question might reasonably be posed, which is the more provocative, unfriendly or a worry to the nearest major power: a Chinese ship operating in international waters and monitoring a military exercise, the rationale for at least part of which is designed to prepare for possible hostile action against China; or US warships and military aircraft sailing and flying within the 12 nautical mile limit of Nansha and Xisha Islands? It is a question that the Australian mainstream media prefer not to ask.

Thirdly, the perceived problem with the PLAN ship's presence was not only that its appearance was "provocative" and "aggressive" but also that it was carrying out electronic surveillance of the Talisman Sabre exercises. In short, the Haiwingxing was a "spy ship".

The ADF's official reaction was more measured. In a statement the ADF said "the vessel's presence had not detracted from the exercises's objectives". Further, the statement went on, "Australia respects the rights of all states to exercise freedom of navigation in international waters in accordance with international law".

What none of the media reports noted is that the Haiwingxing was doing no more than the US is doing in waters bordering every nation on earth including, if one wishes to use the word 'provocative' as applied to the Chinese vessel, in the coastal waters of Russia and China. As recently as within the past month a massive American armada has been conducting military exercises off the Korean coast which rather puts word's like unfriendly, provocative and alarming in a proper context.

As far as we know, no Australian Navy ships are engaged in electronic surveillance of other nations, but that is certainly not true of Pine Gap which is a

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spy facility par excellence, and only one of several such electronic monitoring facilities on the Australian mainland. In the event of an actual war, Pine Gap and others would be prime nuclear targets precisely because of their role in electronic monitoring and providing guidance for sundry lethal weapons.

Yet no Australian media describes this electronic spying as “aggressive” or “provocative” although they are clearly activities aimed at enhancing a warfare capability against countries with whom we currently have peaceful relations, and in the case of China, are also our largest trading partner by a considerable margin.

The manufactured concern over the Chinese ship’s presence and activity must therefore be seen as part of a wider campaign to denigrate China, as witnessed by the coverage of the South China Sea dispute, the severely deficient coverage of the Belt and Road Initiative, and the complete failure to recognise how the geopolitical centre of gravity has shifted. The mainstream media’s myopia in this regard will only further isolate Australia from playing a meaningful role in the emerging multipolar world.

## WAR POWERS REFORM BULLETIN # 52

### *Our mission creeps into Southeast Asia*

**I**n late May 2017, former head of the ADF Admiral Chris Barrie warned that having been involved in proxy wars in the Middle East for two decades, Australia was ‘sleepwalking’ towards a major war. So it seemed in Syria. After a series of American bombing raids that were said to be ‘mistakes’ – one of which, in September 2016, involving the RAAF, killed more than 60 Syrian soldiers – the US on 19 June 2017 shot down a Syrian fighter plane that had reportedly attacked the Syrian Democratic Forces. For this strike, in the ‘deconfliction zone’ bordering Syria, Jordan, and Iraq, the US did not even claim to have made a mistake. The ADF halted Australian air operations on 20 June when Russia announced it would scramble its fighter planes, track US-led coalition aircraft and drones in the area, and shut down the hotline between the two sides. There has been no subsequent announcement as to how long

Australia’s ‘temporary’ suspension of RAAF flights over Syria will last.

Russia has called for an emergency session of the UN Security Council. If this occurs, the illegality of Australia’s bombing of Syria could be exposed once again. Not only does Syria pose no threat to Australia, we are effectively attacking the government of a sovereign state which has shown itself to be increasingly in control of its territory, and which has not invited us to bomb its forces. In doing so, our leaders are evidently committing the war crime of aggression.

Australia has also been sleepwalking in Indonesia and the Philippines. Earlier this year Saudi Arabia announced generous funding for Wahhabi proselytisers in nominally secular Indonesia and in the southern Philippines, reviving concerns about fundamentalists and Islamist activism in their outer provinces. In May, Islamic State (IS) announced the establishment of the ‘Islamic state Eastern Region’ and just before Ramadan some of its members suicide-bombed a Jakarta bus station and others besieged Marawi City. In June when the four currently active Muslim rebel groups in the Philippines declared allegiance to IS, Australia dispatched two RAAF Orion aircraft to Mindanao to join US Orions in fighting the ‘terrorists’ and supporting President Rodrigo Duterte. In the past, Duterte had shunned American re-occupation of Philippine bases and was prepared to negotiate with China about disputed islands in the South China Sea. The Muslim population in Mindanao (the ‘Moros’) traditionally engage in piracy, smuggling and kidnapping. The latest Moro groups to become prominent are Abu Sayaaf and the Maute, allied under Isnilon Hapilon who is wanted by the FBI for terrorism. Now they have been joined by brothers from Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Chechnya and Yemen. The predominantly Christian government in Manila has for decades responded to the Moros with oppression. Last December, Duterte arrogantly rejected a ceasefire offered by the Maute.

Australia had rural development programs and Catholic priests in Mindanao for several years, and occasional threats, attacks and

abductions occurred nearby, but we never called in the ADF. The rationale was that offering local people better conditions would deter them from joining the rebels. But in the Southern Philippines, piracy, gun-running, and dope dealing always paid better than tenant farming for rich absentee landlords. Duterte’s ‘extra-judicial killings’ of thousands of those engaged in the drug trade have fomented Muslim outrage. As Peter Hartcher observed, the events in Marawi show that ‘any part of the planet that is ungoverned, or even just poorly governed, is ripe for jihadi land grab.’

Obvious similarities exist with the Cold War period, when Communists were the enemy and Western countries tried to suppress nationalist guerrilla movements, often by backing local dictators. Now we are hearing that a revived domino effect of Islamist militancy in Southeast Asia could reach Australia. Malaysia and Indonesia have sent naval support to the Philippines, and Australia is reported to be moving to coordinate counter-terrorism with regional governments. No-one inquires why Trump doesn’t pressure his Saudi Arabian friends to stop funding Salafists in Indonesia and the Philippines, or why Duterte’s extra-judicial murders are forgivable when Assad’s killings of Syrian citizens are not. As for Australia, if we never sent Orions during decades of Moro uprisings, why are we doing so now?

Australians should not have to resort to speculation about what our troops are doing either in Syria or in the Philippines. Deployment of the ADF into a new operation is an act of war, which should be debated and voted on by the Parliament. The discussion should include the setting of clear objectives and strategies. As long as such open debates are absent, Australia will continue to sleepwalk into disastrous wars, dreaming that the US will protect us.

**Alison Broinowski**  
Vice-President, AWPR



**PAUL KEATING: NORTH KOREA**

*Paul Keating: North Korea could collapse if it gives up nuclear weapons*

**James Massola, Fergus Hunter**

**Published:** August 12 2017 - 10:03AM

**P**aul Keating has warned that North Korea will never abandon its nuclear weapon program and that this new reality will have to be addressed in the same way as the west sought to contain the former Soviet Union.

The former prime minister, one of Australia's most-respected foreign policy thinkers and a strong advocate for a more independent foreign policy, has disagreed strongly with the language and approach being taken by the US President Donald Trump towards the rogue state.

On Friday, US President Donald Trump reiterated his bellicose warning to North Korea, suggesting that his threat to unleash "fire and fury" may not have gone far enough.

"Maybe it wasn't tough enough," Trump said during a lengthy exchange with reporters at his golf club in Bedminster, New Jersey.

Mr Keating said his criticism could be extended to Australia's pledge to enter any potential conflict between the US and North Korea. He also disagreed with former prime ministers Kevin Rudd and Tony Abbott that Australia should pursue a missile defence system against North Korea's intercontinental ballistic missiles.

His comments about the growing tensions on the Korean peninsula come on the same day that Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull declared Australia would assist America if it was attacked by North Korea.

"If there is an attack on the United States by North Korea, then the ANZUS treaty will be invoked and Australia will come to the aid of the United States," Mr Turnbull said. This would be only the second time the ANZUS treaty had been invoked.

Speaking ahead of a national security briefing with Defence Minister Marise Payne and Defence Force chief Mark Binskin, Mr Turnbull highlighted the UN Security Council's recent imposition of harsher sanctions on North Korea which, significantly, were backed by China and Russia.

"As I discussed with Vice-President Pence last night [Thursday], both the United States and Australia are committed to resolving this situation on the Korean Peninsula, to bringing the North Korean regime to its senses through diplomatic and economic means. We stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the United States."

US President Donald Trump has threatened to unleash "fire and fury" on the rogue state and the North Korean regime has, in turn, warned it would attack the US Pacific territory of Guam, home to a major airforce base.

Mr Keating decided to speak publicly after being contacted by Fairfax Media and his views will be expanded in a major essay for a new magazine, *Australian Foreign Affairs*, to be published in October.

"I have long believed, especially after the unprovoked Western attack on Iraq and the ransacking of the Gaddafi regime in Libya, that North Korea would not desist from the full development of its nuclear weapons program, despite threats and sanctions from the West and even from China," he said

"I said in April, we should regard North Korea as a full and capable nuclear weapons state – a state that would, in future, need to be contained, in the way the Soviet Union was contained during the Cold War. Developments since April have only confirmed my view."

"More than that, it may be, that because the development of nuclear weapons in North Korea has, in a sense, become the *raison d'être* of the state, were Kim Jong-Un and his generals to agree to the West's demands, they may not politically survive that acquiescence."

"The moral in this is that all nuclear proliferation is bad and dangerous, particularly in the hands of outlier regimes like North Korea. We knew this from the moment the Manhattan Project succeeded in 1945."

When asked if a missile shield was an option that Australia should pursue to protect the mainland, Mr Keating's response was blunt.

"I think this is more than debatable. The offending missiles would approach their targets at something like Mach 20, a phenomenal speed. We could never know, until the fatal event, whether a missile defence system would effectively work, or work in respect of each and every missile," he said.

"A more worldly and competent foreign and defence policy is by far the preferred first line of defence – rather than the default position of relying on expensive but problematic hardware."

Mr Turnbull also disagreed with Mr Abbott and Mr Rudd - who have both told Fairfax Media in the last four weeks that Australia should pursue missile defence - on the need for such a shield.

He said on Friday the current advice from Defence was that the terminal high altitude area defence [THAAD] system "is designed to provide protection for relatively small areas against short to intermediate range missiles".

Former US Ambassador Kim Beazley said the prime minister had responded to a hypothetical situation when discussing whether to invoke the ANZUS alliance and not "an automatic commitment" but is "as close to automatic as we can get".

We have a commitment there which is as close to automatic as we can get.

"It does not arise from the ANZUS alliance but from the United Nations. We are still technically at war on the Peninsula but we are signatories to an Armistice, agreed with the UN," he said.

Greens leader Richard Di Natale said "the last thing we need here is a Prime Minister backing an unhinged and paranoid leader into a conflict that could potentially end life on Earth as we know it".

He called on Mr Turnbull to tell the President to "back off".

"If there was an ever a clearer example of why Australia needs to ditch the US alliance and forge an independent, non-aligned foreign policy, this is it. Malcolm Turnbull now needs to pick up the phone,

*(continued on Page 8...)*



(continued from Page 7...)

he needs to talk to Donald Trump and urge him to de-escalate."

Defence analysts believe North Korea's longest-range missiles could reach Australia. Foreign Minister Julie Bishop has said North Korea's ICBMs pose an "existential threat" to Australia, though we are not a primary target.

The US, Japan, Western Europe, Israel and other nations have deployed missile defence.

### JUST PEACE COMMENT

Letter to the Editor

The grandstanding of its offensive military capacity by the North Korean leadership must be condemned, but so too the reckless threats of military action by the United States.

It is clear that any military attack on DRNK would lead to terrible consequences for the people of both North and South Korea and threaten major powers conflict with both China and Russia as border Korean peninsula countries.

Let us not underestimate the impact of war as a result of these threats.

We see it on our TV screens with the deaths, destruction of homes and cities and the mass of people seeking refuge from conflicts in Syria Yemen Iraq, North Africa.

This is what the United States is threatening, not only affecting North Koreans, but civilians around the world.

Australia and other countries need to stand up to the US as an independent nation loudly saying no to military intervention. The immediate action needed is the withdrawal of US naval air and ground presence surrounding the DRNK to defuse the tension.

The long term answers to this protracted conflict must lie with non military efforts exercised by the countries of the region with the assistance of the United Nations.

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### JIMMY CARTER COMMENT

*Statement From Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter on Current U.S.-North Korea Relations*

By Jimmy Carter

Global Research, August 13, 2017

The Carter Center 10 August 2017

*The harsh rhetoric from Washington and Pyongyang during recent months has exacerbated an already confrontational relationship between our countries, and has probably eliminated any chance of good faith peace talks between the United States and North Korea. In addition to restraining the warlike rhetoric, our leaders need to encourage talks between North Korea and other countries, especially China and Russia. The recent UN Security Council unanimous vote for new sanctions suggests that these countries could help. In all cases, a nuclear exchange must be avoided. All parties must assure North Koreans they will forego any military action against them if North Korea remains peaceful.*

I have visited North Korea three times, and have spent more than 20 hours in discussions with their political leaders regarding important issues that affect U.S.-DPRK relations.

In June 1994, I met with **Kim Il Sung** in a time of crisis, when he agreed to put all their nuclear programs under strict supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency and to seek mutual agreement with the United States on a permanent peace treaty, to have summit talks with the president of South Korea, to expedite the recovery of the remains of American service personnel buried in his country, and to take other steps to ease tension on the peninsula. Kim Il Sung died shortly after my visit, and his successor, **Kim Jong Il**, notified me and leaders in Washington that he would honor the promises made by his father. These obligations were later confirmed officially in negotiations in Geneva by **Robert Gallucci** and other representatives of the Clinton administration.

I returned to Pyongyang in August 2010, at the invitation of North Korean leaders, to bring home **Aijalon Gomes**, an American who had been detained

there. My last visit to North Korea was in May 2011 when I led a delegation of Elders (former presidents of Ireland and Finland and former prime minister of Norway) to assure the delivery of donated food directly to needy people.

During all these visits, the North Koreans emphasized that they wanted peaceful relations with the United States and their neighbors, but were convinced that we planned a preemptive military strike against their country. They wanted a peace treaty (especially with America) to replace the ceasefire agreement that had existed since the end of the Korean War in 1953, and to end the economic sanctions that had been very damaging to them during that long interim period. They have made it clear to me and others that their first priority is to assure that their military capability is capable of destroying a large part of Seoul and of responding strongly in other ways to any American attack. The influence of China in Pyongyang seems to be greatly reduced since **Kim Jong Un** became the North Korean leader in December 2011.

A commitment to peace by the United States and North Korea is crucial. When this confrontational crisis is ended, the United States should be prepared to consummate a permanent treaty to replace the ceasefire of 1953. The United States should make this clear, to North Koreans and to our allies.

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## THE PINE GAP ANNIVERSARY PARTY

by **Binoy Kampmark**

July 30th, 2017

**I**t all happened without much fuss, since fuss was bound to be the enemy. Dignitaries, guests and various partners lined up for a gathering at Alice Springs in Australia's Northern Territory on Saturday, commemorating the secret base's half-century.

The *Alice Spring News Online* described it, not inaccurately, as a "stealth party". The Convention Centre hosting the dinner was tight lipped throughout the week about the guest list. "Unfortunately the details of this weekend's event are not available for public release." Not for residents in Alice Springs; not for the electors, or even the politicians. This would be an imperial, vetted affair.

A sense about how the base functions in a defiant limbo, one resistant to Australian sovereignty, can be gathered in various ways. The local federal member, Chansey Paech, whose constituency hosts the base, was not invited. Senator Nigel Scullion's query about the exclusion of media from the event was rebuffed by the Defence department, with the Defence Minister keen to hold the line against her own colleague.

The Institute for Aboriginal Development (IAD), charged with supplying the indigenous "welcome to country" gathering at such bashes, seemed less than pleased to supply details. When the intrepid *Alice Springs News Online* dared ask, the CEO Kerry Le Rossignol responded with a dismissive "No comment".

On July 25, a Defence spokesperson insisted that, "The Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap is proud to commemorate its 50th anniversary. However, celebrations are restricted to site personnel and invited guests only." Power without perusal; might, without scrutiny.

The Australian press corps haven been subjected to a drip feed process over the years about what exactly takes place at the US base, hungrily consuming morsels like indigent urchins. This is a "joint" facility in

name only, but it does have Australian personnel running the low-grade coffee errands. Vassals have their uses, and should be reminded of them.

The Nautilus Institute for Security and Instability has been keeping a keener eye than most on this, notably through the eagle-eyed Richard Tanter. In an introductory overview on Pine Gap, its ongoing, updated report on the base notes the following:

Pine Gap is perhaps the most important United States intelligence facility outside that country, playing a vital role in the collection of a very wide range of signals intelligence, providing early warning ballistic missile launches, targeting of nuclear weapons, providing battlefield intelligence data for United States armed forces operating in Afghanistan and elsewhere (including previously in Iraq), critically supporting United States and Japanese missile defence, supporting arms control verification, and contributing targeting data to United States drone attacks.

The report pegs Pine Gap's role to three operational functions, with the original one still being primary: a station for geosynchronous signals intelligence (SIGINT) satellites developed under the auspices of the Central Intelligence Agency. Originally, these were intended to focus on the testing of Soviet missiles. One estimate puts the number of radomes and satellite dishes at Pine Gap at 38.

The second features a function acquired in late 1999, when the base became a Relay Ground Station for detecting missile launches, including Overhead Persistent Infrared (OPIR) which now includes a Space-Based Infrared System (SBIRS).

The third is its interception function (foreign satellite/communications satellite), acquired in the first decade of 2000. The Nautilus report notes that two 23-metre dishes appropriate for COMSAT SIGINT Development (Sigdev) were installed within the 30-metre radomes at the end of 1999 and early 2000.

All this cut, dried and smoked material conveys the relevance of Australia's continued geographical role as a dry goods merchant for Washington. It supplies the isolation and the means for the US imperium as officials in Canberra keep mum about the sheer extent Pine

Gap operates. It also supplies the bloodied hand that assists US-directed drone strikes in theatres where neither Washington nor Canberra are officially at war. Australia remains America's glorified manservant.

These are just a few points that have galvanised a small but vocal movement insisting on the closure of the base. Protests have also centred on disrupting, to use the words of James Brennan from Disarm, "the activities of the US war machine in Australia and on Aboriginal land."

At various stages, prosecutions on charges of trespass under the *Defence (Special Undertakings) Act 1952* have also been mounted, though the effort in 2007 was laughed out of court by the presiding judge, Daynor Trigg, who deemed the statute "a bit of nonsense". The defendants were duly acquitted by the Northern Territory Criminal Appeals Court, who quashed attempts by prosecutors to seek a retrial.

As late as last year, six self-proclaimed "peace pilgrims" received the attention of authorities for sporting musical instruments and pictures depicting war casualties onto the base. Their fate may be similar to those in 2007: to make the charges stick, evidence on the function of Pine Gap would have to be adduced. The veil would be lifted; secrecy would abate.

What is more pressing for the Canberra apparatchiks is what a base like Pine Gap does in the context of spats with other powers which Australia shares ties with. The China rise is particularly problematic, given the teeth-gnashing belligerence being shown over maritime disputes.

Even as Chinese nationals purchase Australian real estate, tremors between Washington and Beijing can be felt as the base celebrates its half-century. A happy birthday it would have been, but only for some.

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**FANCIFUL TERRORS***Bomb Plots and Australian Airport Security*by **Binoy Kampmark**

July 31st, 2017

**I**n the classroom of international security, Australia remains an infant wanting attention before the older hands. During the Paris Peace talks, Prime Minister William Morris (“Billy”) Hughes screamed and hollered Australia’s wishes to gain greater concessions after its losses during the Great War, urging, among other things, a more punitive settlement for Germany.

In the post-September 2001 age, recognition comes in different forms, notably in the field of terrorism. Australian authorities want recognition from their international partners; Australian security services demand attention from their peers. The premise of this call is simple if masochistic: Australia is worth torching, bombing and assailing, its values, however obscure, vulnerable before a massive, inchoate threat shrouded in obscurantism.

Over the weekend, the security services again displayed why adding fuel to the fire of recognition remains a burning lust for the Australian security complex. The inner-city suburb of Surry Hills in Sydney, and the south-western suburbs of Lakemba, Wiley and Punchbowl, witnessed raids and seizures of material that could be used to make an improvised explosive device.

What was notable here was the domesticity behind the alleged plot. Focus was specific to Surry Hills in what was supposedly an attempt to create an IED involving a domestic grinder and box containing a multi-miner. At stages, those with a culinary inclination might have been confused: were Australia’s best and brightest in the front line of security getting excited about the ill-use kitchen appliances might be put to?

The arrest provided yet another occasion Australian audiences are becoming familiar with: individuals arrested and detained, usually with no prior convictions let alone brush with

the law, while the celebratory stuffing is sought to file charges under anti-terrorism laws.

But this was not a time for ironic reflection. Australians needed to be frightened and reassured, a necessary dialectic that governments in trouble tend to encourage. First, comes the fear of death, launched by a sinister fundamentalist force; then comes the paternal reassurance of the patria: those in blue, green and grey will protect you.

Without even questioning the likelihood of success in any of these ventures (would this supposed device have ever gotten onto a plane?), such networks as Channel Nine news would insist that this could be the “13th significant conspiracy to be foiled by Australian authorities since the country’s terror threat level was raised to ‘probable’ in 2014.”

*The Herald Sun* was already dubbing this a Jihadi “meat mincer bomb plot”, happy to ignore the obvious point that details were horrendously sketchy. The Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, deemed the conspiracy “elaborate”. (The foe must always be elevated to make the effort both worthwhile and free of folly.) The AFP Commissioner, Andrew Colvin, was convinced that this was “Islamic-inspired terrorism. Exactly what is behind this is something we will need to investigate fully.”

Depending on what you scoured, reports suggested that this was a “non-traditional” device which was set to be used for an “Islamist inspired” cause. The usual cadre of experts were consulted to simply affirm trends they could neither prove nor verify, with the “lone wolf” theme galloping out in front.

John Coyne of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute’s Border Security Program, for instance, plotted a kindergarten evolution for his audience: planes were used in September 2001; then came regionally focused incidents such as the Bali bombings, and now, in classic fatuity, “a new chapter arising or a return chapter almost”. “This is much more panned and deliberate, if the allegations are correct.”

Rita Panahi, whose writings prefer opinion to the inconvenience incurred by looking at evidence, cheered the

weekend efforts and issued a reminder: “Remember the weekend’s terror raids next time you have to surrender a tube of sunscreen as you pass through airport security a second time, this time barefooted and beltless, and fearful you might miss your flight.”

For Panahi, this was a case that was done and dusted. These were “wannabe jihadis” (dead cert); they had plotted to inflict “mayhem and destruction on Australian soil” (naturally) and Australians needed to understand that an ungainly super structure of intrusive security measures were indispensable to security. Thank the counter-terrorism forces, luck and distance.

Such occasions also provide chicken feed for pecking journalists, many of whom have ceased the task of even procuring their beaks for the next expose. Indeed, some were crowing, including one on ABC 24, that the “disruption” of an “imminent” attack had taken place at speed; that this “cell” had little chance of ever bringing their device to an aircraft. Evidence and scrutiny are ill-considered, and the political classes are permitted to behave accordingly.

The Border Protection Minister, Peter Dutton, never happy to part with anything valuable on the subject of security, refused to confirm whether there had been an international dimension, a tip-off from intelligence agencies, or assistance.

“There will be lots of speculation around what the intent was,” claimed Dutton, “but obviously all of us have been working hard over recent days and we rely upon the expertise of the Federal Police and ASIO and other agencies.” He observed that there was “a lot of speculation around” which he did not wish to add to.

He need not have bothered, given that the opinion makers have formed a coalition of denial and embellishment so vast and enthusiastic so as to make Australia matter in the supposed global jihadi effort. It would come as a crushing disappointment to the infant in that room of international relations to realise otherwise.

**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).

**TRUMP'S RELISH***Trump Relishes Annihilation Like a Hors D'Oeuvre***By Finian Cunningham**August 09, 2017 "Information Clearing House" –

**I**t really is saying something when US President Trump's latest threat against North Korea draws a rebuke from John McCain - America's most hawkish lawmaker.

McCain said Trump's comments about striking North Korea with "fire and fury" were not helpful in the current spiral of tensions.

Other members of the US Congress deplored Trump's reckless rhetoric, even comparing the president to the North Korean leader Kim Jung-un, who is commonly regarded as "a nut-job" by American politicians and media.

That comparison is saying something about Donald Trump's own state of mind.

Speaking before dinner this week at this private golf club in New Jersey, Trump warned North Korea that the country would "face fire and fury, the like of which the world has never seen before". Such words coming on the 72nd anniversary of the US dropping two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki — killing over 200,000 people — are grotesque.

Do American political leaders have no shame about the past criminal deeds of their country? Speaking about ordering genocide as if it's like ordering a hors d'oeuvre.

Even in the gung-ho political culture of the United States, Trump's casual belligerence and threat of annihilation caused a shock among some politicians and media. One lawmaker, New York Representative Eliot Engel, called Trump's rhetoric "unhinged".

The alarm is well founded. Given numerous threats already from the US that it is prepared to use pre-emptive military force against North Korea, the words from Trump implying a catastrophic attack worse than the horror of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are indeed criminally reckless.

North Korea quickly responded that it was ready to carry out a pre-emptive

attack on the US airbase on the Pacific island of Guam, which would "envelope it in fire". Pyongyang uses this kind of melodramatic rhetoric all the time, regularly threatening to turn the US and its allies in South Korea and Japan into "a sea of fire".

But now, even more alarmingly, we have the American Commander-in-Chief indulging in a treacherous spiral of warmongering threats, where one misstep, one misunderstanding, could launch a nuclear war in the region.

Russia and China have both called for calm and for dialogue to resolve the long-running conflict on the Korean Peninsula, which has seen recurring tensions ever since the end of the Korean War in 1953.

However, Russia and China bear a measure of responsibility for the latest flare-up. Both countries supported US calls last weekend to pile on more economic sanctions against North Korea, when they voted unanimously at the Security Council. Those sanctions were imposed in response to North Korea's defiance of previous resolutions banning the testing of ballistic missiles and nuclear warheads. Last month, North Korea launched two intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), which many analysts believe are capable of hitting the US mainland.

But by piling on more sanctions against North Korea, the move has inevitably inflamed tensions.

Pyeongyang denounced the latest round of sanctions as an outrageous violation of its sovereignty and its right to develop military self-defenses. After all, it points out, the US has thousands of nuclear weapons capable of hitting North Korea. Washington has also installed this year a new missile system, the THAAD, in South Korea, which gives it a first strike advantage.

Moreover, the latest sanctions signed off at the UN last weekend are, on the face of it, deeply punishing against the North Korean economy and its populace. The nation's top exports of coal, minerals and seafood are to be banned, which would axe its already paltry export revenue by one-third, going from \$3 billion to \$2 billion a year.

Given the array of American offensive military forces, the repeated

verbal threats of "all options on the table" and now the latest ratcheting up of sanctions, is it any wonder North Korea perceives an existential danger? Then we have Trump making shockingly grotesque comments about the prospect of ordering an annihilation right on the anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, while he is about to have dinner with his wife.

Russia and China made a huge mistake in backing more US-led sanctions against North Korea last weekend. That move has only escalated tensions and has emboldened the Americans in their incorrigibly aggressive mentality.

Moscow and Beijing, more than anyone else, should know that sanctions are a counterproductive policy. They are a weapon of war-making and a baleful substitute for diplomacy.

In the case of Korea's historic conflict, the only solution is to recognize that America is part of the problem. Ever since the end of the Korean War, the perennial presence of American military forces on the peninsula is a never-ending source of conflict.

Russia and China are right to insist on immediate all-party talks for the region, involving the two Koreas. But slapping sanctions on one side is wrong, especially given the ongoing war threats issued by the US. Only days ago, the US flew nuclear-capable B-1 bombers from Guam over the Korean Peninsula. Why should North Korea, the region and the world for that matter accept such American aggression with impunity?

Russia and China have a crucial role to play in order to make the US come to its senses and scale back from a catastrophic war. But given the American hubris and self-righteousness to wage criminal wars, and given the twittery state of mind of its Commander-in-Chief, the task of making the US behave like a normal law-abiding nation is foreboding.

It's not North Korea that needs to be sanctioned. It is the world's biggest rogue state, the USA, that should be sanctioned and prosecuted many times

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over. Until it reserves the right to unilaterally threaten and attack any nation, including with the use of dropping of atomic bombs on civilian centers, the world will always be in grave peril. Joining US calls for sanctions on North Korea is like feeding a monster.

This article was first published by [Sputnik](#)

## ISRAEL'S SADISTIC REPRISALS

*Israel's Ever-more Sadistic Reprisals Against Palestinians Help Bolster its Victim Image*

by **Jonathan Cook**

July 11th, 2017

**W**hen Israel passed a new counter-terrorism law last year, Ayman Odeh, a leader of the country's large minority of Palestinian citizens, described its draconian measures as colonialism's "last gasp". He said: "I see ... the panic of the French at the end of the occupation of Algeria."

The panic and cruelty plumbed new depths last week, when Israeli officials launched a \$2.3 million lawsuit against the family of Fadi Qanbar, who crashed a truck into soldiers in Jerusalem in January, killing four. He was shot dead at the scene.

The suit demands that his widow, Tahani, reimburse the state for the compensation it awarded the soldiers' families. If she cannot raise the astronomic sum, the debt will pass to her four children, the oldest of whom is currently only seven.

Israel is reported to be preparing many similar cases.

Like other families of Palestinians who commit attacks, the Qanbars are homeless, after Israel sealed their East Jerusalem home with cement. Twelve relatives were also stripped of their residency papers as a prelude to expelling them to the West Bank.

None has done anything wrong – their crime is simply to be related to someone Israel defines as a "terrorist".

This trend is intensifying. Israel has demanded that the Palestinian Authority stop paying a small monthly stipend to families like the Qanbars, whose breadwinner was killed or jailed. Conviction rates among Palestinians in Israel's military legal system stand at more

than 99 per cent, and hundreds of prisoners are incarcerated without charge.

Israeli legislation is set to seize \$280 million – a sum equivalent to the total stipends – from taxes Israel collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, potentially bankrupting it.

On Wednesday Israel loyalists will introduce in the US Senate a bill to similarly deny the PA aid unless it stops "funding terror". Issa Karaka, a Palestinian official, said it would be impossible for the PA to comply: "Almost every other household ... is the family of a prisoner or martyr."

Israel has taken collective punishment – a serious violation of international law – to new extremes, stretching the notion to realms once imaginable only in a dystopian fable like George Orwell's 1984.

Israel argues that a potential attacker can only be dissuaded by knowing his loved ones will suffer harsh retribution. Or put another way, Israel is prepared to use any means to crush the motivation of Palestinians to resist its brutal, five-decade occupation.

All evidence, however, indicates that when people reach breaking-point, and are willing to die in the fight against their oppressors, they give little thought to the consequences for their families. That was the conclusion of an investigation by the Israeli army more than a decade ago.

In truth, Israel knows its policy is futile. It is not deterring attacks, but instead engaging in complex displacement activity. Ever-more sadistic forms of revenge shore up a collective and historic sense of Jewish victimhood while deflecting Israelis' attention from the reality that their country is a brutal colonial settler state.

If that verdict seems harsh, consider a newly published study into the effects on operators of using drones to carry out extrajudicial executions, in which civilians are often killed as "collateral damage".

A US survey found pilots who remotely fly drones soon develop symptoms of post-traumatic stress from inflicting so much death and destruction. The Israeli army replicated the study after its pilots operated drones over Gaza during Israel's 2014 attack – the ultimate act of collective punishment. Some 500 Palestinian children were killed as the tiny enclave was bombarded for nearly two months.

Doctors were surprised, however, that the pilots showed no signs of depression or anxiety. The researchers speculate that Israeli pilots may feel more justified in their actions, because they are closer to Gaza than US pilots are to Afghanistan, Iraq or Yemen. They are more confident that they are the ones under threat, even as they rain down death unseen on Palestinians.

The determination to maintain this exclusive self-image as the victim leads to outrageous double standards.

Last week the Israeli supreme court backed the refusal by officials to seal up the homes of three Jews who kidnapped Mohammed Abu Khdeir, a 16-year-old from Jerusalem, in 2014 and burnt him alive.

In May the Israeli government revealed that it had denied compensation to six-year-old Ahmed Dawabsheh, the badly scarred, sole survivor of an arson attack by Jewish extremists that killed his entire family two years ago.

Human rights group B'Tselem recently warned that Israel has given itself immunity from paying compensation to all Palestinians under occupation killed or disabled by the Israeli army – even in cases of criminal wrongdoing.

This endless heaping of insult upon injury for Palestinians is possible only because the west has indulged Israel's wallowing in victimhood so long. It is time to prick this bubble of self-delusion and remind Israel that it, not the Palestinians, is the oppressor.

First published in [The National](#)

**Jonathan Cook**, based in Nazareth, Israel is a winner of the Martha Gellhorn Special Prize for Journalism. His latest books are [Israel and the Clash of Civilisations: Iraq, Iran and the Plan to Remake the Middle East](#) (Pluto Press) and [Disappearing Palestine: Israel's Experiments in Human Despair](#) (Zed Books).

**POWER TO THE PEOPLE***Why Palestinian Victory in Jerusalem is a Pivotal Moment*by **Ramzy Baroud**

August 2nd, 2017

**N**either Fatah nor Hamas have been of much relevance to the mass protests staged around Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem. Neither have American pressure, half-hearted European ‘concern about the situation’ or cliché Arab declarations made one iota of difference. United Nations officials warned of the grim scenarios of escalation, but their statements were mere words.

The spontaneous mass movement in Jerusalem, which eventually defeated Israeli plans to change the status of Al-Aqsa was purely a people’s movement. Despite the hefty price of several dead and hundreds wounded, it challenged both the Israeli government and the quisling Palestinian leadership.

Israel shut down Al-Aqsa compound on July 14, following a shootout between three armed Palestinians and Israeli occupation officers. The compound was reopened a few days later, but Palestinian worshipers refused to enter, as massive security installation, gates, cameras and metal detectors were installed.

The people of Jerusalem immediately understood the implication of the Israeli action. In the name of added security measures, the Israeli government was exploiting the situation to change the status of Al-Aqsa, as part of its efforts to further isolate Palestinians and Judaize the illegally occupied city.

The Israeli army occupied Palestinian East Jerusalem in 1967, annexing it in 1981 in defiance of international law and despite strong UN objection.

For 50 years, Jerusalem has endured daily battles. The Israelis fought to expand their influence in the city, increase the number of illegal Jewish settlers and cut off Jerusalem from the rest of the Palestinian Territories; while Palestinians, Muslim and Christians alike, fought back.

Al-Aqsa compound – also known as Haram Al-Sharif or the Noble Sanctuary – is the most symbolic element in the fight. It is a microcosm of the fate of the

occupied city, in fact, the fate of the entire Palestinian land.

The compound has been administered by Islamic Waqf, through an Israeli-Jordanian understanding. Many Israeli politicians in the Likud Party and the Netanyahu-led right wing government coalition have tried to change this.

Palestinians understand that the fate of their mosque and the future of their city are tightly linked. For them, if Al-Aqsa is lost, then Jerusalem is truly conquered.

This fight, between Palestinian worshipers and the Israeli army, happens every single day, usually escalating on Friday. It is on this holy day for Muslims that tens of thousands of faithful flock to Al-Aqsa to pray, oftentimes to be met by new military gates and army regulations. Young Palestinians, in particular, have been blocked from reaching Al-Aqsa, also in the name of security.

But the struggle for Jerusalem can rarely be expressed in numbers, death toll and televised reports. It is the ordinary Palestinians’ constant fight for space, for identity and to preserve the sanctity of their holy land.

In the last two years, the fight escalated further as Israel began expanding its illegal settlements in East Jerusalem and right wing parties issued a series of laws targeting Palestinians in the city. One such law is the call for prayer law, aimed at preventing mosques from making the call for prayers at dawn, as has been the practice for a millennium.

Palestinian youth, many born after the failed Oslo Accords, are fed up as the Israeli military controls every aspect of their lives and their corrupt leadership grows more irrelevant and self-serving.

This frustration has been expressed in numerous ways: in non-violent resistance, new political ideas, in art, music, on social media, but also through individual acts of violent resistance.

Since the most recent Al-Quds Intifada – Jerusalem uprising – started in October 2015, “some 285 Palestinians have died in alleged attacks, protests and (Israeli) army raids,” reported Farah Najjar and Zena Tahhan. About 47 Israelis were killed in that same period.

But the Intifada was somehow contained and managed. Certainly, human rights

groups protested many of the army killings of Palestinians as unnecessary or unprovoked, but little has changed on the ground. The Palestinian Authority has continued to operate almost entirely independent from the violent reality faced by its people on a daily basis.

The shootout of July 14 could have registered as yet another violent episode of many that have been reported in Jerusalem in recent months. Following such events, the Israeli official discourse ignores the military occupation entirely and focuses instead on Israel’s security problem caused by ‘Palestinian terror’. Politicians then swoop in with new laws, proposals and radical ideas to exploit a tragic situation and remold the status quo.

Considering the numerous odds faced by Palestinians, every rational political analysis would have rightly concluded that Palestinians were losing this battle as well. With the United States fully backing Israeli measures and the international community growing distant and disinterested, the people of Jerusalem could not stand a chance.

But such understanding of conflict, however logical, often proves terribly wrong, since it casually overlooks the people.

In this latest confrontation, Palestinians of Jerusalem won, presenting an impressive model of mobilization and popular solidarity for all Palestinians. The Israeli army removed the barricades and the metal detectors, pushing Israel to the brink of a political crisis involving angry politicians, the army and internal intelligence, the Shin Bet.

The people’s victory was a massive embarrassment for Mahmoud Abbas, the President of the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah. He tried to ‘piggyback off the protests’ but failed, reported the Atlantic.

Other factions, too, moved quickly to mobilize on the people’s victory, but their efforts have appeared staged and insincere.

“Today is a joyful day, full of celebration and sorrow at the same time – sorrow for the people who lost their  
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lives and were injured,” a protester told Journalists, as thousands stormed the gates of Jerusalem armed with their prayer rugs, flags and voices hoarse from chanting for nearly two weeks.

“This is very much a grassroots movement – this isn’t led by Hamas or Fatah, the traditional political leaders of the Palestinians,” journalist Imran Khan reported from outside the compound.

This grass root movement was made of thousands of women, men and children. They included Zeina Amro, who cooked daily for those who held steadfast outside the compound, was shot by a rubber bullet in the head, yet returned to urge the men to stand their ground the following day.

It also includes the child Yousef Sakafi, whose chores included splashing water over people as they sat endless hours under the unforgiving sun, refusing to move.

It also includes many Palestinian Christians who came to pray with their Muslim brethren.

Conveying the scene from Jerusalem, television news footage and newspaper photos showed massive crowds of people, standing, sitting, praying or running in disarray among bullets, sound bombs and gas canisters.

But the crowds are made up of individuals, the likes of Zeina, Yousef and many more, all driven by their insistence to face injustice with their bare chests in an inspiring display of human tenacity.

Of course, more violence will follow, as the Israeli occupation is enriched and relentless, but ordinary Palestinians will not quit the fight. They have held resolute for nearly 70 years.

Rational political analysis cannot possibly fathom how a nation undergoing numerous odds can still mobilize against an army, and win.

But the power of the people often exceeds what is seemingly rational. Almost leaderless, Palestinians remain a strong nation, united by an identity that is predicated on the pillars of human rights, resistance and steadfastness.

**Dr. Ramzy Baroud** is an author and a journalist. He is author of [The Second Palestinian Intifada: A Chronicle of a People's Struggle](#) and his latest [My Father Was a Freedom Fighter: Gaza's Untold Story](#). He can be reached at [ramzybaroud@hotmail.com](mailto:ramzybaroud@hotmail.com).

## FEAR AND TREPIDATION IN TEL AVIV

### *Is Israel Losing the Syria War?*

by **Ramzy Baroud**

July 25th, 2017

**I**srael, which has played a precarious role in the Syrian war since 2011, is furious to learn that the future of the conflict is not to its liking.

The six-year-old Syria war is moving to a new stage, perhaps its final. The Syrian regime is consolidating its control over most of the populated centers, while ISIS is losing ground fast – and everywhere.

Areas evacuated by the rapidly disintegrated militant group are up for grabs. There are many hotly contested regions sought over by the government of Bashar al-Assad in Damascus and its allies, on the one hand, and the various anti-Assad opposition groups and their supporters, on the other.

With ISIS largely vanquished in Iraq – at an extremely high death toll of 40,000 people in Mosul alone – warring parties there are moving west. Shia militias, emboldened by the Iraq victory, have been pushing westward as far as the Iraq-Syria border, converging with forces loyal to the Syrian government on the other side.

Concurrently, first steps at a permanent ceasefire are bearing fruit, compared to many failed attempts in the past.

Following a ceasefire agreement between the United States and Russia on July 7 at the G-20 meeting in Hamburg, Germany, three provinces in southwestern Syria – bordering Jordan and Israeli-occupied Golan Heights – are now relatively quiet. The agreement is likely to be extended elsewhere.

The Israeli government has made it clear to the US that it is displeased with the agreement, and Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has been leading strong efforts to undermine the ceasefire.

Netanyahu’s worst fears are, perhaps, actualizing: a solution in

Syria that would allow for a permanent Iranian and Hezbollah presence in the country.

In the early phases of the war, such a possibility seemed remote; the constantly changing fortunes in Syria’s brutal combat made the discussion altogether irrelevant.

But things have now changed.

Despite assurances to the contrary, Israel has always been involved in the Syria conflict. Israel’s repeated claims that “it maintains a policy of non-intervention in Syria’s civil war,” only fools US mainstream media.

Not only was Israel involved in the war, it also played no role in the aid efforts, nor did it ever extend a helping hand to Syrian refugees.

Hundreds of thousands of Syrians have perished in the merciless war; many cities and villages were totally destroyed and millions of Syrians become refugees.

While tiny and poor Lebanon has hosted over a million Syrian refugees, every country in the region and many nations around the world have hosted Syrian refugees, as well. Except Israel.

Even a symbolic government proposal to host 100 Syrian orphans was eventually dropped.

However, the nature of the Israeli involvement in Syria is starting to change. The ceasefire, the growing Russian clout and the inconsistent US position has forced Israel to redefine its role.

A sign of the times has been Netanyahu’s frequent visits to Moscow, to persuade the emboldened Russian President, Vladimir Putin, of Israel’s interests.

While Moscow is treading carefully, unlike Washington it hardly perceives Israeli interests as paramount. When Israel shot down a Syrian missile using an arrow missile last March, the Israeli ambassador to Moscow was summoned for reprimand.

The chastising of Israel took place only days after Netanyahu visited Moscow and “made it clear” to Putin that he wants to “prevent any Syrian settlement from leaving Iran and its proxies with

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a military presence' in Syria."

Since the start of the conflict, Israel wanted to appear as if in control of the situation, at least regarding the conflict in southwestern Syria. It bombed targets in Syria as it saw fit, and casually spoke of maintaining regular contacts with certain opposition groups.

In recent comments before European officials, Netanyahu admitted to striking Iranian convoys in Syria 'dozens of times.'

But without a joint Israeli-US plan, Israel is now emerging as a weak party. Making that realization quite belatedly, Israel is become increasingly frustrated. After years of lobbying, the Obama Administration refused to regard Israel's objectives in Syria as the driving force behind his government's policies.

Failing to obtain such support from newly-elected President Donald Trump as well, Israel is now attempting to develop its own independent strategy.

On June 18, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Israel has been giving "secret aid" to Syrian rebels, in the form of "cash and humanitarian aid."

The *New York Times* reported on July 20 of large shipments of Israeli aid that is "expected to (give) 'glimmer of hope' for Syrians."

Needless to say, giving hope to Syrians is not an Israeli priority. Aside from the frequent bombing and refusal to host any refugees, Israel has occupied the Syrian Golan Heights in 1967 and illegally annexed the territory in 1981.

Instead, Israel's aim is to infiltrate southern Syria to create a buffer against Iranian, Hezbollah and other hostile forces.

Termed "Operation Good Neighbor," Israel is working diligently to build ties with various heads of tribes and influential groups in that region.

Yet, the Israeli plan appears to be a flimsy attempt at catching up, as Russia and the US, in addition to their regional allies, seem to be converging on an agreement independent from Israel's own objectives or even security concerns.

Israeli officials are angry, and feel particularly betrayed by Washington. If things continue to move in this direction, Iran could soon have a secured pathway connecting Tehran to Damascus and Beirut,

Israeli National Security Council head, Yaakov Amidror, threatened in a recent press conference that his country is prepared to move against Iran in Syria, alone.

Vehemently rejecting the ceasefire, Amidror said that the Israeli army will "intervene and destroy every attempt to build (permanent Iranian) infrastructure in Syria."

Netanyahu's equally charged statements during his European visit also point at the growing frustration in Tel Aviv.

This stands in sharp contrast from the days when the neoconservatives in Washington managed the Middle East through a vision that was largely, if not fully, consistent with Israeli impulses.

The famed strategy paper prepared by a US study group led by Richard Perle in 1996 is of little use now, as the region is no longer shaped by a country or two.

The paper entitled: "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm", saw a hostile Arab world masterfully managed by US and Israel.

For a fleeting moment, Tel Aviv hoped that Trump would bring about change to the US attitude.

Indeed, there was that euphoric movement in Israel when the Trump administration struck Syria. But the limited nature of the strike made it clear that the US had no plans for massive military deployment similar to that of Iraq in 2003.

The initial excitement was eventually replaced by cynicism as expressed by this headline in the Monitor: "Netanyahu puts Trump on notice over Syria."

In 1982, taking advantage of sectarian conflicts, Israel invaded Lebanon and installed a government led by its allies. Those days are long gone.

While Israel remains militarily strong, the region itself has changed and Israel is not the only power holding all the cards.

Moreover, the receding global leadership of the US under Trump makes the Israeli-American duo less effective.

With no alternative allies influential enough to fill the gap, Israel is left, for the first time, with very limited options.

With Russia's determined return to the Middle East, and the decided retreat by the US, the outcome of the Syria war is almost a foregone conclusion. Surely, this is not the 'new Syria' that Israel had hoped for.

## HAS NARENDRA MODI SWITCHED SIDES?

By F. William Engdahl

August 12, 2017



*It's very discomfoting to see the nation of India, one of the great potential leading countries of the world systematically self-destruct. Provoking a new war with China over remote chunks of land in the high Himalayas where the borders of China's Tibet Autonomous Region converge with India and the Kingdom of Bhutan, is only the latest example. The question posed is who or what grand design is behind India's foreign and domestic policies under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Has Modi switched sides? If so to whom?*

### Eurasian Harmony?

Only a year ago all seemed if not serene, well, then on its way to peaceful development with Modi's Asian neighbors including China and even, cautiously, Pakistan.

Just last year India, alongside Pakistan, were accepted as formal members of the increasingly important Shanghai Cooperation Organization where China is a founding member along with Russia, raising hopes that the common SCO format would permit peaceful resolution of simmering border tensions created by the 1947 British partition of India into a dominant Muslim Pakistan and a majority Hindu India with several unresolved friction areas including Kashmir and slyly left by Mountbatten as future explosion points.

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India is also a member along with China in the BRICS organization which just created a BRICS New Development Bank in Shanghai whose President is an Indian. India is also a member of the China-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. And until Modi announced India's refusal to join the May 14 Beijing conference of the China One Belt, One Road, India was also a participant in the vast Eurasian infrastructure project.

### **OBOR Boycott, Japan 'Freedom Corridor'**

How quickly things have changed. Modi announced his refusal to participate in the May 14 China OBOR conference citing the Chinese investment in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, or CPEC, a \$62 billion highway, rail and port infrastructure development between China and Pakistan as part of China's OBOR, which passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

Then, with surprising haste, India unveiled a vision document for Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) at the ongoing African Development Bank meeting in Gujarat, in a joint project with Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. The Indo-Japan AAGC document is an explicit part of a so-called Indo-Pacific Freedom Corridor being put in place by India and Japan to counter China's OBOR, using Japanese money and Indian established presence in Africa.



In November last year, Indian and Japanese Prime Ministers, Narendra Modi and Shinzo Abe, conceptualised the idea of an Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC). (Source: [Swarajya](#))

Under Abe, Japan has signed on to an increasingly aggressive anti-China agenda including over the disputed Diaoyu Islands called Senkaku Islands by Japan in the East China Sea. As well Japan has opted to install US missile defense systems and under Abe is regarded as the strongest US military

ally in Asia. When Abe met Trump this February, the US President reaffirmed terms of the US-Japan mutual defense treaty and made clear that the treaty extended to disputed islands in the East China Sea—the Senkaku or the Diaoyu as the barren islands are called in China.

### **Modi in Washington, Tel Aviv**

Weeks later, on June 27 India's Prime Minister Modi met with the US President in Washington. The day prior, conveniently, the US State Department announced designation of Pakistan-based Kashmiri leader of the militant Kashmir Valley Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Mohammad Yusuf Shah, as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT). That designation permits US sanctions on Pakistan among other things.

As a result of the Modi-Trump talks, the US agreed to sell India 22 of its Guardian drones, a so-called game-changer, for up to \$3 billion. Other items included expanded military cooperation and Indian agreement to buy US shale gas LNG. Modi seemed so pleased with his Washington talks that he invited the President's daughter, Ivanka Trump, to lead the US delegation to Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES) later this year in India.

Still glowing from his clear Washington political success, India's Modi flew to Israel July 7 for an unprecedented meeting of an Indian head of government in Israel with an Israeli Prime Minister. The talks between Modi and Benjamin Netanyahu were hailed in Indian media as a major shift in Indian foreign policy.

Here is where it gets seriously interesting. There has been a secret collaboration including offices in India between Israel's Mossad intelligence and India's CIA, called RAW going back to the 1950's. In 2008 Israel's Ambassador to India, Mark Sofer revealed that Israeli intelligence had provided the Indian Army with vital satellite imagery during India's 1999 "Kargil War" with Pakistan that allowed India to precisely bomb Pakistani troop positions who had occupied posts in India's Kargil district in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir.

### **The Dubious Role of Ajit Doval**

The July Modi visit to Tel Aviv had been months in preparation. Already

end of February Modi sent his National Security Advisor Ajit Doval to Tel Aviv to discuss details of the trip. There Doval met with Yosef Cohen the head of the Mossad and discussed among other things the alleged support by China and Pakistan along with other states for the Taliban in Afghanistan near the Afghan-Pakistan border.

Doval is no softie. He is attributed with something called the Doval Doctrine in India, the recent shift in Indian security policy in relation to Pakistan from what he calls 'Defensive' to 'Defensive Offensive'. He is reported behind India's surgical strikes in Pakistan in September 2016, and is behind the rise of pro-Indian militants in Kashmir. As an Indian blog describes it the Doval Doctrine, formulated in his speeches in 2014 and 2015 after being named MIDO National Security Adviser, essentially is aimed at China and Pakistan, has three components: "Irrelevance of morality, Of extremism freed from calculation or calibration, and Reliance on military." Clearly Doval has little use for diplomatic solutions.

Whatever was privately agreed between Modi and Washington in June as well as with Tel Aviv in early July, it was in this time frame that the Doklam dispute erupted in the Indian decision to send troops to forcibly intervene against Chinese construction teams on the sensitive border zone between China, Bhutan and India in the Tibetan plateau.

For its side, China is citing a letter by former Indian PM Jawaharlal Nehru to Chinese Premier Chou En-Lai in 1959:

"This Convention of 1890 also defined the boundary between Sikkim and Tibet; and the boundary was later, in 1895, demarcated. There is thus no dispute regarding the boundary of Sikkim with the Tibet region," the letter read.

China has also cites a reference of May 10, 2006, besides the 1890 convention and the 1959-60 letters which says, "Both sides agree on the boundary alignment in the Sikkim Sector." China publicly claims also that it "notified" India about the road building as a "goodwill" gesture.

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At this point the real issue is not the validity or non-validity under international law of the Chinese arguments. All surrounding the recent Doklam dispute between China and India suggests the dark hand of Washington and Tel Aviv in cahoots with the Modi government to use the confrontation to sabotage the progress of China's huge and developing One Belt, One Road infrastructure project by attempting to foster another US-instigated proxy war.

The escalating dispute over Doklam need never have escalated on a military front. That was a decision of the Modi government and clearly bears the fingerprints of the fingerprints of Ajit Doval, Modi's security adviser and former head of Indian intelligence.

Has Narendra Modi actually switched sides from a genuine supporter of peaceful resolution of Indo-Pakistani and Indo-Chinese border disputes in a spirit of good-willed collaboration within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, or was he Janus-faced in terms of his allegiances from the 2014 onset of his tenure as prime Minister, a kind of Anglo-American-Israeli Trojan Horse sent to sabotage China's promotion of the Eurasian new Economic Silk Road?

The answer is not yet known at least not by this author. However, a well-placed Indian source with close ties to the Indian military forces noted to me in a recent private correspondence that shortly following Trump's election in November last year, a senior US intelligence adviser to the Trump circles stated bluntly that there would not be a war between USA and China, but rather there would be a war between India and China across the Himalayas. That was in November at a time Doklam was completely quiet.

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*Featured image is from the author.*

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## ON THE BEACH 2017

### *The Beckoning Of Nuclear War*

By **John Pilger**

August 07, 2017 "[Information Clearing House](#)" –

**T**he US submarine captain says, "We've all got to die one day, some sooner and some later. The trouble always has been that you're never ready, because you don't know when it's coming. Well, now we do know and there's nothing to be done about it."

He says he will be dead by September. It will take about a week to die, though no one can be sure. Animals live the longest.

The war was over in a month. The United States, Russia and China were the protagonists. It is not clear if it was started by accident or mistake. There was no victor. The northern hemisphere is contaminated and lifeless now.

A curtain of radioactivity is moving south towards Australia and New Zealand, southern Africa and South America. By September, the last cities, towns and villages will succumb. As in the north, most buildings will remain untouched, some illuminated by the last flickers of electric light.

This is the way the world ends  
Not with a bang but a whimper

These lines from T.S. Eliot's poem *The Hollow Men* appear at the beginning of Nevil Shute's novel *On the Beach*, which left me close to tears. The endorsements on the cover said the same.

Published in 1957 at the height of the Cold War when too many writers were silent or cowed, it is a masterpiece. At first the language suggests a genteel relic; yet nothing I have read on nuclear war is as unyielding in its warning. No book is more urgent.

Some readers will remember the black and white Hollywood film starring Gregory Peck as the US Navy commander who takes his submarine to Australia to await the silent, formless spectre descending on the last of the living world.

I read *On the Beach* for the first time the other day, finishing it as the US Congress passed a law to wage economic war on Russia, the world's second most lethal nuclear power. There was no justification for this insane vote, except the promise of plunder.

The "sanctions" are aimed at Europe, too, mainly Germany, which depends on Russian natural gas and on European companies that do legitimate business with Russia. In what passed for debate on Capitol Hill, the more garrulous senators left no doubt that the embargo was designed to force Europe to import expensive American gas.

Their main aim seems to be war – real war. No provocation as extreme can suggest anything else. They seem to crave it, even though Americans have little idea what war is. The Civil War of 1861-5 was the last on their mainland. War is what the United States does to others.

The only nation to have used nuclear weapons against human beings, they have since destroyed scores of governments, many of them democracies, and laid to waste whole societies – the million deaths in Iraq were a fraction of the carnage in Indo-China, which President Reagan called "a noble cause" and President Obama revised as the tragedy of an "exceptional people" He was not referring to the Vietnamese.

Filming last year at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, I overheard a National Parks Service guide lecturing a school party of young teenagers. "Listen up," he said. "We lost 58,000 young soldiers in Vietnam, and they died defending *your freedom*."

At a stroke, the truth was inverted. No freedom was defended. Freedom was destroyed. A peasant country was invaded and millions of its people were killed, maimed, dispossessed, poisoned; 60,000 of the invaders took their own lives. Listen up, indeed.

A lobotomy is performed on each generation. Facts are removed. History is excised and replaced by what *Time* magazine calls "an eternal present". Harold Pinter described this as "manipulation of power worldwide, while masquerading as a force for universal good, a brilliant, even witty, highly successful act

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of hypnosis [which meant] that it never happened. Nothing ever happened. Even while it was happening it wasn't happening. It didn't matter. It was of no interest."

Those who call themselves liberals or tendentiously "the left" are eager participants in this manipulation, and its brainwashing, which today revert to one name: Trump.

Trump is mad, a fascist, a dupe of Russia. He is also a gift for "liberal brains pickled in the formaldehyde of identity politics", wrote Luciana Bohne memorably. The obsession with Trump the man — not Trump as a symptom and caricature of an enduring system — beckons great danger for all of us.

While they pursue their fossilised anti-Russia agendas, narcissistic media such as the *Washington Post*, the BBC and the *Guardian* suppress the essence of the most important political story of our time as they warmonger on a scale I cannot remember in my lifetime.

On 3 August, in contrast to the acreage the *Guardian* has given to drivel that the Russians conspired with Trump (reminiscent of the far-right smearing of John Kennedy as a "Soviet agent"), the paper buried, on page 16, news that the President of the United States was forced to sign a Congressional bill declaring economic war on Russia.

Unlike every other Trump signing, this was conducted in virtual secrecy and attached with a caveat from Trump himself that it was "clearly unconstitutional".

A coup against the man in the White House is under way. This is not because he is an odious human being, but because he has consistently made clear he does not want war with Russia.

This glimpse of sanity, or simple pragmatism, is anathema to the "national security" managers who guard a system based on war, surveillance, armaments, threats and extreme capitalism. Martin Luther King called them "the greatest purveyors of violence in the world today".

They have encircled Russia and China with missiles and a nuclear arsenal. They have used neo-Nazis to install an unstable, aggressive regime on Russia's

"borderland" — the way through which Hitler invaded, causing the deaths of 27 million people. Their goal is to dismember the modern Russian Federation.

In response, "partnership" is a word used incessantly by Vladimir Putin — anything, it seems, that might halt an evangelical drive to war in the United States. Incredulity in Russia may have now turned to fear and perhaps a certain resolution. The Russians almost certainly have war-gamed nuclear counter strikes. Air-raid drills are not uncommon. Their history tells them to get ready.

The threat is simultaneous. Russia is first, China is next. The US has just completed a huge military exercise with Australia known as Talisman Sabre. They rehearsed a blockade of the Malacca Straits and the South China Sea, through which pass China's economic lifelines.

The admiral commanding the US Pacific fleet said that, "if required", he would nuke China. That he would say such a thing publicly in the current perfidious atmosphere begins to make fact of Nevil Shute's fiction.

None of this is considered news. No connection is made as the bloodfest of Passchendaele a century ago is remembered. Honest reporting is no longer welcome in much of the media. Windbags, known as pundits, dominate: editors are infotainment or party line managers. Where there was once sub-editing, there is the liberation of axe-grinding clichés. Those journalists who do not comply are defenestrated.

The urgency has plenty of precedents. In my film, *The Coming War on China*, John Bordne, a member of a US Air Force missile combat crew based in Okinawa, Japan, describes how in 1962 — during the Cuban missile crisis — he and his colleagues were "told to launch all the missiles" from their silos.

Nuclear armed, the missiles were aimed at both China and Russia. A junior officer questioned this, and the order was eventually rescinded — but only after they were issued with service revolvers and ordered to shoot at others in a missile crew if they did not "stand down".

At the height of the Cold War, the anti-communist hysteria in the United States was such that US officials who were on official business in China were accused of treason and sacked. In 1957 — the year Shute wrote *On the Beach* — no official in the State Department could speak the language of the world's most populous nation. Mandarin speakers were purged under strictures now echoed in the Congressional bill that has just passed, aimed at Russia.

The bill was bipartisan. There is no fundamental difference between Democrats and Republicans. The terms "left" and "right" are meaningless.

Most of America's modern wars were started not by conservatives, but by liberal Democrats.

When Obama left office, he presided over a record seven wars, including America's longest war and an unprecedented campaign of extrajudicial killings — murder — by drones.

In his last year, according to a Council on Foreign Relations study, Obama, the "reluctant liberal warrior", dropped 26,171 bombs — three bombs every hour, 24 hours a day. Having pledged to help "rid the world" of nuclear weapons, the Nobel Peace Laureate built more nuclear warheads than any president since the Cold War.

Trump is a wimp by comparison. It was Obama — with his secretary of state Hillary Clinton at his side — who destroyed Libya as a modern state and launched the human stampede to Europe. At home, immigration groups knew him as the "deporter-in-chief".

One of Obama's last acts as president was to sign a bill that handed a record \$618 billion to the Pentagon, reflecting the soaring ascendancy of fascist militarism in the governance of the United States. Trump has endorsed this.

Buried in the detail was the establishment of a "Center for Information Analysis and Response". This is a ministry of truth. It is tasked with providing an "official narrative of facts" that will prepare us for the real possibility of nuclear war — if we allow it.

**DIEGO GARCIA VOTE***Humiliating UN Defeat for UK on Diego Garcia Vote*

By James O'Neill\*

**O**n Thursday of last week (22/6/17) the United Nations General Assembly voted overwhelmingly by 94 votes to 15, with 64 abstentions, on a motion advanced by Mauritius seeking a referral to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for an advisory opinion on the Chagos Islands.

One suspects that the majority of any given population in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas and Australasia would have trouble identifying where the Chagos Islands might be, let alone the significance of the vote.

It was however, a vote of considerable significance and to understand why, and the identity of the 15 naysayers, a brief history is in order.

The Chagos Archipelago is located in the central Indian Ocean. It was part of the British colony of Mauritius until 1965 when it was detached from Mauritius and included in a new entity called the British Indian Ocean Territory. The British paid the colony the sum of three million pounds for the islands. The concept of a colonial power negotiating with one of its subjects to “purchase” part of its sovereign territory is fraught with issues, not the last of which is the unequal bargaining power of the two entities. There is another significant problem that will be returned to below.

Between 1965 and 1968, when Mauritius gained its independence, the British government forcibly removed the whole of the Chagos population. They were mostly resettled in the UK and the USA. That wholesale removal of the population has been a running legal sore ever since.

Why would the British wish to purchase some remote specks of land in the Indian Ocean and treat its inhabitants in such an appalling manner? The answer to that question becomes immediately apparent when one realizes that the only significant island in the Chagos Group is Diego Garcia.

Having acquired the island in dubious circumstances and deported its entire population, the British then handed it over to the Americans who constructed a massive military base there. Another legal fiction is that it is a “joint” US-UK base, although evidence for that is virtually non-existent. The Americans were granted a 50-year lease, although they did not pay a single dollar for the privilege. That lease was extended for a further 20 years in December 2016.

Diego Garcia has acquired a further unenviable reputation since becoming essentially another military outpost. It is now part of the network of US military bases used to extrapolate US military power to wherever that power is needed to advance US geopolitical aims.

It has also been used as a staging post for ‘extraordinary rendition’ (i.e. unlawful kidnapping and shipment of individuals), and as one of the US’s network of centres for ‘enhanced interrogation’, (i.e. torture). The British may wish to reflect on their willingness to maintain the “joint facility” claim as joint management carries with a joint liability for the many and varied breaches of international law conducted on or from the island.

In the UN, the British ambassador argued that monetary compensation had been provided to Mauritius; and that it was a bilateral matter between the UK and Mauritius and that it should remain so.

That latter argument, also advanced by a number of the handful of countries who voted in support of the UK position, ignores both the actual resolution and an important body of international law that lies behind it.

The first part of the resolution, which is the only part to be discussed here, asks:

*“Was the process of decolonization of Mauritius lawfully completed when Mauritius was granted independence in 1968 following the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius and having regard to international law, including obligations reflected in General Assembly Resolution 1514 of 14 December 1960.....”*

The significance of this part of the resolution is twofold. It does not go to the issue of whether Mauritius had sovereignty over the islands, but whether the process of decolonization was lawfully completed.

Secondly, the UN General Assembly Resolution referred to (1514 of 1960) makes it clear that the breaking up of colonies before independence is specifically prohibited.

In the present case, that is exactly what the UK did when it must have known that such an action was illegal under international law. Not for the first time, and one is confident, certainly not for the last time, international law for the major western powers is only a tool of geopolitical convenience. Western political leaders, of whom Australia’s Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull is a prominent example, are fond of using phrases such as ‘the rule of law’ and ‘the rules based international order’.

There is a manifest disjunction between the rhetoric and the application in a wide range of areas, including in Australia’s case, the treatment of refugees and involvement in numerous illegal wars of choice.

It was therefore no surprise that Australia was one of the 15 countries that voted against the Mauritian resolution. The Australian UN representative was voting against the resolution she said, because:

- (1) It was not appropriate to use the Court’s advisory opinion jurisdiction to determine the rights and interests of States arising from a specific context.
- (2) The Diego Garcia military base played a pivotal part in the global fight against terrorism (and) that it was in the interests of all to ensure that there was no uncertainty about its status that could jeopardise its contribution to international peace and security.

This argument is beyond satire. It may be one reason why the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s official website makes absolutely no mention of the UN vote and why Australia was part of a tiny minority (UK, USA, Israel, Afghanistan, Albania, Japan and South Korea were among the others) so out of step with the overwhelming weight of world opinion.

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**THE MASK IS OFF***Trump Is Seeking War with Iran*By **Trita Parsi**July 29, 2017 "[Information Clearing House](#)" -

Something extraordinary has happened in Washington. President Donald Trump has made it clear, in no uncertain terms and with no effort to disguise his duplicity, that he will claim that Tehran is cheating on the nuclear deal by October—the facts be damned. In short, the fix is in. Trump will refuse to accept that Iran is in compliance and thereby set the stage for a military confrontation. His advisors have even been kind enough to explain how they will go about this. Rarely has a sinister plan to destroy an arms control agreement and pave the way for war been so openly telegraphed.

The unmasking of Trump's plans to sabotage the nuclear deal began two weeks ago when he reluctantly had to certify that Iran indeed was in compliance. Both the US intelligence as well as the International Atomic Energy Agency had confirmed Tehran's fair play. But Trump threw a tantrum in the Oval Office and berated his national security team for not having found a way to claim Iran was cheating. According to *Foreign Policy*, the adults in the room—Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis, and National Security Advisor H. R. McMaster—eventually calmed Trump down but only on the condition that they double down on finding a way for the president to blow up the deal by October.

Prior to the revelation of Trump's Iran certification meltdown, most analysts and diplomats believed that Trump's rhetoric on Iran was just that—empty talk. His bark was worse than his bite, as demonstrated when he certified Iran's compliance back in April and when he renewed sanctions waivers in May. The distance between his rhetoric and actual policy was tangible. Rhetorically, Trump officials described Iran as the root of all problems in the Middle East and as the greatest state sponsor of terror. Trump even suggested he might quit the deal.

In action, however, President Trump continued to waive sanctions and admitted that Iran was adhering to the deal. As a result, many concluded that Trump would continue to fulfill the obligations of the deal while sticking to his harsh rhetoric in order to appease domestic opponents of the nuclear deal—as well as Trump's allies in Saudi Arabia and Israel.

But now, assessments are changing. The tangible danger of Trump's malice on the Iran deal—as well as the danger of the advice of the “adults in the room”—became further clarified this week as tidbits of the reality TV star's plans began to leak.

**How to Wreck a Deal**

Recognizing that refusing to certify Iran would isolate the United States, Trump's advisors gave him another plan. Use the spot-inspections mechanism of the nuclear deal, they suggested, to demand access to a whole set of military sites in Iran. Once Iran balks—which it will since the mechanism is only supposed to be used if tangible evidence exists that those sites are being used for illicit nuclear activities—Trump can claim that Iran is in violation, blowing up the nuclear deal while shifting the blame to Tehran.

Thus, the advice of the adults in the room—those who we are supposed to restrain Trump—was not to keep the highly successful nuclear deal that has taken both an Iranian bomb and war with Iran off the table. Rather, they recommended killing it in a manner that would conceal Trump's malice and shift the cost to Iran.

According to *The New York Times*, the groundwork for this strategy has already been laid. Senate Foreign Relations Chair Bob Corker (R-TN) calls this strategy “radical enforcement” of the deal. “If they don't let us in,” Corker told *The Washington Post*, “boom.” Then he added: “You want the breakup of this deal to be about Iran. You don't want it to be about the U.S., because we want our allies with us.”

This is a charade, a rerun of the machinations that resulted in the Iraq war. It doesn't matter what Iran does or doesn't do. If it were up to Trump, he'd never have accepted that Iran was in compliance in the first place. He

admitted as much to the *Wall Street Journal*. “If it was up to me, I would have had them [the Iranians] non-compliant 180 days ago.”

Sounding supremely confident of the “radical implementation” strategy, Trump added that “I think they'll be noncompliant [in October].” In so doing, he further confirmed doubts that the process is about determining whether Iran is in compliance or not. The administration is committed to finding a way to claim Iran has violated the accord, regardless of the facts—just as George W. Bush did with Iraq.

**Potential for Backfire**

But Trump's confidence may be misplaced on two levels. First, abusing the inspection mechanisms of the deal may prove harder than Trump has been led to believe. The inspections are the cornerstone of the deal, and Iran's ability to cheat on the deal is essentially non-existent as long as the integrity and efficiency of the inspections remain in tact. But if Trump begins to abuse the mechanism to fabricate a conflict, he will end up undermining the inspections regime and actually enhance the ability of those in Iran who would like to pursue a covert nuclear program. Precisely because of the commitment of Europe and others to non-proliferation, they are likely to resist Trump's efforts to tinker with the inspections.

Second, by revealing his hand, Trump has displayed his duplicity for all to see. That includes the American public, whose anti-war sentiments remain strong and are a key reason they supported the nuclear deal in the first place.

The American public knows the Iraq playbook quite well. Trump's own supporters remain enraged by the disastrous war with Iraq. They know how they got played. It's difficult to imagine why they would allow themselves to get played again by a president who has left little doubt about his intent to deceive.

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**MURDER IN NORTH KOREA**

*Trump – in North Korea You will be Murdering Human Beings!*

By **Andre Vltchek**

April 21, 2017 "Information Clearing House" –

**W**hen I think about North Korea, what first comes to my mind is a mist over the calm and majestic surface of the Taedong River near Pyongyang. Next I always recall two lovers, locked in a tender and almost desperate embrace, sitting side by side on the shore. I saw them every day, while taking brisk walks at dawn. Now I don't know for sure whether they were real or just a product of my fantasy; a sad and gentle reminder of all that has been already lost, as well as of all that should have happened but never really materialized.

Currently, as Donald Trump's "armada" is speeding towards China and DPRK, I keep recalling those moments: the cliff, the lovers and a lone fisherman with his long rod at the other side of the river. Everything in my memory connected to those dawns is now motionless, serene.

Sometimes I wonder whether words still have the power they once used to have. In the past, a beautiful poem, a confession, or a declaration of love, were capable of changing one's entire life, and sometimes even the entire destiny of a nation. But is this still the case, in this time and age? As a writer I often feel futility, even despair. Still, as an internationalist, I refuse to succumb to pessimism, and I try to use words as my weapons, again and again.

I have already said a lot about North Korea. I have shown images. I have spoken about the unimaginable pain this country has had to endure. I have spoken broadly about its tremendous gesture – of helping to liberate and then to educate so many parts of the world, including the enormous and devastated continent of Africa.

Still the propaganda against the people of DPRK rules.

Let me try again; let me try again and again and again:

North Korea is a beautiful country, inhabited by human beings, with blood

circulating through their veins. Despite what you are directly and indirectly told, these people feel pain and they are capable of experiencing great joy. Like others, they often dream, fall in love, and suffer when being insulted or betrayed or abandoned. They laugh and cry, they hold hands, get angry, even desperate. They have great hopes for a better life and they work very hard trying to build their future.

So listen well, manager, or supervisor of what you yourself call the "free world". Or how should I call you, President? Ok, fine, President... If you shoot your Tomahawk missiles at them, at DPRK, (as you recently did at Syria), or if you drop your bloody "Mother of All Bombs" on them (as you just did on some god-forsaken hamlet in Afghanistan, just in order to demonstrate your spite and destructive force), their bodies will be torn to pieces, people will die in tremendous agony; wives will be howling in despair burying their husbands, grandparents will be forced to cover the dead bodies of their tiny grandchildren with white sheets, entire neighborhoods and villages will cease to exist.

Of course you people do it everywhere; you think that you are the masters of the world, so used to spreading agony and desolation all over the world, but let me remind you one more time and put it on the record: it may all look like some fun-to-play computer game or a TV show, but it is not; it is all real, when your shit hits the targets, it's damn real! I have seen plenty of it, and I have had really enough!

I know this is not what you have been told, and this is not what you tell the others.

North Koreans are supposed to look and behave like a nation of brainless robots, lacking all basic emotions and individuality, staring forward without seeing much, unable to feel pain, compassion or love.

You don't want to see the truth, the reality, and you want others to be blind as well.

Even if you'll blow the entire DPRK to pieces, you'll actually not see much anyway, you'll see almost nothing: just your own missiles shooting from battleships and submarines, your own airplanes taking-off from aircraft carriers, as well as some computer-generated images of powerful explosions. No pain,

no reality, and no agony: nothing will get to you; nothing will reach you and your citizens.

It is you who is blind; it is not they.

You actually like it, don't you? Admit you do. Let's have it all in the open. And many citizens in the West like it as well – new titillating experiences, free 'entertainment', and a welcome break from the dire and empty, grey, loveless and meaningless routine of daily life in both North America and Europe. Hundreds of millions glued to their TV screens. Your popularity is going down, lately, isn't it? The more missiles you shoot, the more bombs you drop, and the more countries you intimidate and confront, the broader your 'support base' gets.

You are a businessman, after all. The trade, the deal is simple, easy to grasp: you give to the majority of your people what they desire, and they give you support and admiration. True, isn't it, if stripped of all that 'political correctness'.

The psychologist Jung called this culture 'pathological'. It has already destroyed basically all continents on Earth. It is now, perhaps, attempting to finish what is left of the world.

Still, you ought to know and understand and should be fully aware of the following: you might now get some generous endorsement from your fellow mentally ill citizens, but if you blow up the DPRK or any other country on Earth, sky-high, and if we as the planet Earth still somehow manage to survive, you and your 'culture' will be cursed for centuries and millennia to come! Think about it. Is it really worth it?

Perhaps you don't give a damn. Most likely you don't. Still, give it a try, try to think, and try to imagine: you will go down in history as a degenerate mass murderer and a bigot!

Three years ago, this is how I described the 60th anniversary of the Victory Day in the DPRK:

"The brass band begins to play yet another military tune. I zoom on an old lady, her chest decorated with medals. As I get ready to press the shutter, two large tears begin rolling down her cheeks. And suddenly I realize that I

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cannot photograph her. I really cannot. Her face is all wrinkled, and yet it is both youthful and endlessly tender. Here is my face, I think, the face I was looking for all those days. And yet I cannot even press the shutter of my Leica.

Then something squeezes my throat and I have to search in my equipment bag for some tissue, as my glasses get foggy, and for a short time I cannot see anything at all. I sob loudly, just once. Nobody can hear, because of the loud playing of the band.

Later I get closer to her, and I bow, and she reciprocates. We make our separate peace in the middle of the boiling-hot main square. I am suddenly happy to be here. We have both lost something. She lost more. I was certain she lost at least half of her loved-ones in the carnage of those bygone years. I lost something too, and now I also lost all respect and belonging, to the culture that is still ruling the world; the culture that was once mine, but a culture that is still robbing people of their faces, and then burns their bodies with napalm and flames.

It is the 60th Anniversary of Victory Day in the DPRK. An anniversary marked by tears, grey hair, tremendous fireworks, parades, and by the 'memories of fire'.

That evening, after returning to the capital, I finally made it to the river. It was covered by a gentle but impenetrable fog. There were two lovers sitting by the shore, motionless, in silent embrace. The woman's hair was gently falling on her lover's shoulder. He was holding her hand, reverently. I was going to lift my big professional camera, but then I stopped, abruptly, all of a sudden too afraid that what my eyes were seeing or my brain imagining, would not be reflected in the viewfinder."

This is how I still remember the event.

The West has already killed millions of North Koreans. How many more have to vanish, just for not surrendering? What is the price of not agreeing to serve the Empire? Would it be one million more, or ten million? The number, please: you are a businessman; so do define the price truthfully!

The DPRK has never attacked anybody. The United States which claims it now 'feels threatened', has attacked dozens

and dozens of countries, robbed millions of people of life, and raped freedom, democracy and cultures all over the world.

There is one image inside my head, which I want to share with all my readers, even if I will be risking that this time my writing will be bordering on sentimentality. I don't give a fuck, for once; this is no time for 'polished and elegant style'. So here it is:

At one point I managed to break free from our delegation. It was in the capital, Pyongyang. I just walked and walked, along the mighty river, through an enormous park alongside ancient fortifications.

I spotted a girl, tiny, with a big ribbon in her hair. She was wearing white shoes. It was sunset. Her mother, a simple but beautiful lady, was talking to her. It was so obvious how much she loved and cherished her daughter. The two of them could not see me; I was observing them from some distance. There was so much tenderness, so much serenity between these two human beings. The mother was caressing her daughter's face, explaining something, pointing at the trees. Their faces were totally relaxed, no fear, no tension, just love.

I walked further, and still in the park, I saw a couple surrounded by a group of people. It was a family photo session. A man and a woman were obviously getting married; he was wearing a formal suit, she was dressed in a wedding gown. Then I noticed that large black sunglasses were hiding a large part of the man's face. He was blind. Most likely, he was badly burned behind the dark spectacles. His future wife was younger, and she was attractive. She was happy! She kept chatting, laughing cheerfully. I was stunned. In the West, people have been betraying each other, abandoning one another over the tiniest inconveniences or doubts, for the most egotistic reasons. And here, a young attractive woman was joining, happily, her badly injured man, so they could walk together, side-by-side, for the rest of their life journey.

I saw a lot of North Korea after those few hours in the park. I was faced with the most fortified border on Earth. I met and discussed philosophy and how the West tries to de-humanize its enemies,

with Yang Hyong Sob, the Vice President of the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Committee. I discussed philosophy and existentialism with the great theologian and philosopher John Cobb, on board a bus that was taking us from Pyongyang to the borderline.

There were 'big moments' during that trip, great celebrations all around me. There were elaborate performances and speeches, marches and music. Yet, nothing touched me so deeply as those moments in the park. There, I observed enormous tenderness given to a child by her mother. And I witnessed that natural and beautiful, simplicity and joy of love, mixed with serenity and dignity radiating from a young woman marrying her blind and injured partner.

That is North Korea, which I have been privileged enough to have observed with my own eyes. That is North Korea which the manager wants to 'take care of', which means 'to destroy'. And that is North Korea where I realized, as on so many other occasions, in so many countries, that there is still so much love that resides on this Earth, and that no barbarity, no cruelty, would ever be able to defeat it.

This essay is not my 'usual stuff'. It is not a philosophy, or reportage. I don't know what it is. I don't care what it is. I just wanted to share something with my readers: something that is inside me right now, something that is breaking and shouting and rebelling against the state of things.

What I am certain of is that at this moment, I want to be there, in Pyongyang. I want to go back, although no one has invited me to return, yet.

If the supervisor, the manager, decides to attack, I want to be on my feet and alert and ready, facing his ships and missiles. Just like that, as always, without any cover or bulletproof vest, just with my cameras, and a pen and a simple notepad, as well as a tiny Asian dragon – a good luck charm – in my pocket.

I will not be afraid. I don't think most of the people of North Korea would be afraid. Only those who are ready to

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**BOOK REVIEW: HOOPER'S WAR***Moral Injury of War: The Invisible Wound of Empire*

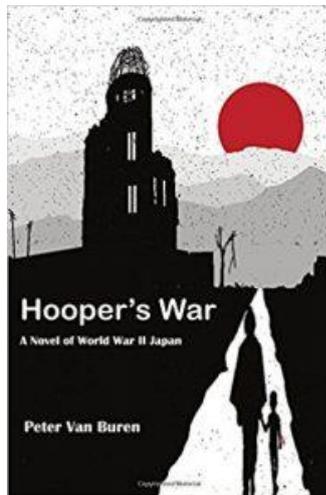
A review of  
Hooper's War by  
Peter Van Buren  
by **Nozomi Hayase**  
July 5th, 2017

**W**ith the failure of the Democratic establishment, the crisis of liberal democracy is now seized by a new rise of power. The US empire with Trump

as commander-in-chief has renewed its vow toward colonial domination. With nationalism and militarism in full swing, Trump's America aims to radically alter the future of this country. His campaign slogan "make America great again" was a kind of historical revisionism, ignoring the deep oppression and inequality that runs beneath this nation's history. From mass murder in the Middle East and the chaos of Libya to the destruction of Syria, along with conflicts with Russia and now tension with North Korea, the appetite of warmongering American expansionism never seems to end.

A similar trend is happening with US ally, Japan. As North Korea's repeated missile tests threaten stability in the Pacific region, there is increasing pressure toward remilitarization. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe aggressively pushes to revise the country's pacifist constitution established in post-WWII world that called for the complete renunciation of war. Such move appears to be a politically driven ambition to bring the nation back to the pre-war imperial Japan. The ultra right-wing engages in a reinterpretation of the past in efforts to make Japan "beautiful" again. They aim to erase the country's wartime atrocities in neighboring countries in Asia, by replacing the conquest of the past with a narrative of heroism, through denial and minimization of the Nanking Massacre and issues of comfort women.

History repeats itself. What is this drive that tries to reenact abuses of the past?



What grips our collective psyche, making it difficult to resist this return of imperialism? A novel titled *Hooper's War* (2017) that

portrays WWII in Japan provides a framework through which to understand this irrational force that regresses society and averts the path toward peace. The author, Peter Van Buren, a 24-year veteran of the US State Department, lived in Japan for 10 years and spent time in Iraq embedded with a US combat unit. His cross-cultural tale of the nation that suffered the horrific tragedy of the world's first usage of a nuclear arsenal offers rare insights.

**Hidden Scars of War**

British investigative journalist Robert Fisk once said, "War is a total failure of the human spirit." If Fisk, a veteran war correspondent, exposed the cruelty of modern warfare to our face, then Van Buren, the former diplomat, with his lucid writing let the destruction of our spirit unravel in slow motion.

The story is set in an alternate WWII with the American invasion, through a fictional firebombing of Kyoto that Van Buren created, based on eyewitness accounts of the August 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Sometimes, a metaphorical reality is more effective to reveal the truth of human affairs. In the intersection of historical facts and non-fiction, history is reawakened. We are able to see the wound of war that has been buried deep in the oblivion of our memory.

Clinical psychiatrist, Jonathan Shay identified this war's invisible scar manifested in combat veterans' prolonged suffering. Calling it "moral injury", he defined it as "betrayal of what is right by someone who holds legitimate authority in a high stake situation". Shay describes how, when individuals are inflicted with this injury, their character begins to change, such that one's social and moral horizon shrinks and they lose capacity to care for others.

While PTSD is fear-based and develops after the experience of a terrifying event, moral injury accompanies a pervasive sense of toxic shame, grief and intense guilt. Unlike a physical injury that is

visible, a moral injury remains invisible, making the suffering of the wounded hidden.

**Making of the Emperor's Soldier**

Moral injury is a ritual of war, a process of initiating a young man into a warrior. The invasion begins inside the hearts and minds of combatants. War kindles the fire of human spirit – faith, honor and loyalty, only to ensnare mortals into a vacuous moral desert, saturated with lust for dominion and conquest.

In his allegorical retelling of WWII Japan, Van Buren (2017) illustrates this process graphically with a sensitive touch. The story unfolds through reflections of both American lieutenant Nathaniel Hooper and young Japanese sergeant Eichi Nakagawa on their experiences before, during and after the invasion. In that period of Japanese imperialism, Japanese became the emperor's soldiers. Sergeant Nakagawa depicts the lessons from Major Yamada at the training where young men are indoctrinated with the tradition and duty to fulfill obligation to the emperor. Major Yamada told Nakagawa, "You have a mouth but you cannot say what you wish. And you have a brain but you cannot think as you wish".

In order for men to fight, first they have to cut their ties to the heart that knows what is right, that which stands in the way of their transgression. Those who were called to the battleground have to leave their bodies, being estranged from the living force inside that breathes and remembers our inherent obligation to one another. Out of this source of legitimacy now placed in the Emperor's Imperial Army, honor and pride is generated. Each time a soldier takes up their sword, this feeling of greatness grows, filling up their emptied soul.

**Suicide of the Soul**

In his retirement home in Hawaii, Hooper recalled the essence of war not as men dying, but of killing. He says:

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War isn't a place that makes men better. Flawed men turn bad, then bad men turn evil. So the darkest secret of my war wasn't the visceral knowledge that people can be filthy and horrible. It was the visceral knowledge that I could be filthy and horrible.

The loss of one's moral compass that war inflicts on soldiers leads them to not just die in honor, but murder their own soul. War turns love for one's country into hatred toward those who have been made into the "enemies", and eventually this flare of hatred burns oneself. Nakagawa told the man who used to be a soldier, "Maybe, old man, maybe. I hate the Americans, but I now also hate something of what we have become. And I will die because of it. I even look forward to it".

The invisible scar of moral injury is like an unspoken oath. The pain that could not be felt in our betrayal of our own humanity binds every emperor's army, commanding man's spirit into the hands of an imperial state, to fulfill its insatiable hunger for power. Major Yamada urged the young sergeant to listen carefully:

You can kill as many Americans as you like and it will not make a difference to this war. But you, you cannot live if you forgo obligation, and you cannot die well if you forego obligation. This is thus not about your life, Nakagawa, but about your damn soul.

The horror of war haunts those who stepped into it long after they have left the combat zone. This military code of conduct that binds the soul is never broken. Hooper said, "People say, 'whatever you have to tell yourself,' but they forget you can't lie to yourself alone at night. Imagine what it's like to be my age and scared of the dark". No amount of myth-making through symbols of flags and patriotism and medals of honor can cover up the deep wounds, the guilt and shame that remind veterans of the living hell that they helped to create.

### Bringing Troops Home

The explosion of the "Little Boy" uranium bomb on August 5, 1945, was said to end the Pacific War. The spread of fireballs and poisons of "black rain" created hell on Earth that no life can withstand. The pictures of atomic victims that were kept from the American public are now available to be seen. These horrific images

of those who were killed in this dreadful nuclear fire make war's brutality naked to the eyes. Yet, until a soul that was taken into a battleground is returned, there is nobody that can fully witness the event and degree of this human destruction.

Intermingling spirits across shores — friction of ancestors who fought for the land of the rising sun and also the land of the free and the home of the brave — turned the Earth into a wretched ghost town. Bombs bursting in air blew out both Hinomaru (the sun-mark flag) and the star-spangled banner.

"O, say can you see, by the dawn's early light, what so proudly we hailed, at the twilight's last gleaming?" Cries of deceased innocents; thirsty and hungry souls get stuck in the rib cages of men in uniform, as they sing their national anthem. Former lieutenant Hooper laments over memories that follow him to the present:

"Well-meaning people would say, 'open the wound, let it out'. The problem was those wounds had never closed in the first place. Other people get it a little better, knowing it's not about overcoming as much as coping. They tell us, 'You've got to fight as hard at home to beat this as you did over there to get home', except we're not sure what we're fighting for."

In the ashes and ruins of Hiroshima, both Japanese and Americans have left their souls behind. We have buried the truth — this unbearable pain that radiates beneath the skin of our soldiers, the children and women, being transmitted over generations. Souls vacated from bodies in the waving shock of atomic bombs also now hover over Vietnam and are lost in Iraq and Afghanistan, just wanting to get back home.

### Retrieval of Moral Courage

Invisible wounds of war call for our witness. Every time we shield memories of our own aggression upon our fellow man through historical revisionism, denial and deflection, we forsake the young whom our society sacrificed in its self-righteous suicide. Only through courage to claim this invisible wound as our own can we break the chains of command that keep us all in murderous arms of empire and resuscitate the heart,

letting its light of conscience show us our way back home.

*Hooper's War* is a story of this courage. It invites readers to retrieve vanished memories of human events. In multiple perspectives depicted in this novel, we are able to see the truth of war, not by a view defined by nationality, neither Japanese nor American, but simply as a human. In the breath of words that unite these souls from different shores, Van Buren asserts his own voice, bearing witness to this tragedy of Hiroshima in his soul. He asks, "Was there a path that bypassed both the atomic bombings and a land invasion?" There was such alternative. He tells us, "To end the war, neither the use of nuclear weapons nor a land invasion of the Japanese mainland, was, at least, a possibility".

Moral injury happens when we give up our own power to outer authority. Whether it is a king, president, an emperor or prime minister; when we try to find change from outside, through control and use of force, we were kept in a narrow band, within the selected reality of the few. We give in to military might that is often offered as the only option.

The honest account of the past can transform the flash of light of the atomic bomb that once blinded us, into a force that could enlighten the world. For the first time, we are able to see the real enemy, the monster unleashed by wars that continue to devour our hearts, shedding the blood of future generations to come. Only then are we able to lift our gaze and see the alternative path that has always been there. We can free ourselves from the tyrannical past that tries to repeat itself. In this crack opened in history, we find our creative power, to which we can surrender the sword forever, making war an option that we no longer need to take.

First published at [antiwar.com](http://antiwar.com).

Reference:<sup>1</sup> Van Buren, P. (2017). *Hooper's war: A novel of WWII Japan*. Luminis Books.

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**MEMORIES OF FUTILITY***The Passchendaele method of war*By **Binoy Kampmark**

Posted Wednesday, 9 August 2017

*So fruitless in its results, so depressing in its direction was the 1917 offensive, that 'Passchendaele' has come to be synonym for military failure, a name black-bordered in the records of the British Army. Basil Liddell Hart, 1934*

**R**arely does one word trap an image with such nerve tingling fright and awe. But as an image of slaughter, of men needlessly butchered, lives surrendered over absentee stone hearted generals with an understanding of war lost in the amnesia of small arms fire, spears and straw dress, one suffices. Passchendaele became the code for blood needlessly spilt; for decisions that should have, in any other context, demanded the trial and execution of its initiators.

A century ago, wave upon wave of men were shredded, pulverised and drowned according to misplaced notions, killed by obsolete ideas in what was the Third Battle of Ypres. The Americans had yet to arrive to make a difference in the conflict, while a bleeding Russia had been vanquished, facing revolution. The French, preoccupied with mutinies, needed a fortifying distraction.

Britain and its imperial forces were intent on providing one, with Sir Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig convinced that the German line would collapse with one last, but all-comprehensive strategic thrust.

The battle had been preceded by what came to be considered the largest man-made explosion in pre-atomic times, featuring 19 tunnelled mines beneath German lines on Messines Ridge. E.S.

Turner goes so far as to claim that British prime minister Lloyd George, it had been rumoured, wanted to be woken up at 3 in the morning that June night.

The initial enthusiasm, as with so much in the Great War (1914-1918), was misplaced. "I died in hell," recalled war poet Siegfried Sassoon. "They call it Passchendaele." As the blood drained in conditions so swampy as to render the trenches almost aquatic (many soldiers drowned

in shell holes); as the ammunition and shells were expended, humanity's great skill of killing for reasons of futility became apparent.

It was a futility that kept the awards machine busy. Lasting three months and a gain for the Allies of a mere five miles, the Victoria Cross, deemed the highest of Commonwealth military honours, was awarded 61 times. Haig had lost a sixth of the British army. As historians Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson note in *Passchendaele: The Untold Story* (1996) a psychological breakdown also took place during the battle, marked by desertion and drunkenness.

The accounts have been saturating the commemorations across several countries whose soldiers perished in the muddied industrial abattoir. In Christchurch, New Zealand, an opening exhibition titled "The Belgians have not forgotten" shined a grim light upon a conflict which cost the combating sides over half-a-million casualties. For this sliver of a country, some 2800 troops were killed wounded, or went missing within a matter of two hours.

New Zealand's fraternal neighbour, Australia, also busy on the commemoration circuit. It had committed its fair, grotesque bounty of blood to the battle. By the time the battle ended on November 10, Australia's five committed divisions had suffered 38,000 casualties, including 12,000 killed.

In London's Trafalgar Square before the National Gallery, a mud soldier, the creation of Dutch artist Damian Van Der Velden, was erected, to be left in gradual dissolution before rain. The statue itself was compacted from the

historically churned Passchendaele mud.

These exhibitions and ceremonial points all serve a similar purpose. For Dave Adamson of the Waimakariri Passchendaele Trust, it was the promotion of "peace and understanding". But the peace and understanding such efforts have are less to the members of the public than those who would bag and hoodwink it. For them, war remains a good, even necessary thing.

Harry Patch, the supercentenarian "last Tommy" who died at venerable age of 111 in 2009, put the case flawlessly: "I felt then, as I feel now, that the politicians who took us to war should have been given the guns and told to settle the differences themselves, instead of organising nothing better than legalized mass murder."

The end point of such futility is that humankind hugs the death god with all too much enthusiasm. Gone are the trench filled nightmares of industrial slaughter. Now, conflicts are undeclared, open-ended, described as forensic horrors marked by surgical strikes.

To live life, to be loved, and then, to be surrendered to an insidious Thanatic drive all too often willed on by others. "We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow," goes John McCrae's haunting words, "Loved and were loved and now we lie/in Flanders fields."

Even more important are the words that follow: that the dead shall be, as it were, trapped in an interminable state of restless, mournful sleeplessness, a nocturnal nightmare should faith be broken with the sacrifice of the fallen: "We shall not sleep, though poppies

grow/In Flanders field." If faith is there to be broken, is it not in the ties between humankind so much as its sanguinary leaders who keep insisting that slaughter and an inventory of dead are necessary for matters of state.

**Binoy Kampmark** was a Commonwealth Scholar at Selwyn College, Cambridge. He currently lectures at RMIT University, Melbourne and blogs at [Oz.Moses](http://Oz.Moses).



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**POETRY (etc)****Aeschylus**From *The Persians*

Translated by Robert Potter

Through sad constraint, ah me!  
forsaken lie,  
All pale and smear'd with gore:-  
Raise high the mournful strain,  
And let the voice of anguish pierce  
the sky:-  
Or roll beneath the roaring tide,  
By monsters rent of touch abhorr'd;  
While through the widow'd mansion echoing wide  
Sounds the deep groan, and wails its slaughter'd lord:  
Pale with his fears the helpless orphan there  
Gives the full stream of plaintive grief to flow;  
While age its hoary head in deep despair  
Bends; list'ning to the shrieks of wo.

\*\*\*

He in realm-unpeopling war  
Wasted not his subjects' blood,  
Godlike in his will to spare,  
In his councils wise and good.

\*\*\*

And was riot this the phrensy of the soul?  
But much I fear lest all my treasured wealth  
Fall to some daring hand an easy prey...  
This from too frequent converse with bad men  
The impetuous Xerxes learn'd; these caught his ear  
With thy great deeds, as winning for thy sons  
Vast riches with thy conquering spear, while he  
Tim'rous and slothful, never, save in sport,  
Lifted his lance, nor added to the wealth  
Won by his noble fathers. This reproach  
Oft by bad men repeated, urged his soul  
To attempt this war, and lead his troops to Greece.

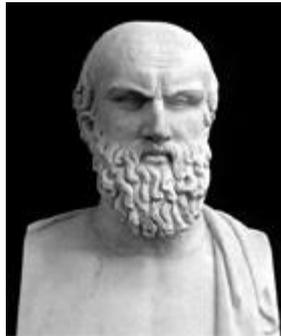
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...now these glories are no more:  
Farewell the big war's plumed pride:  
The gods have crush'd this trophied power;  
Sunk are our vanquish'd arms beneath the indignant  
tide.

\*\*\*

O thou afflicted monarch, once the lord  
Of marshall'd armies, of the lustre beam'd  
From glory's ray o'er Persia, of her sons  
The pride, the grace, whom ruin now hath sunk  
In blood! The unpeopled land laments her youth  
By Xerxes led to slaughter, till the realms  
Of death are gorged with Persians; for the flower  
Of all the realm, thousands, whose dreadful bows  
With arrowy shower annoy'd the foe, are fall'n.

From Antiwar Literature and Philosophical Sections

<https://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2014/01/23/aeschylus-the-unpeopled-land-laments-her-youth/>**The Way of Power**

Power does not  
validate itself in the world  
by the good works it performs  
but the moral atrocities it commits

The more pointless  
the act of oppression  
or violent the deed of bloodshed  
the more it serves the purpose

Of keeping men  
in "shock and awe"  
of the hand that struck the blow  
and docile to its bidding

The more it holds them  
waiting and expecting and accepting  
the next blow more pointless and bloody  
than the one before it.

by **Jon Taylor** / August 9th, 2015

This article was posted on Sunday, August 9th, 2015.

From Dissident Voice <http://dissidentvoice.org/2015/08/the-way-of-power/>

COUNTRIES ATTACKED BY BOMBING, SABOTAGE OR ATTEMPTED GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW SINCE WORLD WAR TWO	
<b>IRAN</b>	<b>USA</b>
China 1945-46	Argentina 1976
Syria 1949	Turkey 1980
Korea 1950-53	Poland 1980-81
China 1950-53	El Salvador 1981-92
Iran 1953	Nicaragua 1981-1990
Guatemala 1954	Cambodia 1980-95
Tibet 1955-70s	Angola 1980
Indonesia 1958	Lebanon 1982-84
Cuba 1959	Grenada 1983-84
Democratic Republic of the Congo 1960-65	Philippines 1986
Iraq 1960-63	Libya 1986
Dominican Republic 1961	Iran 1987-88
Vietnam 1961-73	Libya 1989
Brazil 1964	Panama 1989-90
Belgian Congo 1964	Iraq 1991
Guatemala 1964	Kuwait 1991
Laos 1964-73	Somalia 1992-94
Dominican Republic 1965-66	Iraq 1992-1996
Peru 1965	Bosnia 1995
Greece 1967	Iran 1998
Guatemala 1967-69	Sudan 1998
Cambodia 1969-70	Afghanistan 1998
Chile 1970-73	Yugoslavia - Serbia 1999
	Afghanistan 2001
	Iraq 2002-3
	Somalia 2006-2007
	Iran 2005-present
	Libya 2011

*"This is a war to end all wars."*

– American President, Woodrow Wilson

*"Only the dead have seen the end of war."*

– George Santayana, Spanish-American philosopher, in a counter to Wilson's words



## AN AMERICAN PARADOX

*Pillorying Fake News while Promoting False Flags*

by **Mathew Maavak**

July 5th, 2017

**T**he United States is a schizophrenic asylum of extreme paradoxes: While its internal politics reverberates with fake news-mediated recriminations, Americans yet find merit in the same disinformation machinery that facilitates false flags abroad.

The US is now threatening Syria over an imminent “chemical weapons attack” without offering a shred of proof to the international community. Then again, the last time the US resorted to due UNSC process had instead resulted in wars and mayhem that continue till today. The vial brandished by Colin Powell was found to contain nothing more than a concoction of fraudulent intelligence and mass-mediated hysteria over Saddam Hussein’s alleged possession of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Nevertheless, fake news had come of age and forged an indispensable bond between elected US officials and the sheeple who voted them in.

### **Fake News: A Collective American Psychosis**

No one epitomizes the fake news paradox better than the president of the United States, Donald J. Trump, himself.

Trump’s tantrums against the fake news machinery, particularly CNN, reached a new nadir when the president thumped the imaginary daylight out of a wrestler who supposedly represented CNN. It was a textbook demonstration of the Intermittent Explosive Disorder (IED) – a mental condition characterized by impulsive outbursts of anger, violence and rage that are usually disproportionate to the situation at hand.

IED is listed as a behavioural disorder in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) but it can share co-morbidity with various forms of psychoses. This may explain how Trump could magically see CNN in a rehearsed wrestling segment he had acted in years earlier. When fake wrestling is blurred with reality TV show and politics, the result is Donald Trump!

Just how this juvenile video montage is going to roll back years of collective citizen addiction to fake news is open to question but the incident does confirm what the world has been suspecting for a long time: The US is run by lunatics for lunatics. The recent US presidential elections, after all, was a deep state-engineered Hobson’s choice between two psychopaths whose fanatical support base was evenly-split between 100 million adult Americans.

Trump’s electoral nemesis, Hillary Clinton, remains the catalyst for the fake news hydra but the president somehow lacks the courage to take her on. He is instead lashing out like a helpless child against institutions and personalities that are mere cogs in America’s disinformation complex.

In the meantime, the US public has meekly accepted a status quo where the IEDs of its elected officials regularly result in US troops being blown up by the IEDs of the combat variety. Call it a poetic validation of the laws of “reaping what you sow.”

In any case, one in five Americans already suffer from mental illness and this crisis is expected to aggravate under the Trump presidency. Expect suicides, spree shootings and homelessness to skyrocket in the coming months. Perhaps, some genius in the White House had figured out that mentally-impaired citizens may be more receptive to fake news.

### **Fake News as an Instrument of War**

Joseph de Maistre once noted: “Every nation gets the government it deserves.” This is particularly true in the case of the United States where Americans do not really vote for a president every four years but rather a messiah who can deliver them from the apocalyptic bogeys of the other deep state candidate. Forget the thinning bread; it is the ever-bloodying circus that counts!

After a while, fake news, lurid allegations and gutter politics are autonomously perpetuated through a zombified sheeple. Thereafter, the deep state only has to provide directions to the slaughter house.

This pathos was apparent when the latest WMD allegations were arrayed against Syria. The US ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, did not disappoint

with her inimitable performance. Her repertoire was as forceful and convincing as the incongruous melange of a Bollywood tear-jerker, rampant American militarism and open defecation along the Attari-Wagah border. Deconstructing Haley’s argument for anything of factual merit is like studying the erupting contents of a burst sewer pipe for intellectual stimulation. But then, Haley is the populist product of the very society that earlier elected her as the governor of South Carolina. Haley’s supporters like this sort of stuff, fake or not, and they continue to rally behind her in the social media.

The US fake news hydra also relayed Haley’s WMD allegations without questioning the need for an urgent deliberation by the UN Security Council, as is the case with anything concerning WMDs. Perhaps they forgot a famous precedence set by the United States during the height of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis when US envoy Adlai Stevenson prevailed against the USSR’s Valerian Zorin. The John F. Kennedy administration even won the admiration of the Soviets after that episode, and both superpowers thereafter entered a period of détente that brought a tangible degree of stability to the world.

However, officials of Stevenson’s calibre who can resort to facts, evidence and logic are virtually extinct in the United States. Instead, we have the insensate antics of Sean Spicer and Heather Nauert who themselves embody walking-talking WMDs against basic human intelligence – reflecting the sure prospect of oblivion that awaits the United States!

**Mathew Maavak** is a writer and geopolitical observer residing in Malaysia.

*(continued from Page 19...)*

Similarly, the two major Australian newspaper chains (Murdoch and Fairfax) also failed to carry a single report on the debate, the outcome, or its considerable significance. Far easier, it would seem, to pretend something has not happened, than to have to justify yet another indefensible position.

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(continued from Page 22...)

commit mass murder, over and over again, in all corners of the world, are now most likely scared; at least subconsciously, at least in their own essence as well as of their own insanity.

Andre Vltchek is a philosopher, novelist, filmmaker and investigative journalist. He has covered wars and conflicts in dozens of countries. He can be reached through his [website](#) and his [Twitter](#).

“There are some militarists who say: ‘We are not interested in politics but only in the profession of arms.’ It is vital that these simple-minded militarists be made to realize the relationship that exists between politics and military affairs. Military action is a method used to attain a political goal. While military affairs and political affairs are not identical, it is impossible to isolate one from the other.” - Mao Zedong, Yu Chi Chan”

— [Mao Tse-tung](#)

“If the U.S. monopoly capitalist groups persist in pushing their policies of aggression and war, the day is bound to come when they will be hanged by the people of the whole world. The same fate awaits the accomplices of the United States.”

— [Mao Tse-tung](#), [Quotations from Chairman Mao Tsetung](#)

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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