



# The Peace Issue . . .

The Newsletter of Just Peace Queensland Inc

Issue No. 58

September 2019

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

**Contents of this issue include:**

USA – Rogue State	1
Just Peace Editorial	2
Just Peace Activities	3
Choosing Humanity	4
Australia in the Pacific	5
Timor-Leste and Australia	6
West Papua	7
Trouble in Hong Kong	8
A Dangerous Ally	10
Israel: Terrorist State	13
Israel: Apartheid State	14
Iran in US Sights	15
US Terror Syndicate	16
Remembering the Victims	17
Afghanistan End-Game	18
The New Cold War	20
They Are Not Heroes	26
Nuclear Insanities	27
Poetry	29
Hollywood Propaganda	30
Hamas	32

## U.S.A. - Rogue State

**In US-Iran conflict, it's Trump's America that is the rogue state**

*It takes an exceptional degree of western cognitive bias to not see that it is the United States that is the bully, the aggressor and the international-law breaker in this conflict, not Iran*

**W**HO do you believe, the US or Iran? Donald Trump or Hassan Rouhani? For much of our western-bias media, the question never enters their head. They can accuse Trump of all manner of lies on personal or domestic issues, but when it comes to the word of the US President versus Iran's, it's no contest - the guy standing in front of the red, white and blue stars and stripes wins every time.

It's that mentality which leads the political editor of Rupert Murdoch's The Sunday Times, Tim Shipman, to accuse Jeremy Corbyn of siding with the "theocratic terrorists" for calling on Britain to "act to ease tensions" and calling for "credible evidence" that Iran attacked oil tankers in the gulf.

Shipman tweeted: "Brexit party leading, Tories assembling a circular firing squad, Change UK imploding: "What should we do to capitalise on this propitious situation?" "Blame America, speak up for theocratic terrorists and dismiss credible evidence from our intelligence partners?" "That'll do it...""

Conservative renegade Peter Osborne described Shipman's analysis as "grotesquely unfair", but fairness really has little to do with it - Shipman was merely parroting the standard British establishment response to any questioning of its now ingrained foreign policy of "always with America, right or wrong". The Germans have questioned the evidence, the Japanese have questioned the evidence, even Nancy Pelosi, speaker of the House of Representatives, has questioned the evidence. But Shipman

wants us all to fall in line with a US regime known for its lying, known to be seeking to ratchet up tensions with Iran, with Iraq and the WMD's that never were still fresh in the memory.

When it comes to track records, any sober comparison would see the Iranians are far less warmongering. In fact, when Houssani stated on Tuesday that "Iran will not wage war against any nation", he spoke from a position of credibility. Iran - unlike almost all of its neighbours - has not started a war in modern history. It has a military budget as a per cent of GDP of less than 3 per cent, compared to 8.8 per cent for Saudi Arabia and 4.4 per cent for Israel (and that's minus all the US military aid they receive).

It's almost certainly the case that if the bombs begin to fall, it will be Washington, not Tehran, which drops the first one. The US has been at war 222 years out of 239, and currently drops one bomb per 12 minutes in its military escapades. It has a military spend larger than the rest of the world combined, and Trump is flanked by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on the one side, the former CIA chief who proudly announced earlier this year that in that role "we lied, we cheated and we stole", and national security advisor John Bolton on the other, who was literally involved in drawing up the fake evidence of WMD's to present to the UN in justifying attacking Iraq.

And then there are the hard facts of how the Iran Nuclear Deal was cancelled. A legally binding agreement signed in 2015 by the US, UK, France, China, Russia and Germany which tied Tehran to limits on its uranium enrichment in return for the lifting of sanctions. Iran was compliant with the Deal when Trump's regime unilaterally ripped it up in May last year, in

*(continued on Page 2...)*

**The Peace Issue . . .**

The newsletter of  
 Just Peace Queensland Inc  
 PO Box 573  
 Coorparoo Qld 4151 AUSTRALIA  
 Web site: [www.justpeaceqld.org](http://www.justpeaceqld.org)  
 Email: [justpeaceqld@gmail.com](mailto:justpeaceqld@gmail.com)

Co-convenors:  
 Annette Brownlie 07 3843 1270  
 0431 597 256  
 Norm Bullen 07 3848 8277  
 Publication Editor: Adrian Pollock  
 07 3366 3251  
 Email: [apollock@optusnet.com.au](mailto:apollock@optusnet.com.au)



(continued from Page 1...)

defiance of all other signatories and in breach of international law. Trump then enforced new sanctions on Iran and demanded the rest of the world join in, or else they too will feel the brunt of the sanctions in trading in the United States and using the Dollar. Predictably, corporate Europe has more-or-less towed Washington's line.

After such brutish behaviour, we now have the spectacle of the US complaining that Iran plans to increase uranium enrichment beyond the Nuclear Deal limits later this month, and demanding to know what everyone else is going to do about it. Frankly, given the threats from the US and its allies in the region, and given the fact that Tehran entered a legally binding agreement that has now been torn up and is suffering under sanctions as a result, would it be any wonder that they would move towards establishing a nuclear weapons capacity, fully aware of Israel's not-so-secret nukes 2000 kilometres away?

It's Benjamin Netanyahu's brutal Israeli regime and the despotic Mohammad Bin Salman of Saudi Arabia that is egging Trump, Pompeo and Bolton on most. Two leaders who respectively have so little regard for international law that they will colonise another country and behead a Washington Post journalist on Turkish soil. Trump has been so willing to cosy up to Israel's law-breaking that Netanyahu has named an illegal settlement in the Golan Heights after him: Trump Heights. After threatening action on Saudi Arabia's murder of Jamal Khashoggi in an embassy in Ankara, which his own intelligence services said was carried out on the orders of Bin Salman, the US President decided to do nothing. Too many arms to be sold to Riyadh to do anything about murdering journalist's in cold blood, you see.

This is the cold hard truth of this conflict: one side is the bully, the aggressor and the international-law breaker, the other side is Iran. We'd call the US a rogue state, except that term is only for its enemies, isn't it?

*Common Weal is a 'think and do tank' campaigning for social and economic equality in Scotland. We develop policy on and campaign for social and economic equality, for wellbeing and the environment, for quality of life, for peace and justice.*

*For 40 years Scotland has suffered from 'me first' politics – and we all came second. Politics has made a few extremely wealthy and left the rest suffering from low pay, insecurity, declining public services and fragmented communities.*

**EDITORIAL**

**A Heartbreaking Story of Perpetual Colonisation**

Your anti-war group, Just Peace Queensland, has been organising public forums for many years. This year we have had several formally-organised forums and a number of forums strongly supported by Just Peace. Our last one for 2019 is entitled **We Are Not Monkeys: The Struggle for Justice in West Papua**. This will be held on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 beginning at 3 pm at the Red Brick Hotel. (By now you will have received the flyer for this event.

We are honoured to have Peter Arndt and Amatus Douw speaking on this issue. Peter is executive officer of the Brisbane Archdiocese Catholic Justice and Peace Commission. Amatus is President of the International Forum for West Papua (IFWP).

The issue of West Papua has recently been addressed in the media. New attempts by West Papuans to gain independence from Indonesia have resulted in many deaths and injuries. The most recent protests (beginning August 19<sup>th</sup>) have arisen in part as a response to the arrests of 43 Papuan students in an apartment block in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia, for allegedly disrespecting the Indonesian flag. Civilian militias who had gathered outside the building were reported to be present at the location and had attacked the students verbally and physically. Allegedly, the mob had yelled "Monkeys, get out" at the students.

Just Peace has held a number of public forums on West Papuan independence over the past years. The most recent

protests however have gained a great deal more publicity as a result of the broadcast of video through personal social media communications by Papuans living in their country.

However the plight of the West Papuans, who have been subjected to often brutal military occupation for decades, has gained very little real sympathy from Australia and even the United Nations.

We considered therefore that Just Peace Queensland must support this issue in these turbulent times. Many Indonesians in fact have included demands to demilitarize West Papuan in the most recent (September 22<sup>nd</sup>) protests throughout Indonesia. These protests have decried changes in the criminal code that will weaken anticorruption processes; they wish to halt military action in Papua and free political prisoners there; and reject legislation that would give companies greater power over natural resources, ban sex outside marriage and limit freedom of expression.

We hope of course that the issue of the subjugation of the West Papuans does not get lost in this turmoil. On the other hand it is somewhat distressing to know that the world's largest gold mine and second largest copper mine are in West Papua.

**Mike Henry and Ross Gwyther**  
Co-conveners  
Just Peace Queensland.

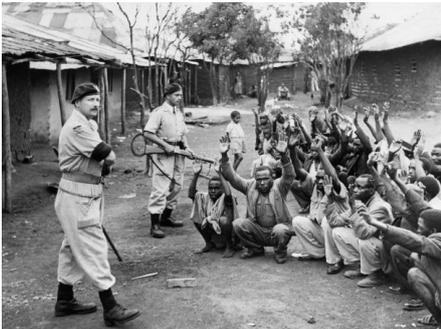


Papuans are detained by Indonesian authorities in Jayapura, West Papua

**ACTIVITIES REPORT****Actions and Activities****June to September 2019**

We discussed the activities of your group over the period up till May 2019 in issue 57 of The Peace Issue, page 3. That seems like such a long time ago now in view of the tumultuous events taking place on a daily basis all over the world. It was much simpler back in say the 1950's when we could focus on one thing at a time, such as the Mau Mau struggle for independence in Kenya. Now in September 2019 we see a chilling reminder of the new face of struggle for independence, this time in West Papua (see Editorial, [A Heartbreaking Story of Perpetual Colonisation](#)).

On October 13<sup>th</sup> Just Peace has organised a public forum on the West Papuan issue: **We Are Not Monkeys: The Struggle for Justice in West Papua.**



Kenya, 1953



West Papua, 2015

In our last newsletter we presented a few tantalising peeks at forthcoming events organised or strongly supported by Just Peace Queensland. Here's what happened then, and what we have done since:

**June 8<sup>th</sup>** Casey Davison's short documentary, *Risky Business. Australia's Military Alliance with the US*, was screened to an enthusiastic

audience at the large meeting room in the Brisbane City Council Library. The film is based upon interviews of attendees at IPAN\* 2017, Melbourne.

**July 7<sup>th</sup>** Sneak Preview of IPAN National Conference 2019. Public forum to publicise the Darwin IPAN 2019 Conference. *Risky Business* film shown. James O'Neill gave an impassioned speech on the baleful influence of the United States military machine globally.

**July 18<sup>th</sup>** Your group was instrumental in getting Vince Scappatura to come to Brisbane to speak about his new book, *The US Lobby and Australian Defence Policy* at the Avid Reader Bookshop.

**July 21<sup>st</sup>** Major project. Just Peace was the collaborator with historian Dr. Deborah Jordan in a book launch and exhibition of her work entitled *Peace and Treaty. Queensland Women and the Ending of World War 1*. The event was held in the Queensland Terrace, State Library of Queensland. Approximately 35 people attended including Senator Claire Moore and Professor Susan Harris-Rimmer, University of Queensland. The work was supported financially by a grant from the Department of Veteran's Affairs, Commonwealth of Australia, through Ms Terri Butler, MP, federal member for Griffith.

**July 27<sup>th</sup>** Committee member Maureen Todhunter spoke at a Venezuela Rally in King George Square representing Just Peace.

**August 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>** Major project. Annette Brownlie, a tireless member of Just Peace, is President of IPAN. Her committee drove the organisation of IPAN National Conference 2019, held in Darwin. The title of the conference was: *Australia at the Crossroads. Time for an Independent Foreign Policy*. The annual meeting attracted 100 registrants and a score of eminent speakers, many from other countries. The meeting was primarily focussed upon the urgent need to begin disengagement of the Australian military from that of the United States. It further addressed the environmental, economic and social impacts associated with the presence of a foreign military base on Australian soil. It soils our international reputation, doesn't it?

**August 9<sup>th</sup>** *Beats Not Bombs. Nagasaki Day*. Organised by Robin Taubenfeld of Friends of the Earth and Rosie Severin,

committee member of Just Peace. Committee member Anita Reed was present to recite her poems.

**August 14<sup>th</sup>** Major project: Just Peace and UNAAQ\* were the primary organisers of the *Peace and Climate Action Workshop*. Lenora O'Connor, a member of Just Peace, conceived this idea. Students from high schools and primary schools across Queensland came together to produce a multi-media event in which the students themselves create their ideas of how climate and peace are related. The event was held at Kelvin Grove College and attracted 35 students, their teachers and supporters from Just Peace and UNAAQ.

**August 17<sup>th</sup>** ICAN\* Report: *Choosing Humanity* and a film screening at Griffith University. Just Peace is a strong supporter of ICAN and publicised and attended this event. A campaign to visit member's local Councillors is being coordinated by Just Peace and WILPF. If you can volunteer contact Vikki Henry, on [oma4peace@gmail.com](mailto:oma4peace@gmail.com).

**August 31<sup>st</sup>** Members of Just Peace attended a fundraiser for Palestine at Kurilpa Hall. Phil Monsour and Palestinian poet from US were featured.

**September 1<sup>st</sup>** Members of Just Peace drove to Burleigh Heads, NSW, to welcome the bicycle riders on the *Big Ride for Palestine*. This annual event raised \$8,000 to support Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank.

**September 14<sup>th</sup>** Just Peace members Annette Brownlie and Lenora O'Connor, attended the International Day of Peace Event at Kelvin Grove State College.

**September 21<sup>st</sup>** Just Peace is a major contributor to the International Day of Peace Lecture, this year with internationally known journalist, Sophie McNeill. The title of her lecture was *Protection of Human Rights in an Era of Ongoing Wars*. Her talk was a searing indictment of the collapse of international rules of engagement in wars, particularly where civilians are targeted.

(continued on Page 4...)



(continued from Page 3...)

**September 27<sup>th</sup>** Maralinga Day. Organised by *Just Peace* member Rosie Severin and Robin Taubenfeld of Friends of the Earth. Remembers the 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the first atomic bomb test in the Buffalo series conducted by the United Kingdom at the 3000 square km Maralinga site (Arangu country of the Maralinga people), in south-west South Australia.

**Membership of Other Organizations:** *Just Peace* is a member of:

IPAN, APAN\*, IPB\*, UNAAQ, ICAN, WILPF\*

\*IPAN: Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (<https://ipan.org.au/>)

\*ICAN: International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (<http://www.icanw.org/au/>) (Nobel Peace Prize 2017)

\*UNAAQ: United Nations Association of Australia Queensland (<https://www.unaa.org.au/about/state-teams/queensland/qld-contact-us/>)

\*International Peace Bureau ([www.ipb.org](http://www.ipb.org)) (Nobel Peace Prize 1910)

\*Australia Palestine Advocacy Network (<https://apan.org.au>)

\*Womens International League for Peace and Freedom (<https://www.wilpf.org.au>)

Dear APAN members

Please find attached the minutes of APAN's AGM held two weeks ago. The AGM was followed by APAN's annual dinner, attended by 200 people in Melbourne and was successful in securing APAN base funding for the coming year.

Following the AGM, APAN Executive members travelled to Canberra on a lobbying trip. It was our second lobbying trip since the election – bringing our total number of meetings to 70!

In July, we had a full timetable of meetings with supporters of Palestine, who we sought advice from and encouraged to be active for Palestine. We are so encouraged by the number of supporters in parliament.

This month, our trip focused on meeting coalition and new members of parliament. This was a much more challenging trip- the limited knowledge

and/or sympathy for Palestinians being our primary obstacle. It was a particularly important trip for that reason, as it gave us an opportunity to work on deepening and broadening the perspectives of our potential detractors. We also secured commitments from a number of Government members and cross-benchers for them to engage with the Foreign Minister, raising her awareness of the many views within the Government party room. The most tangible outcome to these meetings were speeches in parliament that we supported – see following links to videos of the speeches by new Senator Tim Ayres and Adam Bandt MP. In the last two months, we have also been focused on DFAT, both in having been asked to participate in the cyclical review of aid to Palestine, and responding to attacks on UNRWA.

In the next two months we are looking forward to supporting some wonderful grassroots actions for Palestine. There will be the visit of Dr Salman Abu Sitta from Palestine; Run for Palestine; the Palestinian Film Festival – and other smaller events. We hope that you will join us in promoting all these wonderful initiatives – see [our website for full details](#).

While we celebrate the growing of the grassroots, as well as political support for Palestine here in Australia, the hardships for Palestinians remain unabated. While we are encouraged by the apparent inability of Netanyahu and the most extreme right wing parties to get the support required to re-form Government, we know that Israel won't be moving to end the Occupation anytime soon. The news from Palestine continues to include Palestinians brutally killed by the Occupation, and we know that behind the story of every death are countless others that demonstrate how pervasively the Occupation has curtailed people's lives.

So we thank you for being a member of APAN. We stand together, Palestinians and their supporters, to be a voice that will continue to work steadfastly for justice.

In solidarity

**Bishop George Browning**

APAN President

Australia Palestine Advocacy Network  
PO Box 3166  
Manuka, ACT 2603  
Australia

## CHOOSING HUMANITY OVER 14,000 NUCLEAR WEAPONS

I already knew there were 14,000 nuclear weapons in the world. The thing that shocked me when I read the ICAN Report, *Choosing Humanity*, was that the average power of these weapons is equal to that of thirteen Hiroshima bombs.

*Choosing Humanity* is a good title for the Report because it IS a choice, and the choice right now for nations is whether to sign the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The Hiroshima bomb killed 65,000 people, devastated the city and left survivors with sickness and terrible burns. A nuclear explosion creates a radioactive cloud, and a nuclear war could result in a nuclear winter when nothing will grow. There are false alarms that a nuclear attack is coming to a country, which could easily cause a nuclear war. So all nuclear arms are a danger to the earth.

The only sensible response to this acute threat to people and the earth itself is to eliminate all nuclear weapons and ban them forever. The Report urges the Australian Government to sign the Treaty, which bans a joining country from having anything to do with nuclear weapons.

I hope that everyone who becomes aware of the dangers will tell their friends about it and write and urge their M.P. and other politicians to work and vote for Australia signing the Treaty. Currently ICAN is having a campaign for mayors to write to the Government on behalf of their town or city (22 thus far) so it would be great if people would also contact their councillor and mayor. The more people who write, the more effective it will be, for the sake of all of our children and grandchildren.

(ICAN stands for International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. Begun in Australia by Australian doctors but now worldwide, ICAN won the 2017 Nobel Prize for Peace.)

**Anita Reed**

Member of Just Peace Committee.



## AUSTRALIAN POSTURING IN THE PACIFIC

*Australia shows up in Tuvalu and trips over*

30 August 2019

Author: **Tess Newton Cain**,

TNC Pacific Consulting

**O**n 13-16 August 2019 the leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum held their 50th meeting. The theme, as chosen by their host and current chair Tuvaluan Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga, was ‘Securing our Future in the Pacific’. The leaders’ meeting of 2018 provides context for what transpired in 2019 and why it is significant.

At the 2018 meeting in Nauru, all members of the Pacific Islands Forum signed the Boe Declaration on Regional Security. The Boe Declaration came from extensive consultations throughout the region. Climate change was elevated to the status of the ‘single greatest threat’ facing the region at the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting. This was continued into the final text that was accepted and signed at the leaders’ meeting in Nauru.

The focus on an expanded concept of security — one that is centred on human security rather than geostrategic anxiety — is notable in the Boe Declaration. It includes a statement that recognises an ‘increasingly complex regional security environment’. But the foundational narrative is of ‘an expanded concept of security, which addresses the wide range of security issues in the region, both traditional and non-traditional’. This is the starting point for discussions about security in the Pacific islands region.

The leaders of Pacific island nations are seeking security, not securitisation. They are concerned about moves towards militarisation in their neighbourhood. When reports of US plans to spend US\$300 million to expand naval facilities in northern Australia were received, the Foreign Minister of Vanuatu, Ralph Regenvanu tweeted, ‘Can we stop militarising the Pacific please?’

During Papua New Guinean Prime Minister James Marape and his delegation’s visit to Australia, the governor of Manus province, Charlie

Benjamin, restated his disapproval of the proposed redevelopment of the Lombrum base by Papua New Guinea, the United States and Australia.

These voices and others need to be heard and acknowledged. No amount of showing up will achieve the lasting partnerships that regional security requires if the voices of Pacific leaders are disregarded.

In 2019, leaders endorsed the Boe Declaration Action Plan. In particular, ‘leaders requested that traditional and cultural norms be acknowledged and considered as an underpinning imperative of all security initiatives’.

Persistent cultural tone-deafness contributed to the diplomatic missteps of Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his team in Tuvalu. This characterises (or is perceived to characterise) Australian engagements in the region. Sopoaga’s criticism of Australia’s behaviour as ‘un-Pacific’ is a harsh statement from a Polynesian statesman. Australia must invest in cultural competency quickly if they want to be the security partner of choice among the Pacific island countries.

Since 2016, and particularly since late 2018, Australia has focussed a great deal of diplomatic and political energy on a ‘Pacific step-up’. Led personally by Morrison, this is a ‘whole of government’ exercise which is designed to put the Pacific at the heart of Australian foreign policy. This initiative has been widely welcomed in the region, although it is generally perceived as being driven by a desire to counter the rising influence of China.

The Pacific step-up has been compromised by what happened in Tuvalu. When asked if Australia’s conduct would push Pacific states closer to China, the Prime Minister of Fiji, Frank Bainimarama, stated bluntly, ‘They [China] don’t go down and tell the world that we’ve given this much money to the Pacific islands. They don’t do that. They’re good people, definitely better than Morrison, I can tell you that’. These sentiments were reiterated by Anote Tong, the former president of Kiribati during a visit to Australia. These

people do not speak for the Pacific but their voices are influential and the fact that they are making these public statements is noteworthy in itself.

Australian policymakers need to recognise that if the step-up falters, this may have negative impacts on their ability to ‘bring along’ like-minded nations who are seeking to shore up or enhance their influence in the region. There is an emerging fault line between Australia and New Zealand when it comes to addressing the region’s biggest security threats. Its significance was borne out when New Zealand’s Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern strongly aligned with the island states.

The United Kingdom has commenced a ‘Pacific Uplift’ and has stated that addressing climate change sits at the heart of this positioning. US policymakers and their interlocutors seek to ascertain how they can establish a presence beyond the Compact States. They may be concerned that looking to Australia as their pre-eminent guide to Pacific engagement may not be as beneficial as it may have first appeared.

The truism that ‘culture eats strategy for breakfast’ applies in the Pacific as it does elsewhere. As Anna Powles has argued often, relationships are currency in the Pacific and for the currency to grow in value, careful investment is required. Looking ahead to the 2020 meeting of Pacific Islands Forum leaders in Vanuatu, the country’s Foreign Minister issued a point of guidance that is also applicable to all who seek better relationships in the Pacific. It is that ‘Australia must understand that relationships in the region are not just about the funding of projects’.

This is a clear direction for getting the Pacific ‘step-up’ back onto a firmer footing.

*Tess Newton Cain is the Principal of TNC Pacific Consulting. She tweets @CainTess.*

*This article is based on a presentation to the Kategalan Forum hosted by the Prospect Foundation in Taiwan.*

*“We first crush people to the earth, and then claim the right of trampling on them forever, because they are prostrate.” — Lydia Maria Child*

**TIMOR-LESTE AND AUSTRALIA***A Loveless Affair at Twenty*by **Binoy Kampmark**

September 1st, 2019

**C**ringe worthy, a touch molesting in sentiment: this was the celebratory occasion of the gathering of Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison with his East Timorese counterparts. During the course of its history, the state has been pillaged and bombed, its residents massacred and its politicians spied upon. The exposure of that seedy little matter of espionage came in December 2013, when it was revealed that an Australian intelligence officer known as Witness K had spilled the beans on how his masters were attempting to undercut the East Timorese in their 2004 negotiations for a maritime boundary. The Australian delegation had eyes on underwater oil and gas revenue; nothing would be left to chance.

Because of such cheery sentiment, the cabinet offices of the East Timorese were bugged by agents of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS). “It was outrageous,” recalled the lead negotiator on behalf of the East Timorese, the seasoned US diplomat Peter Galbraith. “I’d taken protective measures against Australian espionage, which I thought would be based on cell phones and internet, but I thought it was pretty crude to be bugging the prime minister’s offices.” In Galbraith’s view, Australian politicians had been accessories to corporate greed (a condition familiar to the US political classes).

Witness K initially took the matter to the Inspector General of Intelligence and Security, and obtained approval to consult Bernard Collaery, barrister and former attorney general of the Australian Capital Territory. This put into motion an effort, led by Collaery, to challenge the validity of the treaty, which had granted the Australians a distinctly generous equal share of the revenue.

The revelations also armed East Timor with modest ammunition to trigger the UN conciliation process, retrospectively praised by embarrassed Australian politicians as revolutionary. Deemed heroes by former Timor-Leste president

José Ramos-Horta for their “conscience and courage”, both Witness K and Collaery have been prosecuted in the finest traditions of the Australian national security state: those two will forever be associated with foiling Australian efforts of corporate plunder.

The bugging affair was merely symptomatic of a broader sociopathic tendency shown towards the territory. The intervention of an Australian-led force in September 1999 has been taken as a cathartic act of history. But the muse of history tells a different story. Australia was deeply reluctant to send forces, taking issue with a prevailing view in some circles of the US State Department that something should be done. Foreign Minister Alexander Downer was keen to avoid agitating Indonesia, despite the murderous antics of pro-Jakarta supporters running riot in the aftermath of the independence referendum.

When such reluctance was reported in the *Sunday Age* on August 1, 1999, Downer saw off such claims, which involved a said meeting between Ashton Calvert, head of the Department of Trade and Foreign Affairs, and Stanley Roth, US assistant secretary of state for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, as “completely false”. Roth, it transpired, felt the need for an international presence to arrest escalating violence. Downer preferred another approach: plugging leaks and concealing Australia’s role in rejecting US offers for a coordinated deployment in East Timor.

The fear of precipitating showers of Indonesian indignation was not new. In 1975, the Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, lionised by the Australian Labour Party as a doyen of progressive enlightenment, gave the nod to Indonesia’s bloodthirsty president Suharto that the territory could be annexed without much fuss. While it was never for Australia to agree or disagree with the expansionist move, the bend-over-backwards assurance was needlessly ingratiating, assisted by the paternalistic view that an independent East Timor was simply not viable, politically or

economically. Whitlam would subsequently reassure himself that the Indonesian military might have been benevolent occupiers, a spectacularly foolish assumption.

Now, Australia has expressed undying fraternal support, loftily insisting it was generous in letting an impoverished Timor-Leste receive a 70 percent share of future revenue from the Great Sunrise gas-field. In Dili to ratify a new maritime boundary treaty with East Timor’s Taur Matan Ruak, not all was calm in the ceremonial mood. East Timor prefers processing the gas for export in Dili; the Australians and project developer Woodside have opted for a more self-beneficial floating platform.

Nor has the Morrison government been open to suggestions that Australia compensate Dili for billions of dollars obtained in gas royalties under the previous maritime border agreement. “What we have been doing in the last 20 years,” deflected Morrison, “has been investing as the principal development partner in Timor-Leste. Australia has invested some \$1.7 billion directly through our various programs and we continue to invest now over \$100 million.” Never you mind that this is dwarfed by the \$5 billion amount being suggested to right the imbalance.

Whether it is natural resources or the matter of regional security, Timor-Leste has again made a mark on Canberra’s radar. The usual culprits insisting on Australian rough riding in the region have come out with blazing enthusiasm. Such places require Canberra’s attention lest the devil that is Beijing creep up on Australia’s interests. “While Australia has been focused on the Pacific ‘step-up’,” writes *The Australian*, “East Timor had until recently dropped off the radar.” The views of former Victorian premier Steve Bracks, are noted in the paper. “Every time I go to Timor now I see Chinese delegations. I don’t see any Australians.”

The neo-colonial footprint has been easing off, leaving the strategists worried. It was left to Morrison and his foreign minister, Marise Payne, to announce what was advertised as a “new maritime security package” featuring the gifting of two patrol boats from Australia  
(continued on Page 7...)



(continued from Page 6...)

in 2023 and funding to modernise a current naval base. A promise to back an underwater fibre optic cable, intended to connect Timor-Leste to the North-West Cable System between Darwin and Port Headland, was also thrown in. If wise heads prevail in Dili, money and investment from both Australian and Chinese sources will be pouring in. Juggling their influences would be a fitting rebuke to the marked callousness that has characterised Australian foreign policy.

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

This article was posted on Sunday, September 1st, 2019

### WEST PAPUA TROUBLES

#### *Spikes of Violence: Protest in West Papua*

by **Binoy Kampmark**

September 12, 2019



Photograph Source: Government of Sarmi Regency – Public Domain

**L**ike Timor-Leste, West Papua, commonly subsuming both Papua and West Papua, remains a separate ethnic entity, acknowledged as such by previous colonial powers. Its Dutch colonial masters, in preparing to leave the region in the 1950s, left the ground fertile for a declaration of independence in 1961. Such a move did not sit well with the Indonesian desire to claim control over all Dutch Asia Pacific colonies on departure. There were resources to be had, economic gains to be made. The military duly moved in.

The New York Agreement between Indonesia and the Netherlands, brokered in 1962 with the assistance of the United States, saw West Papua fall under United Nations control for the duration of one

year. Once passing into Indonesian control, Jakarta would govern the territory “consistent with the rights and freedoms guaranteed to the inhabitants under the terms of the present agreement.” Education would be a priority; illiteracy would be targeted, and efforts made “to accelerate participation of the people in local government through periodic elections.”

One article stood out: “Indonesia will make arrangements, with the assistance and participation of the United Nation Representative and his staff, to give the people of the territory the opportunity to exercise freedom of choice.” In 1969, a ballot was conducted in line with the provision, though hardly in any true, representative sense. In the rich traditions of doctored representation and selective enfranchisement, 1,026 individuals were selected by Indonesian authorities to participate. Indonesia’s military kept an intimidating watch: the vote could not

be left to chance. The result for Indonesian control was unanimous; the UN signed off.

Unlike Timor-Leste, the historically Melanesian territories of Papua and West

Papua remains under thumb and screw, an entity that continues to exist under periodic acts of violence and habitual repression from the Indonesian central authorities. A policy of transmigration has been practiced, a point argued by scholars to be tantamount to genocide. This has entailed moving residents from Java and Sulawesi to West Papua, assisted by Jakarta’s hearty sponsorship.

The Indonesian argument here has been ethnic and political: to confect a national identity through assimilation. Under President Joko Widodo (“Jokowi”), one keen to push the idea of “*Indonesia Maju*” (“Advanced Indonesia”), renewed stress is being placed on infrastructure investment, economic growth and natural

resources, of which Papua features heavily.

The indigenous populace has had to, in turn, surrender land to those transmigrants and appropriating authorities. “The rights of traditional law communities,” notes Clause 17 of Indonesia’s Basic Forestry Act of 1967, “may not be allowed to stand in the way of transmigration sites.”

Appropriations of land, the relocation of residents, and the odd massacre by Indonesian security forces, tend to fly low on the international radar of human rights abuses. West Papua lacks the cinematic appeal or political heft that would encourage around the clock coverage from media networks. Bureaucratic plodders in the various foreign ministries of the world prefer to render such matters benign and of little interest. Geopolitics and natural resources tend to do most of the talking.

In late 2015, for instance, Scott Busby, US deputy assistant secretary of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, and James Carouso, acting deputy assistant secretary for Maritime and Mainland Southeast Asian affairs, ducked and evaded anything too compromising in their testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy. The consequences of demographic policies directed by Jakarta were assiduously ignored. Massacres and institutional accountability in the territory were bypassed, as were Indonesian efforts to prevent scrutiny on the part of human rights monitors, the UN Special rapporteur and journalists.

This year, more instances of violence have managed to leach out and gurgle in media circles. It took a few ugly incidents in the Javanese city of Surabaya to engender a new wave of protests which have had a rattling effect on the security forces. Last month, pro-Indonesian nationalist groups, with reported encouragement from security forces, taunted Papuan students with an array of crude insults in East Java. (“Dogs”, “monkeys” and “pigs” were part of the bitter mix.) The fuse was lit, notably as arrests were made of the Papuans themselves. “Papuans are not monkeys”, proclaimed banners being held at a rally

(continued on Page 8...)



(continued from Page 7...)

in Central Jakarta on August 22. Government buildings have been torched in Jayapura. Additional forces have been deployed, and internet access cut. There are claims that white phosphorous has been used on civilians; prisons are being filled. There have even been protests in Indonesia's capital, with the banned Morning Star flag being flown defiantly in front of the state palace. (Doing so is no mild matter: activist Filep Karma spent over a decade of his life in prison for doing so.)

The struggle for independence, at least in the international eye, has been left to such figures as Benny Wenda, who lobbies governments and groups to back the "Free Papua" campaign. He is particularly keen to take the matter of the Free Choice vote of 1969, that nasty instrument that formalised Indonesian control, to the United Nations General Assembly. Last month, he had to settle for taking the matter to the Pacific Islands Forum as a representative of Vanuatu's delegation. In January, he gifted the UN Human Rights Chief Michelle Bachelet a petition with 1.8 million signatures seeking a new referendum for the territory.

The response from an Indonesian government spokesman was emphatic, curt, and conventional. "Developments in Papua and West Papua province are purely Indonesia's internal affairs. No other country, organisation or individual has the right to interfere in them. We firmly oppose the intervention of Indonesia's internal affairs in whatever form."

The hope for Jokowi and the Indonesian authorities will be simple: ride out the storm, conduct a low-level suppression of protests, and place any talks of secession on the backburner. In this, they can count on regional, if hypocritical support. In the words of a spokesman for the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "Australia recognises Indonesia's territorial integrity and sovereignty over the Papua provinces. Our position is clearly defined by the Lombok Treaty between Indonesia and Australia."

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

## TROUBLE IN HONG KONG

*Western "Progressives" Support Yet Another Color Revolution in Hong Kong*

### The Banality of Protest

by **K.J. Noh**

September 1st, 2019

**M**isinformed "progressive" western "activists" and pundits are putting down their remote controls and organic smoothies just long enough to tweet out that Hong Kong protesters need to be supported as paragons of virtue and justice. Some have even blogged and bloviated about the importance of these protests as a struggle for freedom against "dictatorship."

Most of these individuals never question why, out of the thousands of daily protests, or the 200-plus ongoing global independence movements, or the 50-plus ongoing violent conflicts, why this particular struggle has been *curated* to penetrate the thick fog of their ignorance and their flashbulb-short attention span.

Most of these individuals wouldn't be able to distinguish Hong Kong from Hokkaido, and couldn't tell Putonghua from Toisanhua from Cantonese. Most have never seen or spent a day in China. In fact, you know it's not a real color revolution until the stupid section of the western "progressive" blogosphere gets to cheerleading.

This is what they are willfully missing:

1. It's *not* a progressive popular uprising if the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is involved. The NED is the soft-power coup arm of the US government, doing what the CIA used to do—regime change and dirty tricks—by other means. The NED is crawling all over this. This is an off-the-rack NED project.

2. It's *not* a progressive popular uprising if the key funder and fluffer is a fascist media billionaire with close ties to the most reactionary elements of Western right-wing reaction: Hong Kong's Rupert Murdoch, Jimmy Lai, the owner of the misogynist, racist, xenophobic, Next Media/Next Digital

Corporation/Apple Daily is the driver of this.

3. It's *not* a progressive popular uprising if the key leaders are racist, anti-immigrant, secessionists that court and consort with powerful rightwing extremists and regime change ideologues in the US (John Bolton, Paul Wolfowitz, Mike Pence, Mike Pompeo, Marco Rubio, Eliot Engel, Larry Diamond, etc). John Bolton, for God's sake?

4. You *know it's not* a progressive popular uprising when foreign powers (US Congress, State Dept) proclaim their ardent support for the protestors, write bills, make threats, and threaten consequences if the protests are *not* allowed by the government. When was the last time the US government actually supported a real populist movement?

5. You *know it's not* a popular progressive uprising—or one with a shred of sense—when the protestors make appeals for US intervention or want to go back to being a colony: a shamelessly white supremacist, colonial Apartheid state without a hint of democracy or representation.

6. Popular progressive uprisings don't wave US flags, UK flags, chant colonial slogans, use swastikas and alt-right symbols, terrorize children, spew hate speech ("Chee Na"), or beat unconscious people with US flags. Fascists do.

7. Popular progressive movements for democracy and free speech don't try to shut down free speech and terrorize all who disagree with them.

Let's say you missed all of these. Here are some other things to note:

**A...Protest-in-a-box, for free:** There has been incredible preparation, logistics, organization, and funding. Apologies to dear Rosa Luxembourg, revolutions in this era don't just happen by themselves, and they certainly don't fund themselves. Tens of thousands of protestors, prepared with a flush kit of hardhats, gas masks, filters, goggles, zip ties, staves, lasers, gloves, and body

(continued on Page 9...)



(continued from Page 8...)

armor don't just appear spontaneously.

They don't just improvisationally start creating complex logistics lines using predetermined hand signals while brandishing slick, corporate-designed banners, logos, animation, and soundbite-catchphrases in English. That requires incredible organization, training, and funding.

### **B...The Sudden Color of Violence:**

Note the Blitzkrieg-fast turn to violence. The Modus Operandi for color revolutions is to first instigate mass protests over a *minor* pretext (here, a carefully crafted extradition bill, already suspended), followed by a very quick, prepared escalation to violence: US supported color revolutions need to escalate to violence quickly, the better to crowd out critical reflection, drown the mediascape with emotional images and riot porn, the better to “catapult the propaganda,” the better to create chaos and confusion, the better to bring down, paralyze, render impotent the government by shock; or to trigger a crackdown, thereby bringing down global censure. Above all, they need and rely on disruptive terror to intimidate and paralyze: to create confusion for ongoing sabotage—to throw sand in the gears—and to create structural friction in the conditions of living that render ordinary existence intolerable and unbearable.

In other words, this is not about making demands for creating change: this is shock therapy designed to create a legitimization crisis for a state: render the state impotent or ungovernable, or morally untouchable.

These are well-honed NED/CIA regime change tactics, practiced and documented all over the world, designed to inflame discontent, outrage, and protests. These tactics of geometric escalation, designed to instigate an overreaction by the authorities, the better to use in propaganda and to trigger more agitation are happening as we speak. (The *NY Times*' disingenuous “Marginal Violence theory” is a red herring to distract you as the violence assaults the core, moves asymptotically towards unrestrained urban warfare).

Here are some of the specific tactics, right out of the color revolution template:

**Mass Violence:** including attacking police, cars, and bystanders with Molotovs, blinding lasers, air guns, grenade launchers, sling shots, bricks, steel pipes, sharpened steel bars, baseball bats, sledge hammers, knives, and caustic lye, etc. Bombs, automatic weapons, and axes have also been found and confiscated.

**Mass Terror Tactics:** violent bullying and intimidation, of passers-by, Krystallnacht-style trashing of stores, Rodney King-type beat downs, “Pulp Fiction”-style torture (kidnapping, lynching, and torture of journalist [mass beatings/revival with water/further beatings]); Terrorizing of “opponents” and “non-sympathizers” through leaks, doxing, threats, cyberthreats, and boycotts, and attacking families and their residences (the dorms where the children and wives of the police live). Open incitement on how to kill police and attempted murder through ambush attacks.

**Infrastructure Attacks:** attacks on buildings (police stations, legislative chambers, government buildings, dorms), mass disruption of traffic, transportation, and logistics (airports, subway and subway infrastructure, tollbooths, violent roadblocks, setting fires to barricade in police, massive street fires, coordinated sabotage of traffic lights (to create accidents), cameras, and streetlights.

If a tiny fraction of these types of actions had been unleashed in New York, DC, or London, “democratic” western authorities would have seen fit to let loose with lethal force 13 weeks ago. In fact, as a point of reference, in France, police have killed protestors, blinded 24, and injured 2200 in the *Gilets Jaunes/Yellow Vest* protests.

**C...Fetishistic Demands:** These are demands that don't address the actual conditions that have created the legitimate discontent—rampant inequality and the festering structural violence of a financialized neoliberal state—but rather uncritical, rhetorical, virtue-signaling ad-campaign slogans that can't or won't be met, all the better to justify continued chaos, outrage, and violence.

This is not to say that the working classes of Hong Kong don't have

legitimate grievances to protest. One of the most unequal states in the world—a paradise for billionaires—Hong Kong is a case study in the nihilistic despair of a neoliberal Capitalist state dominated by corporations, high finance and real estate. Due to its history as a capitalist tax haven, with no capital gains, dividend, estate, or value-added taxes, the government derives much of its revenue from selling land to real estate barons, colluding to render housing beyond the reach of most Hong Kong residents and relegating the vast majority of dwellers to claustrophobic subdivided apartments that are the residential equivalent of a subway car at rush hour. The Chinese government, if they are to be blamed, should be blamed for not immediately shutting down this parasitic legacy system of the colonial era—and demonstrating that another way is possible as they have all over the mainland. This legitimate anger at structural Capitalist violence is the outrage and despair that has been diverted and harnessed into anti-immigrant, pro-colonial, anti-Chinese sentiment, serving the color revolution agenda of the West.

**D...Intense, Hyper-coordinated Information Warfare:** coordinated, directed, saturated messaging and censorship in the western press and media:

- One-sided blasting of protest porn or decontextualized police violence, with non-stop pro-protestor commentary and editing;
- Endless, mindless, China-bashing echo-chambering in the media;
- Coordinated, mass white-washing, justification, and erasure of the protestors' over-the-top violence;
- Censorship and mass erasure of almost all voices critical of the protests on the MSM, YouTube, FB, and Twitter: over 200,000 twitter accounts pre-emptively and instantaneously suspended on grounds of supposed “coordination” and undermining “legitimacy and political positions of the protest movement on the ground”. This coordinated, mass censorship happened the exact moment some glimmers of truth

(continued on Page 10...)



(continued from Page 9...)

started to come out and started to discredit the protests (as the gruesome airport torture images started to circulate). Note that grassroots protest movements don't have direct access to the Silicon Valley kill switch if unfavorable information comes out. If there was any doubt as to whether US social media companies function as the subcontracted perception management arm and gatekeepers of the globalized US security-surveillance state, you have here your proof.

Compare this saturated, single-message, biased coverage also with the minimal coverage of the current or recent situations in:

- Kashmir, which Indian troops are currently blockading and violently occupying (where the special autonomous status of the region has been already revoked),
- France's Gilets Jaunes, an ongoing popular protest, where 24 people have been blinded, 2200 injured, and 11 have died,
- West Papua and Papua, Indonesia, where Indonesian troops are currently on a murderous rampage,
- Catalonia, where an independence movement successful at the ballots was violently put down,
- South Korea's Candlelight revolution, a massive populist uprising in South Korea, almost completely ignored until the government was brought down,
- Almost any other popular protest around the world.

To ask sincerely why Hong Kong is receiving saturation coverage, "moral" support, and an unprecedented media platform—out of all the other movements

and struggles—gives you a framework for understanding the scale, scope, and stakes of what this is about. This is a geostrategic, geopolitical information warfare, no longer—if ever—grassroots popular agitation.

**Full Spectrum Resistance:**

In the post-Soviet era, the Pentagon and its allies came up with the doctrine of "Full Spectrum Dominance". This is a war doctrine that aims for total domination in all spheres and battle spaces: dominance, not just in kinetic military conflict, but also in the domains of civil disturbance, information warfare, and social perception, in particular network-centric "operational narrative dominance". This is what's going on here.

Progressives — if you actually are that — you need to keep your eyes open, your minds alert, and think sharply, critically, objectively as you wander into this battlespace.

Color revolutions and regime change operations simply can't happen without you: they need you to become the blind chorus, the vapid echo chamber, the ditz cheerleaders, and the jaundiced, prejudiced, ignorant umpires in this dirty game of information warfare. If you don't want to become a vector of propaganda and a host of disinformation in this ugly viral warfare, you need to think critically, reflexively, dialectically when you tweet, blog, agitate, or speak out. Lives and nations rest in the balance.

**K.J. Noh** is a long time activist, writer, and teacher. He is a member of Veterans for Peace and works on global justice issues. He can be reached at: [k.j.noh48@gmail.com](mailto:k.j.noh48@gmail.com). [Read other articles by K.J.](#)

This article was posted Sunday, 01/09/2019

*"If there is a country that has committed unspeakable atrocities in the world, it is the United States of America. They don't care for human beings."* - Nelson Mandela

*"Every empire, however, tells itself and the world that it is unlike all other empires, that its mission is not to plunder and control but to educate and liberate."*  
(Los Angeles Times, July 20, 2003)  
— Edward W. Said

**A DANGEROUS ALLY**

*We have surrendered our sovereignty to a very dangerous and violent ally.* An update

By **John Menadue**

Posted on 18/09/2019 by Louisa Gunning

**A**s China reasserts its historical world role, its influence will grow in Australia and elsewhere. But that influence is minimal compared with the US which has 'agents of influence' thick on the ground in Australia. Our media, including the ABC, is saturated with US content and a large part of it is controlled by an American citizen with close ties to Donald Trump. We have a reasonable degree of domestic political autonomy despite foreign ownership of our major companies but we have ceded effective foreign and defence power to the US military, industrial and intelligence complex. All our major political parties are happy to maintain our quasi colonial status.

This article was first published on the 9th of August 2019. It is now slightly updated.

The US is the greatest threat to peace in the world. It is an aggressor across the globe. It is the most violent country both at home and abroad. And people know it. The Pew Research Centre found in 2018 that 45% of people surveyed around the world saw 'US power and influence as a major threat'

Retired US Defence Secretary Mattis complained that President Trump should show more respect for allies. But the US shows most respect for allies that do what they are told or supinely comply, like Australia. Our PM even gets an invitation to dinner with Trump and Scott Morrison cannot contain his eagerness. Our media join in the vicarious thrill of it all.

Apart from brief isolationist periods, the US has been almost perpetually at war; wars that we have been foolishly drawn into. The US has subverted and overthrown numerous governments over two centuries. It has a military and business complex, a 'hidden state', that depends on war for influence and enrichment. It believes in its 'manifest destiny' which brings with it an assumed moral superiority which it denies to others. The problems did not start with Trump. They are long-standing and deep rooted.

(continued on Page 11...)



(continued from Page 10...)

Unfortunately, many of our political, bureaucratic, business and media ‘elites’ have been so long on an American drip feed that they find it hard to think of a world without an American focus. We had a similar and dependent view of the UK in the past. That ended in tears in Singapore.

Conservatives rail about Chinese influence but they and we are immersed and dominated by all things American, including the Murdoch media. Our media do regard Australia as the 51st American state. Just look at the saturation coverage of the Democrat primaries with the presidential election still 15 months away! Easy and lazy news. Its harder and nowhere near as interesting to cover much more important news in Indonesia and Malaysia.

In this blog ([Is war in the American DNA?](#)), I have drawn attention to the risks we run in being ‘joined at the hip’ to a country that is almost always at war. The facts are clear. The US has never had a decade without war. Since its founding in 1776 the US has been at war 93% of the time. The ‘frontier’ which dominates so much of American historical thinking was grounded in violence and aggression including occupation of large parts of Spanish/Mexican lands. These wars then extended from its own hemisphere, to the Pacific, to Europe and most recently to the Middle East. The US has launched 201 out of 248 armed conflicts since the end of WWII. In recent decades most of these wars have been unsuccessful. The US maintains 700 military bases or sites around the world including in Australia. In our own region it has massive deployment of hardware and troops in Japan, the ROK and Guam.

US fleets patrol in strength off the Chinese coast. The US would have mass hysteria if the Chinese fleet patrolled off the Californian coast or Florida Keys, as it is legally entitled to do!

The US led illegal invasion of Iraq encouraged by John Howard has resulted, directly and indirectly in the death of a million people and the displacement of millions of people. It has exposed historic religious, tribal and ethnic tensions. World-wide terrorism

and ISIS are the direct result of US aggression and our complicity. John Howard is never held responsible for the massive calamity that he helped facilitate. He remains a national hero at least in the Liberal Party.

The US has been meddling in other countries’ affairs and elections for a century. It tried to change other countries’ governments 72 times during the cold war. Many foreign leaders were assassinated. In the piece reproduced in this blog ([The fatal expense of US Imperialism](#)) Professor Jeffrey Sachs said

‘The scale of US military operations is remarkable. ... The US has a long history of using covert and overt means to overthrow governments deemed to be unfriendly to the US. ... Historian John Coatsworth counts 41 cases of successful US-led regime change for an average of one government overthrow by the US every 28 months for centuries’.

The overthrow, assassination, or interference in foreign governments are diverse, including Honduras, Guatemala, Iran, Haiti, Congo, Indonesia, Japan, Vietnam, Chile, Iraq, Afghanistan and most recently, Syria.

And this interference continued with the undermining of the pro-Russian government in the Ukraine by the US-backed Maidan coup in 2014. Gorbachev and Bush agreed that in allowing the reunification of Germany, NATO would not extend eastwards. But with US encouragement, NATO has now provocatively extended right up to the borders of Russia. Not surprisingly Russia is resisting.

Despite all the evidence of wars and meddling in other countries’ affairs, the American Imperium continues without serious check or query in America or Australia.

There are several reasons why the American record of war and interference has not been challenged.

The first is what is often described as America’s “manifest destiny”; the God-given right to interfere in other countries’ affairs. This right is not given to others because many Americans see themselves as more virtuous and their system of government better than others.

Despite their assumed world role, many Americans have a limited understanding of other countries’ culture and life. Only 32% of Americans have passports. In the UK and Australia it is 70%. Before he became President, George Bush had only been overseas once. That was to visit Beijing where his father was the Ambassador.

Professor Tom Nichols reported in this blog ([How America lost its faith in expertise, and why that matters](#)) Public Policy Polling that revealed that 43% of Republicans and 55% of Democrats supported bombing a place called ‘Agrabah’ which turned out to be a fictional place in a cartoon. Only an ignorant people could presume that their country should bomb a city that did not exist! To this day 70% of registered Republicans doubt that Obama is an American citizen.

The US has invaded countries it knew about and in many cases, cultures and people it knew nothing about, who were assumed to be less virtuous and wise than the US. In examining the failure in Vietnam, General Walter T Kerwin Jr observed that ‘we never understood the Vietnamese. We think we know best. We tried to force on them what they should do...’ The ignorance of ordinary Americans and its politicians, of other countries is legendary but possibly just as important is their resistance to any relief of that ignorance. That may not seem unusual – but it is dangerous for a country with overwhelming military power employed around the globe.

The second reason why the American Imperium continues largely unchecked is the power of what President Eisenhower once called the “military and industrial complex” in the US. In 2019, I would add the intelligence community and politicians to that complex who depend heavily on funding from powerful arms manufacturers across the country and the military and civilian personnel in over 4,000 military facilities across the US. Democrats and Republicans both court these wealthy arms suppliers and their employees.

The intelligence community, universities and think-tanks also have a

(continued on Page 12...)



(continued from Page 11...)

vested interest in the American Imperium.

This complex, which co-opts institutions and individuals in Australia, is often called “the hidden state”. It has enormous influence. No US president nor for that matter any Australian prime minister would likely challenge it.

Australia has locked itself into this complex. Our military and defence leaders are heavily dependent on the US Departments of Defence and State, the CIA and the FBI for advice. But it goes beyond advice. The ‘five eyes’ led by the CIA applied pressure to us on 5G as part of a broader campaign to attack almost all things Chinese. We willingly respond and join the US in disasters like Vietnam, Iraq and the Middle East. While the UN General Assembly votes with large majorities to curb nuclear proliferation, we remain locked in to the position of the US and other nuclear powers.

Our autonomy and independence is also at great risk because our defence/security ‘elites’ in Canberra have as their holy grail the concept of “interoperability” with the US. This is mirrored in US official and think-tank commentary on the role they see for us in our region. So powerful is US influence and our willing cooperation with it that our foreign policies have been largely emasculated and sidelined by the defence and security views of both the US and their acolytes in Australia.

The concept of interoperability does not only mean equipment. It also means personnel where increasingly large numbers of Australian military personnel are embedded in the US military and defence establishments, especially in the Pacific Command in Hawaii. The last US Commander in Hawaii very nearly became the new US Ambassador in Australia. Instead he was sent to Seoul to keep the ROK in line.

The US military and industrial complex and its associates have a vested interest in America being at war and our defence establishment, Department of Defence, ADF, Australian Strategic Policy Institute and the ‘Intelligence’ community are locked-in American loyalists.

As Geoff Raby in this blog has argued, our security and intelligence agencies like ASIO and ASIS have led and bullied the Australian Government into hysteria over China. The collectors of intelligence have become the propagandists and policy makers. Paul Keating calls them ‘nutters’. DFAT has been sidelined. With our intelligence agencies out of control it is not surprising to see the travesty of the prosecution of Bernard Collaery and Witness K. The wrong people are being charged.

The third reason for the continuing dominance of the American Imperium is the way the US expects others to abide by a “rules-based international order” which was largely determined at Bretton Woods after WWII and embedded in various UN agencies. That ‘order’ reflects the power and views of the dominant countries in the 1940s. It does not recognize legitimate interests of newly-emerging countries like China who now insist on playing a part in an international rules-based order.

The US only follows an international rules-based order when it suits its own interests. It pushes for a rules-based system in the South China Sea while refusing to endorse UNCLOS (Law of the Sea) or accept ICJ decisions. The invasion of Iraq was a classic case of breaking the rules. It was illegal. The resultant death and destruction in Iraq met the criteria for war crimes. But the culprits have gone scot free.

It is a myth that democracies like America will behave internationally at a higher level of morality than other countries. Countries act in their own interests as they perceive them. We need to discount the noble ideas espoused by Americans on how they run their own country on the domestic front, and look instead at how they consistently treat other countries. Consider how the Kurds are being treated. They led the fight against ISIS but are now largely abandoned by the US and other ‘allies’. The Kurds are holding the Australian wives and children of ISIS fighters but we are so slow to decently help. The scrapping of the alliance with the Kurds is made the more dishonourable by the emergence of the new version of the US/Saudi alliance with its resulting tragedy in Yemen.

US claims about how well they run their own country are challenged on so many fronts. Forty three million US citizens live in poverty, they have a massive prison population with its indelible racist connotations, guns are ubiquitous and they refuse to address the issue. Violence is as American as cherry pie. It is embedded in US behaviour both at home and abroad.

The founding documents of the US inspire Americans and many people throughout the world. “The land of the free and the home of the brave” still has a clarion call. Unfortunately, those core values have often been denied to others. For example, when the Philippines sought US support it was invaded instead. Ho Chi Minh wanted US support for independence but Vietnam was invaded.

Like many democracies, including our own, money and vested interests are corrupting public life. ‘Democracy’ in the US has been replaced by ‘Donocracy’, with practically no restrictions on funding of elections and political activity for decades. Vested interests are largely unchecked. House of Representatives electorates are gerrymandered and poor and minority group voters are often excluded from the rolls. The powerful Jewish lobby, supported by fundamentalist Christians, has run US policy off the rails on Israel and the Middle East.

The US has slipped to number 21 as a ‘flawed democracy’ in the Economist’s Intelligence 2016 Democracy Index. (NZ was ranked 4 and Australia 10). It noted that ‘public confidence in government has slumped to historic lows in the US.’ That was before Trump!

Many democracies are in trouble. US democracy is in more trouble than most. There is a pervasive sickness.

Our risky dependence on the US cannot be avoided or excused by laying problems at the door of Donald Trump. Malcolm Fraser warned us about a dangerous ally long before Donald Trump came on the scene. US obsession with war and with overthrowing or undermining foreign governments goes back over a century. So does domestic gun violence.

(continued on Page 13...)



(continued from Page 12...)

Donald Trump excesses are not likely to significantly move American policies from what has become the norm over two centuries.

Hugh White has pointed out, the US has in effect now given up looking after anyone but itself – “America first”. It could of course be argued that Trump is just being honest and saying what US presidents have always done, looking after their own interests even if they refused to admit it.

A major voice in articulating American extremism and the American Imperium is Fox News and Rupert Murdoch who exert their influence not just in America but in its subservient ‘allies’ like Australia. In the media, Fox News supported the invasion of Iraq and is mindless of the terrible consequences. Rupert Murdoch applauded the invasion of Iraq because it would reduce oil prices. Fox and News Corp are leading sceptics on climate change which threatens our planet. In April last year the New York Times told us that outside the White House, Rupert Murdoch is Trump’s chief adviser. Rupert Murdoch runs political parties as much as media organisations.

But it is not just the destructive role of News Corp in US, UK and Australia. Our media, including the ABC and even SBS, is so derivative. Our media seems to regard Australia as an island parked off New York. We are saturated with news, views, entertainment and sit-coms from the US. It is so pervasive and extensive, we don’t recognize it for its very nature. The last thing a fish recognizes is water.

Mike Keating described (as Hugh White pointed out) that, based on Australian Treasury figures, by 2030 Chinese GDP is projected to be 70% larger than US GDP. It is already 15 % larger. The US has record debt which the recent tax cuts, like those of Reagan and Bush, will only worsen.

One outcome of the declining comparative US economic power is that the US will ask its allies to do more. We saw the influence of US budgetary pressures in its launch of the pivot to the Pacific. We have seen the first step with Marines in Darwin. There are a lot more big steps to come.

The US may return, hopefully, to its brief periods of isolationism and leave its allies to their own devices. Maybe they will do us a favour!

Despite continual wars, often unsuccessful, the overthrow or subversion of foreign governments and declining US economic influence, US hegemony and domination of Australian thinking continues.

Despite all the evidence, why do we continue in denial?

One reason is that as a small, isolated and white community in Asia we have historically sought an outside protector, first the UK and when that failed, the US. We should not bury in Anzackery the enormous price we paid for British ‘protection’. We have not shaken off that dependence and subservience to distant empires.

We continue to seek security from our region through a US protector rather than, as Paul Keating put it, security within our own region. Our long-term future depends on cooperation in our region and not reliance on a dangerous and distant ally.

Another reason why we are in denial about the American Imperium, is, as I have described, saturation of our media with US news, views and entertainment. We do not have an independent media. Whatever the US media says about tax cuts for the wealthy, defence or climate change it inevitably gets a good run in our media.

A further reason for the continuing US hegemony in Australian attitudes is the galaxy of Australian opinion leaders who have benefitted from American largesse and support – in the media, politics, bureaucracy, business, trade unions, universities and think-tanks. Thousands of influential Australians have been co-opted by US money and support in ‘dialogues’, study centres and think tanks. The US has nourished agents of influence in Australia for decades. China is a raw beginner in the use of soft power.

How long will Australian denial of US policies continue? When will some of us stand up? When will our humiliation end?

Are our political leaders right in their assessment that any questioning of the

threats posed by our interpretation of the benefits and obligations of the US alliance will lose them an election?

In so far as China is any sort of distant threat it would be much less so if we were not so subservient to the US. The US is determined to make China its enemy. We are cooperating in that process.

The US is a very dangerous ally. It is more likely to get us into trouble than out of trouble.

We are joined at the hip to the most violent and dangerous country in the world.

### ISRAEL: TERRORIST STATE

*If there’s such a thing as a murderous culture, then it exists in Israel*

By Gideon Levy

September 08, 2019 "Information Clearing House" –

**T**his is what the editor of Haaretz’s Culture and Literature supplement, Benny Ziffer, wrote on his Facebook page upon returning from paying a condolence call in the settlement of Ofra: “En route I looked at the Palestinian villages alongside the Jewish communities, and I thought of how for the Palestinians murder is a type of sport or enjoyment, perhaps a substitute for erotica. From that perspective we will never have anything culturally in common with them.”

And if that weren’t enough, Ziffer also wrote, “Regarding this evil and undignified people living among us, we can only yearn for the land to vomit it out, because it isn’t worthy of this land, which is full of Jewish blood that it has spilled.”

His post generated no comment. Ziffer has apparently exhausted his allotted attention. By contrast, Yaron London succeeded in raising a bigger momentary storm with less serious remarks: “Arabs are savages ... they don’t only hate Jews, they kill their own first and foremost.”

More than one straight line connects London and Ziffer. Their comments reflect the spirit of the times in Israel.

Both were once considered leftists; the unbridled right still considers

(continued on Page 14...)



(continued from Page 13...)

London to be one. Both are extraordinarily talented, brilliant intellectuals, of enviable erudition. Sometimes it's tempting to say that because of their rare media talent their remarks should be forgiven, lest we be left with Ayala Hasson and Yaakov Bardugo. In contrast to their images as avant garde, they express what many people think, not to mention the majority opinion in Israel, which only the rules of political correctness keep from breaking out into the consensus.

More than they are racists, London and Ziffer are disseminating lies. I was sitting in London's studio when he said his piece; I tried to respond in real time but to no avail. So I will try here.

We examined the past decade; those murderous, bloodletting Palestinians, have since January 2009 killed 190 Israelis. How many Palestinians were killed by Israel, the seeker of peace and goodness, which will never have anything culturally in common with the Arabs? Some 3,500. Israel was 18 times more murderous. Was it for sport? Erotic pleasure? Of course not, but the blood speaks: Israel draws far more of it.

Is it permitted to say that it's Israeli culture to spill blood wholesale? According to London, yes. There is something called national culture, even if it's a culture of killing. But when one speaks about genetic characteristics, it's racism. One can even generalize, as London said, a generalization will always be unjust to the individual and the exceptional. But it has to be based on reality, and the reality is that the enlightened whites have, in the past 100 years, massacred more people than all the Muslims and savages combined. Not only were Hitler and Stalin not Muslims, since World War II the United States, the land of the free, is guilty of more killing than any other country. Most of its mass killers are decidedly non-Muslim.

Someone who generalizes isn't necessarily a racist. But he may turn out to be a liar. If there's a culture of killing, it actually exists in Israel. Soldiers and policemen who shoot to kill as a first choice testify to a warped morality. Fear, hatred, self-pity, the security cult, dehumanization and an itchy trigger finger are all Israeli cultural traits that lead to this mass blood-letting, but woe unto anyone who dares define Israel as having a murderous culture. He'd be condemned as an anti-Semite. The Palestinian people, on the other hand, are one of the most restrained people in history in its violent resistance to occupation and injustice. That's the truth, there's no denying it.

Israel actually likes cultural and national generalizations, especially when they glorify its image. The "Jewish genius," "the chosen people," "Jewish morality," and "eternal Israel," are evidence of baseless arrogance. Ziffer has every right to think that the Palestinians enjoy murder and London can think they are savages compared to us, the enlightened and developed. It is our right (and duty) to answer them: There are no lies more abominable than these.

*This article was originally published by "Haaretz" - -*

#### ISRAEL: APARTHEID STATE

*Apartheid Made Official: Deal of the Century is a Ploy and Annexation is the New Reality*

by **Ramzy Baroud** / September 18th, 2019

**I**sraeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is moving quickly to alter the political reality in Palestine, and facing little or no resistance.

On September 10, Netanyahu declared his intentions to annex swathes of Palestinian land adjacent to the Jordan River, an area that covers 2,400 square kilometers, or nearly a third of the Occupied West Bank. That region, which extends from Bisan in the north to Jericho in the south, is considered to be Palestine's food basket, as it accounts for an estimated 60 percent of vegetables that are produced in the West Bank.

While Israel has already colonized nearly 88 percent of the entire Palestinian Ghour (or Jordan Valley), dividing it between illegal agricultural settlements and military zones, it was always assumed that the militarily occupied region will be included within the border of a future Palestinian state.

Netanyahu's announcement has been linked to Israel's general elections of September 17. The Israeli leader is desperate, as he is facing "unprecedented alliances" that are all closing in to unseat him from his political throne. But this cannot be all. Not even power-hungry Netanyahu would alter the political and territorial landscape of Israel and Palestine indefinitely in exchange for a few votes.

Indeed, talks of annexation have been afoot for years and have long preceded the September elections, or the previous ones in April.

A sense of euphoria has been felt among Israel's right-wing officials since the advent of Donald Trump to the White House. The excitement was not directly linked to Trump but to his Middle East team, like-minded pro-Israel US officials whose support for Israel is predicated on more than personal interests, but religious and ideological beliefs as well.

White House senior adviser, Jared Kushner, selected his team very carefully: Jason Greenblatt as special envoy for Middle East peace, David Friedman as United States Ambassador to Israel, and layers of other second-tier officials whose mission was never aimed at resolving conflict or brokering peace, but supervising a process in which Israel finalizes its colonization of Palestine unhindered.

Kushner's master stroke is epitomized in the way he presented his objectives as part of a political process, later named "Deal of the Century".

In all fairness, Kushner's team hardly labored or even pretended to be peacemakers, especially as they oversaw the US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and of the occupied Golan Heights as Israeli territories. Indeed, none of these officials tried to hide their true motives. Just examine statements made by the just-resigned Greenblatt where he refused to name illegal Jewish settlements as such, but as "neighborhoods and cities"; and Friedman's outright support for the annexation of parts of the Occupied West

(continued on Page 15...)



(continued from Page 14...)

Bank, and much more.

The US political discourse seemed in complete alignment with that of Israel's right-wing parties. When right-wing extremist politicians, the likes of Naftali Bennett and Ayelet Shaked, began floating the idea of annexing most or all of the Occupied West Bank, they no longer sounded like marginal and opportunistic voices vying for attention. They were at the center of Israeli politics, knowing full well that Washington no longer had a problem with Israel's unilateral action.

It could be argued, then, that Netanyahu was merely catching up, as the center of gravity within his right-wing coalition was slipping away to younger, more daring politicians. In fact, Israel, as a whole, was changing. With the Labor Party becoming almost entirely irrelevant, the Center's political ideology moved further to the right, simply because supporting an independent Palestinian state in Israel has become a form of political suicide.

Therefore, Netanyahu's call for the annexation of Palestinian land east of the Jordan River must not be understood in isolation and only within the limited context of the Israeli elections. Israel is now set to annex large parts of the West Bank that it deems strategic. This is most likely to include all illegal settlement blocks and the Jordan Valley as well.

In fact, Netanyahu said on September 11 that he was ready to annex the Jordan Valley region even before the election date, but was blocked by the Attorney General's office. Netanyahu would not have taken such a decision if it represented a political risk or if it faced a push-back from Washington. It is, then, sadly, a matter of time.

Suspiciously absent in all of this are the Palestinian Authority (PA), the Arab League, the European Union and, of course, the United Nations and its many outlets and courts. Aside from a few shy statements – like that of the spokesperson of the UN, Stéphane Dujarric, decrying that “unilateral actions are not helpful in the peace process” – Israeli leaders are facing little or no hindrance whatsoever as they finalize their complete colonization of all Palestinian land.

Unable to stage any kind of meaningful resistance against Israel, the Palestinian leadership is so pathetically insisting on utilizing old terminologies. The official Palestinian response to Netanyahu's annexation pledge, as communicated by Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh, came only to underscore the PA's political bankruptcy.

“Netanyahu is the chief destroyer of the peace process,” Shtayyeh said, warning that annexing parts of the West Bank would have negative consequences.

For his part, the PA leader Mahmoud Abbas resorted, once more, to empty threats. Abbas said in a statement, “All agreements and their resulting obligations would end if the Israeli side annexes the Jordan Valley, the northern Dead Sea, and any part of the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967.”

Neither Abbas nor Shtayyeh seem troubled by the fact that a “peace process” does not exist, and that Israel has already violated all agreements.

While the PA is desperately hanging on to any reason to justify its continued existence, Netanyahu, with the full support of Washington, is moving forward in annexing the West Bank, thus making apartheid an official and undisputed reality.

The Palestinian leadership must understand that the nature of the conflict is now changing. Conventional methods and empty statements will not slow down the Israeli push for annexation nor Tel Aviv's determination to expand its apartheid to all of Palestine. If Palestinians continue to ignore this reality altogether, Israel will continue to single-handedly shape the destiny of Palestine and its people.

**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). [Read other articles by Ramzy](#), or [visit Ramzy's website](#).

This article was posted on Wednesday, September 18th, 2019

## IRAN IN U.S. SIGHTS

### Uncle Sam Scapegoats Iran

By **Finian Cunningham**

September 18, 2019 "[Information Clearing House](#)" -

**F**ollowing the devastating airstrikes on Saudi Arabia's oil industry, US Vice President Mike Pence flexed his tough-talking muscles, vowing that his country is “ready to defend our interests and allies... make no mistake about it.”

Don't you think the assurance is a bit late? Saudi Arabia – a historic and key ally of Washington – had its entire oil production knocked out by 50 per cent last weekend when it came under aerial attack. Global markets were rattled over possible critical fuel shortages as the world's biggest exporter of crude oil might not recover full production for weeks.

So, Pence's stern words of being “ready to defend” certainly ring a bit hollow, if not rather farcical. If Washington was indeed on sentry duty for the Middle East, as it has appointed itself to do decades ago, why weren't the airstrikes on Saudi Arabia's vital oil industry intercepted to prevent the havoc wreaked?

We are not talking here about some remote oil field or installation. The infrastructure targeted for massive damage was at the very heart of Saudi's oil industry. The Abqaiq refinery and processing plant is where up to 70 per cent of all Saudi crude is prepared for export. It is said to be the biggest crude oil processing plant in the world. And it is near to other vital refining and shipping facilities in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province adjacent to the Persian Gulf.

The Yemeni Houthi rebels claimed responsibility for the air raids last weekend, which also targeted a major oil field at Khurais, located in Eastern Province, not far from the Abqaiq processing plant. The Houthis said the blitz was conducted with 10 unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). The distance covered from Yemen is nearly 1,000 kms. It is thought that the Yemeni rebels have developed drones capable of reaching up to 1,500 kms.

(continued on Page 16...)



(continued from Page 15...)

What's more, they have threatened that all key Saudi oil infrastructure is vulnerable to future attacks.

Potentially, a new wave of airstrikes from Yemen using more sophisticated drone models could bring the Saudi rulers to their knees from their oil economy being decimated.

What must be deeply troubling for the Saudis is that their lifeline oil economy seems to be defenceless – despite having spent hundreds of billions of dollars on US anti-missile systems. Months after Donald Trump took office in early 2017, recall how he boasted about the Saudis buying over \$100 billion in Pentagon weaponry.

That's why VP Mike Pence's stirring words of "defending allies" sound ridiculous.

It also suggests that's why US intelligence and military officials are hurriedly trying to blame Iran for carrying out the latest attacks. If the rag-tag Houthi rebels from war-torn Yemen can penetrate US-backed air defences to demolish Saudi oil infrastructure, then American anti-missile technology is more over-rated and much worse in practice than many had already suspected.

President Trump has been a little more circumspect about blaming Iran for the air assaults, but senior administration officials like Pence and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defense Secretary Mark Esper have come out forcefully claiming that Iran is responsible. Iran denies any involvement and says that the US is "in denial" about the fact that the Yemenis are capable and entitled to defend themselves in a more-than-four-year military operation launched on their country by the US-backed Saudi military coalition in March 2015.

US intelligence and military sources are briefing American media outlets that the airstrikes were carried out with drones and cruise missiles fired from southwest Iran. No evidence has been presented, as usual from these



anonymous and faceless US spooks; the only "evidence" so far are satellite images of the damaged oil installations. Those images are far from conclusive. The attacks could have come from the southerly direction of Yemen.

But here's the thing. If drones and cruises missiles were launched from Iran, as the US is claiming, then their flight path would have come within close range of the American Navy's Fifth Fleet headquarters base in Bahrain which is near to Saudi's Eastern Province and its oil infrastructure.

The US Fifth Fleet is responsible for "securing" the entire Middle East and in particular the strategically important Persian Gulf waterway where a third of all globally shipped oil is daily transported. It is the world's premier chokepoint for oil trade.

Is it really plausible that a swarm of drones and cruise missiles allegedly transiting from Iran across the Gulf within a few hundred kilometres of the US Fifth Fleet – with all its warships, radar, satellite and detection technology bristling – were not detected in flight heading for Saudi Arabia?

If Iranian drones and missiles were detected then we can be sure US officials would be blaring the information, categorically pinpointing the incriminating evidence. As it is, American officials and their intelligence sources are so far peddling vague accusations against Iran based on dubious satellite images.

That suggests that Iran's denials are credible and that the Houthis' version of

events is closer to the truth. They hit Saudi Arabia's "crown jewels" and the Saudis' supposed protector, the US, could do nothing about it.

**Finian Cunningham** has written extensively on international affairs, with articles published in several languages. He is a Master's graduate in Agricultural Chemistry and worked as a scientific editor for the Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge, England, before pursuing a career in newspaper journalism. He is also a musician and songwriter. For

nearly 20 years, he worked as an editor and writer in major news media organisations, including The Mirror, Irish Times and Independent.

*This article was originally published by "Sputnik" -*

**U.S. TERROR SYNDICATE**

**US Terror Syndicate**

By **Finian Cunningham**

September 09, 2019 "Information Clearing House" -

**A** recent investigation has uncovered explosive evidence that the US is supplying weapons to terror groups in Syria, Iraq and Yemen. The finding blows the lid sky-high on Washington's much-vaunted claims of "fighting terrorism".

Bulgarian journalist Dilyana Gaytandzhieva and her Arms Watch website have uncovered perhaps some of the most incriminating evidence yet linking the Pentagon to al-Qaeda\*-affiliated jihadi groups across the Middle East.

In a feat of investigative reporting carried out over the past two years, Arms Watch has pieced together an entire network of covert arms dealing orchestrated by the Pentagon. The devastating implication is that such a global syndicate involving US arms contractors, American government officials acting as buyers, and the use of hundreds of civilian airliners given "diplomatic clearance" – all of these logistics must have had top-level authorization in Washington.

(continued on Page 17...)



(continued from Page 16...)

So when President Trump crows about "defeating terror" in Syria or fighting against "Iran-backed proxies" in Yemen, he is either a liar or he has not a clue about what his military and intel chiefs are really up to. Up to their necks in supporting terrorism on an industrial scale.

The giant gun-running scheme operates to purchase non-standard US weaponry from arms companies in the Balkans – Bulgaria, Croatia and Serbia. The cargos comprising millions of weapon pieces, including assault rifles, mortars and rockets, are usually flown to the US airbase, Al Udeid, in Qatar. From there, the arms are transported to various terrorist outfits in Syria, Iraq and Yemen.

How are the weapons tracked back from the terrorists to US government buyers?

As Arms Watch explains, the serial numbers on individual weapons recovered in hauls by the Syrian Arab Army from former militant bases show an exact match with order and lot numbers on documents that Arms Watch received from anonymous leaks. Other leaked documents (emails, passport scans) reveal US government officials purchasing inventories of weapons bearing the same serial numbers from arms companies in Bulgaria, Croatia and Serbia.

Another method of identification is a close examination of propaganda videos released by so-called Islamic State (ISIS or Daesh)\* and other Al Qaeda affiliates such as Nusra Front (rebranded as Tahrir Hayat al-Sham). From the weapons displayed in the videos being handled by militants, the serial numbers can be identified and tracked back to the Balkans and the US buyers.

We are talking here about millions of weapons and tens of millions of dollars. This could not be carried out by rogue American intel agencies acting without authorization. It must have top-level clearance, perhaps even from President Trump's national security council headed up by John Bolton.

As journalist Dilyana Gaytandzhieva comments: "The documents expose the biggest lie in the US foreign policy – officially fighting terrorism while secretly supporting it."

This is by no means the first time that Washington has been accused of covertly sponsoring terror groups for regime-change machinations.

In Syria, US and other NATO weaponry has been recovered over and over again in former terrorist dens. There have also been several reports of American military helicopters making secretive arms drops or transporting militants to safe havens.

Former Afghan President Hamid Karzai made damning claims in a media interview in 2017 in which he said that he was convinced US special forces were aiding and abetting the ISIS network in Afghanistan.

The Russian Ministry of Defence has also reported suspicious movement by US helicopters and arms drops to militants in Syria and Afghanistan.

However, the latest investigative findings by Arms Watch expose an international weapons supply chain to internationally proscribed terror groups – all under the direction of Washington.

The evidence cannot be clearer: the US government is arming, sponsoring and directing terror networks as a proxy force in several countries. Remember these proxies have committed unspeakable barbarities against hundreds of thousands of civilians, including decapitating women and children, across the Middle East.

That means that when the US air force is bombing countries like Iraq, Syria and Yemen (vicariously with regional allies' warplanes), Washington is really serving as the air command for terrorist ground forces.

Since the 9/11 terror attacks on the US in 2001, the world has been utterly changed by constant American warmongering. Whole countries have been demolished, civilizations desecrated, millions of civilians have been killed or maimed, millions of children orphaned, millions of refugees on the move. This astounding record of de facto criminality and state terrorism by Washington has been repeatedly justified or concealed by its claims of conducting a war on terror.

If the US is not fighting terrorism but rather actually mobilizing it and weaponizing it, as the above investigation demonstrates, then the conclusion is truly awesome.

The world is being held hostage by the biggest terror syndicate ever – which masquerades as a democratic government in Washington.

[See previous article for **biographical information on Finian Cunningham**]

## REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS

*Recalling the Hundreds of Thousands of Civilian Victims of America's Endless 'War on Terror'*

by **Dave Lindorff**

September 17, 2019

**N**ow that the flags are back waving from the tops of flagpoles across the country, and the maudlin paeans to the close to 3000 lives lost in the airplane attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, it's time we gave a thought to the dead who were ignored.

According to very conservative estimates, as reported by the "Costs of War" project of Brown University's Watson Institute on International and Public Affairs, nearly 250,000 civilians have been killed during the 8 years since September 2001 in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan in wars or attacks that were instigated by the United States.

Those are very conservative figures carefully compiled by organizations like Iraq Body Count, the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies. These numbers are people known to have died in the violence of war, mostly as so-called "collateral damage," but often deliberately, as when the US bombs a hospital, a wedding or a private housing compound in order to kill some targeted individual considered an "enemy combatant," unconcerned about the others in the area, often women and children, who are almost certain to die or suffer serious injury as the result of a strike.

The numbers do not include the deaths that also stem from America's post 9-11 wars — things like starvation, deaths (continued on Page 18...)



(continued from Page 17...)

from lack of medical care, and especially deaths from diseases like typhus or dysentery caused by lack of access to clean water or adequate sanitation facilities.

It is scandalous that the US government does not publish accurate information about the mayhem and slaughter that its wars have caused, especially because it is precisely because of the US extensive use of airpower, including remotely piloted drones as a means of keeping politically dangerous US military casualties in the so-called “War on Terror” at a minimum that produce so many civilian casualties.

Reporters who want to learn about civilian casualties from these US wars must either take the dangerous step of going to the battle zones without US official backing (what is called embedding with American forces — a set-up that keeps the military in control of access and message), or rely on reports from NGOs that monitor such things.

According to some accounts, civilian deaths caused by America’s permanent war in the Middle East since 2001 could exceed one million. And remember, *none of those deaths*, occurring in places ruled by dictators, authoritarian governments or armed groups in the case of Pakistan’s border region with Afghanistan, had any involvement in attacks on the US. Their deaths, whether caused directly or indirectly by the US military, can *in no way* be construed as “retribution” for the attacks of 9-11.

Add to that the other uncomfortable reality that many of the combatant deaths caused by US forces in places like Iraq, Afghanistan, border areas of Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Syria, are of fighters who are not terrorists at all, but rather, like the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces as well as the Pathet Lao in Laos, who fought and ultimately defeated US forces in the decade-long Indochina War of the ‘60 and ‘70s, are actually “freedom fighters” who have been defending their countries from a US invasion and occupation.

Of course, if we were to acknowledge that the “War on Terror” launched by the Bush/Cheney administration against Afghanistan and later Iraq — two countries none of whose people had anything to do with the 9-11 attacks —



had resulted in so many murdered civilians, it would not just tarnish the reputation of our country, but also those “heroes” in uniform who followed orders and did all the slaughtering.

Folks in Iraq Veterans Against the war and Veterans for Peace will readily explain that the high rates of traumatic stress suffered by returning US veterans of these undeclared and clearly illegal invasions and occupations by the US, like those among returning Vietnam War vets of a prior generation of US war, and the current high rate of suicide among veterans has much to do with the mission, which many troops admit has not had anything to do with “defending America” or “defending freedom,” and everything to do with projecting power and with seeking US global dominance in a world where the US is increasingly being challenged as the “sole power” envisioned by George H.W. Bush’s “New World Order” in the wake of the 1991 US-launched Gulf War against Iraq.

It’s time we as a nation gave some thought to and did some penance for all those civilian deaths and combatant deaths as we remember 9-11.

We might also bow our heads in mourning for the freedoms that we have surrendered to the national security state since that terrible day.

**Dave Lindorff** is a founding member of [ThisCantBeHappening!](#), an online newspaper collective, and is a contributor to [Hopeless: Barack Obama and the Politics of Illusion](#) (AK Press).

## AFGHANISTAN END-GAME?

*Inevitable Withdrawal: The US-Taliban Deal*

by **Binoy Kampmark**

September 6, 2019

**I**t took gallons and flagons of blood, but it eventuated, a squeeze of history into a parchment of possibility: the Taliban eventually pushed the sole superpower on this expiring earth to a deal of some consequence. (The stress is on the some – the consequence is almost always unknown.) “In principle, on paper, yes we have reached an agreement,” claimed the US envoy Zalmay Khalilzad on the Afghan channel ToloNews. “But it is not final until the president of the United States also agrees to it.”

The agreement entails the withdrawal (the public relations feature of the exercise teasingly calls this “pulling out”) of 5,400 troops from the current complement of 14,000 within 135 days of signature. Five military bases will close or be transferred to the Afghan government. In return, the Taliban has given an undertaking never to host forces with the intention of attacking the US and its interests.

Exactitude, however, is eluding the press and those keen to get to the marrow. Word on the policy grapevine is that this is part of an inexorable process that will see a full evacuation within 16 months, though this remains gossip.

The entire process has its exclusions, qualifications and mutual deceptions. In it is a concession, reluctant but ultimately accepted, that the Taliban was a credible power that could never be ignored. To date, the US has held nine rounds of talks, a seemingly dragged out process with one ultimate outcome: a reduction, and ultimate exit of combat forces.

The Taliban was not, as the thesis of certain US strategists, a foreign bacillus moving its way through the Afghan body politic, the imposition of a global fundamentalist corporation. Corrupt local officials of the second rank, however, were also very much part and parcel of the effort, rendering any

(continued on Page 19...)



(continued from Page 18...)

containment strategy meaningless.

A narrative popular and equally fallacious was the notion that the Taliban had suffered defeat and would miraculously move into the back pages of history. Similar views were expressed during the failed effort by the United States to combat the Viet Cong in South Vietnam. An elaborate calculus was created, a mirage facilitated through language: the body count became a means of confusing numbers with political effect.

Time and time again, the Taliban demonstrated that B52s, well-equipped foreign forces and cruise missiles could not extricate them from the land that has claimed so many empires. Politics can only ever be the realisation of tribes, collectives, peoples; weapons and material are unkind and useful companions, but never viable electors or officials.

Even now, the desire to remain from those in overfunded think tanks and well-furnished boardrooms, namely former diplomats engaged on the Afghan project, is stubborn and delusionary. If withdrawal is to take place, goes that tune, it should hinge on a pre-existing peace agreement. An open letter published by the Atlantic Council by nine former US State Department officials previously connected with the country is a babbling affair. "If a peace agreement is going to succeed, we and others need to be committed to continued support for peace consolidation. This will require monitoring compliance, tamping down of those extremists opposed to peace, and supporting good governance and economic growth with international assistance."

The presumptuousness of this tone is remarkable, heavy with work planning jargon and spread sheet nonsense. There is no peace to keep, nor governance worth preserving. Instead, the authors of the note, including such failed bureaucratic luminaries as John Negroponte, Robert P. Finn and Ronald E. Neumann, opt for the imperial line: the US can afford staying in Afghanistan because the Afghans are the ones fighting and dying. (Again, this is Vietnam redux, an



Photograph Source: Fibonacci Blue – [CC BY 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)

Afghan equivalent of Vietnamisation.) In their words, "US fatalities are tragic, but the number of those killed in combat make up less than 20 percent of the US troops who died in non-combat training incidents." All good, then.

In a sign of ruthless bargaining, the Taliban continued the bloodletting even as the deal was being ironed of evident wrinkles. This movement knows nothing of peace but all about the life of war: death is its sovereign; corpses, its crop. On Monday, the Green Village in Kabul was targeted by a truck bomb, leaving 16 dead (this toll being bound to rise). It was a reminder that the Taliban, masters of whole swathes of the countryside, can also strike deep in the capital itself. The killings also supplied the Afghan government a salutary reminder of its impotence, underscored by the fact that President Ashraf Ghani played no role in the Qatar talks.

This leaves us with the realisation that much cruelty is on the horizon. The victory of the Taliban is an occasion to cheer the bloodying of the imperialist's nose. But they will not leave documents of enlightenment, speeches to inspire. This agreement will provide little comfort for those keen to read a text unmolested or seek an education free of crippling dogma. Interior cannibalisation is assured, with civil war a distinct possibility. Tribal war is bound to continue.

As this takes place, the hope for President Donald Trump and his officials will no doubt be similar to the British when they finally upped stakes on instruction from Prime Minister David Cameron: forget that the whole thing ever happened.

**Binoy Kampmark** was a Commonwealth Scholar at Selwyn College, Cambridge. He lectures at RMIT University, Melbourne.

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

*"Emotional neglect lays the groundwork for the emotional numbing that helps boys feel better about being cut off. Eruptions of rage in boys are most often deemed normal, explained by the age-old justification for adolescent patriarchal misbehavior, "Boys will be boys." Patriarchy both creates the rage in boys and then contains it for later use, making it a resource to exploit later on as boys become men. As a national product, this rage can be garnered to further imperialism, hatred and oppression of women and men globally. This rage is needed if boys are to become men willing to travel around the world to fight wars without ever demanding that other ways of solving conflict can be found."*

— **Bell Hooks**

**THE NEW COLD WAR*****The Devolution of US-Russia Relations***

A retired Australian diplomat who served in Moscow dissects the emergence of the new Cold War and its dire consequences.

By **Tony Kevin**

September 14, 2019 "[Information Clearing House](#)" -

**I**n 2014, we saw violent U.S.-supported regime change and civil war in Ukraine. In February, after months of increasing tension from the anti-Russian protest movement's sitdown strike in Kiev's Maidan Square, there was a murderous clash between protesters and Ukrainian police, sparked off by hidden shooters (we now know that were expert Georgian snipers), aiming at police. The elected government collapsed and President Yanukovich fled to Russia, pursued by murder squads.

The new Poroshenko government pledged harsh anti-Russian language laws. Rebels in two Russophone regions in Eastern Ukraine took local control, and appealed for Russian military help. In March, a referendum took place in Russian-speaking Crimea on leaving Ukraine, under Russian military protection. Crimeans voted overwhelmingly to join Russia, a request promptly granted by the Russian Parliament and President. Crimea's border with Ukraine was secured against saboteurs. Crimea is prospering under its pro-Russian government, with the economy kick-started by Russian transport infrastructure investment.

In April, Poroshenko ordered full military attack on the separatist provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk in Eastern Ukraine. A brutal civil war ensued, with aerial and artillery bombardment bringing massive civilian death and destruction to the separatist region. There was major refugee outflow into Russia and other parts of Ukraine. The shutdown of MH17 took place in July 2014.

By August 2015, according to UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates, 13,000 people had been killed and 30,000 wounded. 1.4 million Ukrainians had been internally displaced, and 925,000

had fled to neighbouring countries, mostly Russia and to a lesser extent Poland.

There is now a military stalemate, under the stalled Minsk peace process. But random fatal clashes continue, with the Ukrainian Army mostly blamed by UN observers. The UN reported last month that the ongoing war has affected 5.2 million people, leaving 3.5 million of them in need of relief, including 500,000 children. Most Russians blame the West for fomenting Ukrainian enmity towards Russia. This war brings back for older Russians horrible memories of the Nazi invasion in 1941. The Russia-Ukraine border is only 550 kilometres from Moscow.

**Flashpoint Syria**

Russian forces joined the civil war in Syria in September 2015, at the request of the Syrian Government, faltering under the attacks of Islamist extremist rebel forces reinforced by foreign fighters and advanced weapons. With Russian air and ground support, the tide of war turned. Palmyra and Aleppo were recaptured in 2016. An alleged Syrian Government chemical attack at Khan Shaykhun in April 2017 resulted in a token U.S. missile attack on a Syrian Government airbase: an early decision by President Trump.

**NATO, Strategic Balance, Sanctions**

Tensions have risen in the Baltic as NATO moves ground forces and battlefield missiles up to the Baltic states' borders with Russia. Both sides' naval and air forces play dangerous brinkmanship games in the Baltic. U.S. short-range, non-nuclear-armed anti-ballistic missiles were stationed in Poland and Romania, allegedly against threat of Iranian attack. They are easily convertible to nuclear-armed missiles aimed at nearby Russia.

Nuclear arms control talks have stalled. The INF intermediate nuclear forces treaty expired in 2019, after both sides accused the other of cheating. In March 2018, Putin announced that Russia has developed new types of intercontinental nuclear missiles using technologies that render U.S. defence systems useless. The West has pretended to ignore this announcement, but we can be sure Western defence ministries have noted it. Nuclear

second-strike deterrence has returned, though most people in the West have forgotten what this means. Russians know exactly what it means.

Western economic sanctions against Russia continue to tighten after the 2014 events in Ukraine. The U.S. is still trying to block the nearly completed Nordstream Baltic Sea underwater gas pipeline from Russia to Germany. Sanctions are accelerating the division of the world into two trade and payments systems: the old NATO-led world, and the rest of the world led by China, with full Russian support and increasing interest from India, Japan, ROK and ASEAN.

**Return to Moscow**

In 2013, my children gave me an Ipad. I began to spend several hours a day reading well beyond traditional mainstream Western sources: British and American dissident sites, writers like Craig Murray in UK and in the U.S. Stephen Cohen, and some Russian sites – rt.com, Sputnik, TASS, and the official Foreign Ministry site mid.ru. in English.

In late 2015 I decided to visit Russia independently to write *Return to Moscow*, a literary travel memoir. I planned to compare my impressions of the Soviet Union, where I had lived and worked as an Australian diplomat in 1969-71, with Russia today. I knew there had been huge changes. I wanted to experience 'Putin's Russia' for myself, to see how it felt to be there as an anonymous visitor in the quiet winter season. I wanted to break out of the familiar one-dimensional hostile political view of Russia that Western mainstream media offer: to take my readers with me on a cultural pilgrimage through the tragedy and grandeur and inspiration of Russian history. As with my earlier book on Spain '*Walking the Camino*', this was not intended to be a political book, and yet somehow it became one.

I was still uncommitted on contemporary Russian politics before going to Russia in January 2016. Using the metaphor of a seesaw, I was still sitting somewhere around the middle.

*(continued on Page 21...)*



(continued from Page 20...)

My book was written in late 2015 – early 2016, expertly edited by UWA Publishing. It was launched in March 2017. By this time my political opinions had moved decisively to the Russian end of the seesaw, on the basis of what I had seen in Russia, and what I had read and thought during the year.

I have been back again twice, in winter 2018 and 2019. My 2018 visit included Crimea, and I happened to see a Navalny-led Sunday demonstration in Moscow. I thoroughly enjoyed all three independent visits: in my opinion, they give my judgements on Russia some depth and authenticity.

### **Russophobia Becomes Entrenched**

Russia was a big talking point in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. As the initially unlikely Republican candidate Donald Trump's chances improved, anti-Putin and anti-Russian positions hardened in the outgoing Obama administration and in the Democratic Party establishment which backed candidate Hillary Clinton.

Russia and Putin became caught up in the Democratic Party's increasingly obsessive rage and hatred against the victorious Trump. Russophobia became entrenched in Washington and London U.S. and UK political and strategic elites, especially in intelligence circles: think of Pompeo, Brennan, Comey and Clapper. All sense of international protocol and diplomatic propriety towards Russia and its President was abandoned, as this appalling *Economist* cover from October 2016 shows.

My experience of undeclared political censorship in Australia since four months after publication of *'Return to Moscow'* supports the thesis that:

*We are now in the thick of a ruthless but mostly covert Anglo-American alliance information war against Russia. In this war, individuals who speak up publicly in the cause of detente with Russia will be discouraged from public discourse.*

### **In the Thick of Information War**

When I spoke to you two years ago, I had no idea how far-reaching and ruthless this information war is becoming. I knew that a false negative image of Russia was taking hold in the

West, even as Russia was becoming a more admirable and self-confident civil society, moving forward towards greater democracy and higher living standards, while maintaining essential national security. I did not then know why, or how.

I had just had time to add a few final paragraphs in my book about the possible consequences for Russia-West relations of Trump's surprise election victory in November 2016. I was right to be cautious, because since Trump's inauguration we have seen the step-by-step elimination of any serious pro-detente voices in Washington, and the reassertion of control over this haphazard president by the bipartisan imperial U.S. deep state, as personified from April 2018 by Secretary of State Pompeo and National Security Adviser Bolton. Bolton has now been thrown from the sleigh as decoy for the wolves: under the smooth-talking Pompeo, the imperial policies remain.

### **Truth, Trust and False Narratives**

Let me now turn to some theory about political reality and perception, and how national communities are persuaded to accept false narratives. Let me acknowledge my debt to the fearless and brilliant Australian independent online journalist, Caitlin Johnstone.

Behavioural scientists have worked in the field of what used to be called propaganda since WW1. England has always excelled in this field. Modern wars are won or lost not just on the battlefield, but in people's minds. Propaganda, or as we now call it information warfare, is as much about influencing people's beliefs *within your own national community* as it is about trying to demoralise and subvert the enemy population.

The IT revolution of the past few years has exponentially magnified the effectiveness of information warfare. Already in the 1940s, George Orwell understood how easily governments are able to control and shape public perceptions of reality and to suppress dissent. His brilliant books *1984* and *Animal Farm* are still instruction manuals in principles of information warfare. *Their plots tell of the creation by the state of false narratives, with*

*which to control their gullible populations.*

The disillusioned Orwell wrote from his experience of real politics. As a volunteer fighter in the Spanish Civil War, he saw how both Spanish sides used false news and propaganda narratives to demonise the enemy. He also saw how the Nazi and Stalinist systems in Germany and Russia used propaganda to support show trials and purges, the concentration camps and the Gulag, anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, German master race and Stalinist class enemy ideologies; and how dissident thought was suppressed in these controlled societies. Orwell tried to warn his readers: all this could happen here too, in our familiar old England. But because the good guys won the war against fascism, his warnings were ignored.

We are now in Britain, U.S. and Australia actually living in an information warfare world that has disturbing echoes of the world that Orwell wrote about. The essence of information control is the effective state management of two elements, *trust* and *fear*, to generate and uphold a particular view of *truth*. *Truth, trust and fear*: these are the three key elements, now as 100 years ago in WWI Britain.

*People who work or have worked close to government – in departments, politics, the armed forces, or top universities – mostly accept whatever they understand at the time to be 'the government view' of truth.* Whether for reasons of organisational loyalty, career prudence or intellectual inertia, it is usually this way around governments. It is why moral issues like the Vietnam War and the U.S.-led 2003 invasion of Iraq were so distressing for people of conscience working in or close to government and military jobs in Canberra. They were expected to engage in 'doublethink' as Orwell had described it:

Even in Winston's nightmare world, there were still choices – to retreat into the non-political world of the proles, or to think forbidden thoughts and read forbidden books. These choices involved large risks and punishments. It was easier and safer for most people to

(continued on Page 22...)



(continued from Page 21...)

acquiesce in the fake news they were fed by state-controlled media.

### 'Trust, Truth and False Narratives'

Fairfax journalist Andrew Clark, in the *Australian Financial Review*, in an essay optimistically titled "Not fake news: Why truth and trust are still in good shape in Australia", (AFR Dec. 22, 2018), cited Professor William Davies thus:

"Most of the time, the edifice that we refer to as "truth" is really an investment of trust in our structures of politics and public life' ... 'When trust sinks below a certain point, many people come to view the entire spectacle of politics and public life as a sham."

Here is my main point: *Effective information warfare requires the creation of enough public trust to make the public believe that state-supported lies are true.*

*The key tools are repetition of messages, and diversification of trusted voices. Once a critical mass is created of people believing a false narrative, the lie locks in: its dissemination becomes self-sustaining.*

Caitlin Johnstone a few days ago [put it](#) this way:

"Power is being able to control what happens. *Absolute power* is being able to control what people *think* about what happens. If you can control what happens, you can have power until the public gets sick of your BS and tosses you out on your ass. If you can control what people *think* about what happens, you can have power forever. As long as you can control how people are interpreting circumstances and events, there's no limit to the evils you can get away with."

The Internet has made propaganda campaigns that used to take weeks or months a matter of hours or even minutes to accomplish. It is about getting in quickly, using large enough *clusters* of trusted and diverse sources, in order to cement lies in place, to make the lies seem true, to magnify them through social messaging: in other words, to create credible false narratives that will quickly get into the public's bloodstream.

Over the past two years, I have seen this work many times: on issues like framing Russia for the MH17 tragedy; with false allegations of Assad mounting poison gas attacks in Syria; with false allegations of Russian agents using lethal Novichok to try to kill the Skripals in Salisbury; and with the multiple lies of Russiagate.

It is the mind-numbing effect of constant repetition of disinformation by many eminent people and agencies, in hitherto trusted channels like the BBC or ABC or liberal Anglophone print media that gives the system its power to persuade the credulous. For if so many diverse and reputable people repeatedly report such negative news and express such negative judgements about Russia or China or Iran or Syria, surely they must be right?

We have become used to reading in our quality newspapers and hearing on the BBC and ABC and SBS gross assaults on truth, calmly presented as accepted facts. There is no real public debate on important facts in contention any more. There are no venues for dissent outside contrarian social media sites.

Sometimes, false narratives inter-connect. Often a disinformation narrative in one area is used to influence perceptions in other areas. For example, the false Skripals poisoning story was launched by British intelligence in March 2018, just in time to frame Syrian President Assad as the guilty party in a faked chemical weapons attack in Douma the following month.

### The Skripals Gambit

The Skripals gambit was also a failed British attempt to blight the Russia – hosted Football World Cup in June 2018. In the event, hundreds of thousands of Western sports fans returned home with the warmest memories of Russian good sportsmanship and hospitality.

How do I know the British Skripals narrative is false? For a start, it is illogical, incoherent, and constantly changes. Allegedly, two visiting Russian FSB agents in March 2018 sprayed or smeared Novichok, a deadly toxin instantly lethal in the most microscopic quantities, on the Skripals' house front doorknob. There is no video footage of the Skripals at their front door on the day. We are told they were found

slumped on a park bench, and that is maybe where they had been sprayed with nerve gas? Shortly afterwards, Britain's Head of Army Nursing who happened to be passing by found them, and supervised their hospitalisation and emergency treatment.

Allegedly, much of Salisbury was contaminated by Novichok, and one unfortunate woman mysteriously died weeks later, yet the Skripals somehow did not die, as we are told. But where are they now? We saw a healthy Yulia in a carefully scripted video interview released in May 2018, after an alleged 'one in a million' recovery. We were assured her father had recovered too, but nobody has seen him at all. The Skripals have simply disappeared from sight since 16 months ago. Are they now alive or dead? Are they in voluntary or involuntary British custody?

A month after the poisoning, the UK Government sent biological samples from the Skripals to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, for testing. The OPCW sent the samples to a trusted OPCW laboratory in Spiez, Switzerland.

### Lavrov Spiez BZ claims, April 2018

A few days later, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov dramatically announced in Moscow that the Spiez lab had found in the samples a temporary-effect nerve agent BZ, used by U.S. and UK but not by Russia, that would have disabled the Skripals for a few days without killing them. He also revealed the Spiez lab had found that the Skripal samples had been twice tampered with while still in UK custody: first soon after the poisoning, and again shortly before passing them to the OPCW. He said the Spiez lab had found a high concentration of Novichok, which he called A-234, in its original form. This was extremely suspicious as A-234 has high volatility and could not have retained its purity over a two weeks period. The dosage the Spiez lab found in the samples would have surely killed the Skripals. The OPCW under British pressure rejected Lavrov's claim, and suppressed the Spiez lab report.

(continued on Page 23...)



(continued from Page 22...)

Let's look finally at the alleged assassins.

#### 'Boshirov and Petrov'

These two FSB operatives who visited Salisbury under the false identities of 'Boshirov' and 'Petrov' did not look or behave like credible assassins. It is more likely that they were sent to negotiate with Sergey Skripal about his rumoured interest in returning to Russia. They needed to apply for UK visas a month in advance of travel: ample time for the British agencies to identify them as FSB operatives, and to construct a false attempted assassination narrative around their visit. This false narrative repeatedly trips over its own lies and contradictions. British social media are full of alternative theories and rebuttals. Russians find the whole British Government Skripal narrative laughable. They have invented comedy skits and video games based on it. Yet it had major impact on Russia-West relations.

#### The Douma False Narrative

I turn now to the claimed Assad chemical weapons attack in Douma in April 2018. This falsely alleged attack triggered a major NATO air attack on Syrian targets, ordered by Trump. We came close to WWII in these dangerous days. Thanks to the restraint of the then Secretary of Defence James Mattis and his Russian counterparts, the risk was contained.

The allegation that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad had used outlawed chemical weapons against his own people was based solely on the evidence of faked video images of child victims, made by the discredited White Helmets, a UK-sponsored rebel-linked 'humanitarian' propaganda organisation with much blood on its hands. Founded in 2013 by a British private security specialist of intelligence background, James Le Mesurier, the White Helmets specialised in making fake videos of alleged Assad regime war crimes against Syrian civilians. It is by now a thoroughly discredited organisation that was prepared to kill its prisoners and then film their bodies as alleged victims of government chemical attacks.

#### White Helmets

As the town of Douma was about to fall to advancing Syrian Government forces, the White Helmets filled a room with stacked corpses of murdered prisoners, and photographed them as alleged victims of aerial gas attack. They also made a video alleging child victims of this attack being hosed down by White Helmets. A video of a child named Hassan Diab went viral all over the Western world.

Hassan Diab later testified publicly in The Hague that he had been dragged terrified from his family by force, smeared with some sort of grease, and hosed down with water as part of a fake video. He went from hero to zero overnight, as Western governments and media rejected his testimony as Russian and Syrian propaganda.

In a late development, there is proof that the OPCW suppressed its own engineers' report from Douma that the alleged poison gas cylinders could not have possibly been dropped from the air through the roof of the house where one was found, resting on a bed under a convenient hole in the roof.

I could go on discussing the detail of such false narratives all day. No matter how often they are exposed by critics, our politicians and mainstream media go on referencing them as if they are true. Once people have come to believe false narratives, it is hard to refute them.

So it is with the false narrative that Russian internet interference enabled Trump to win the 2016 U.S. presidential elections: a thesis for which no evidence was found by [Special Counsel Robert] Mueller, yet continues to be cited by many U.S. liberal Democratic media as if it were true. So, even, with MH17.

#### Managing Mass Opinion

This mounting climate of Western Russophobia is not accidental: it is strategically directed, and it is nourished with regular maintenance doses of fresh lies. Each round of lies provides a credible platform for the next round somewhere else. The common thread is a claimed malign Russian origin for whatever goes wrong.

So where is all this disinformation originating? Information technology firms in Washington and London that

are closely networked into government elites, often through attending the same establishment schools or colleges like Eton and Yale, have closely studied and tested the science of influencing crowd opinions through mainstream media and online. They know, in a way that Orwell or Goebbels could hardly have dreamt, how to put out and repeat desired media messages. They know what sizes of 'internet attraction nodes' need to be established online, in order to create diverse critical masses of credible Russophobic messaging, which then attracts enough credulous and loyal followers to become self-propagating.

Firms like the SCL Group (formerly Strategic Communication Laboratories) and the now defunct Cambridge Analytica pioneered such work in the UK. There are many similar firms in Washington, all in the business of monitoring, generating and managing mass opinion. It is big business, and it works closely with the national security state.

Starting in November 2018, an enterprising group of unknown hackers in the UK, who go by the name 'Anonymous', opened a remarkable window into this secret world. Over a few weeks, they hacked and dumped online a huge volume of original documents issued by and detailing the activities of the *Institute for Statecraft* (IfS) and the *Integrity initiative* (II).

We know from this material that the IfS and II are two secret British disinformation networks operating at arms' length from but funded by the UK security services and broader UK government establishment. They bring together high-ranking military and intelligence personnel, often nominally retired, journalists and academics, to produce and disseminate propaganda that serves the agendas of the UK and its allies.

Stung by these massive leaks, Chris Donnelly, a key figure in IfS and II and a former British Army intelligence officer, made a now famous seven-minute YouTube video in December 2018, artfully filmed in a London kitchen, defending their work.

(continued on Page 24...)



(continued from Page 23...)

He argued – quite unconvincingly in my opinion – that IfS and II are simply defending Western societies against disinformation and malign influence, primarily from Russia. He boasted how they have set up in numerous targeted European countries, claimed to be under attack from Russian disinformation, what he called ‘clusters of influence’, to ‘educate’ public opinion and decision-makers in pro-NATO and anti-Russian directions.

Donnelly spoke frankly on how the West is already at war with Russia, a ‘new kind of warfare’, in which he said ‘everything becomes a weapon’. He said that ‘disinformation is the issue which unites all the other weapons in this conflict and gives them a third dimension’.

He said the West has to fight back, if it is to defend itself and to prevail.

We can confirm from the Anonymous leaked files the names of many people in Europe being recruited into these clusters of influence. They tend to be significant people in journalism, publishing, universities and foreign policy think-tanks: opinion-shapers. The leaked documents suggest how ideologically suitable candidates are identified: approached for initial screening interviews; and, if invited to join a cluster of influence, sworn to secrecy.

Remarkably, neither the Anonymous disclosures nor the Donnelly response have ever been reported in Australian media. Even in Britain – where evidence that the Integrity Initiative was mounting a campaign against [Labour leader] Jeremy Corbyn provoked brief media interest. The story quickly disappeared from mainstream media and the BBC. A British under-foreign secretary admitted in Parliamentary Estimates that the UK Foreign Office subsidises the Institute of Statecraft to the tune of nearly 3 million pounds per year. It also gives various other kinds of non-monetary assistance, e.g. providing personnel and office support in Britain’s overseas embassies.

This is not about traditional spying or seeking agents of influence close to governments. It is about generating mass disinformation, in order to create mass climates of belief.

In my opinion, such British and American disinformation efforts, using undeclared clusters of influence, through Five Eyes intelligence-sharing, and possibly with the help of British and American diplomatic missions, may have been in operation in Australia for many years.

Such networks may have been used against me since around mid-2017, to limit the commercial outreach of my book and the impact of its dangerous ideas on the need for East-West detente; and efficiently to suppress my voice in Australian public discourse about Russia and the West. Do I have evidence for this? Yes.

It is not coincidence that the Melbourne Writers Festival in August 2017 somehow lost all my sign-and-sell books from my sold-out scheduled speaking event; that a major debate with [Australian writer and foreign policy analyst] Bobo Lo at the Wheeler Centre in Melbourne was cancelled by his Australian sponsor, the Lowy institute, two weeks before the advertised date; that my last invitation to any writers festival was 15 months ago, in May 2018; that *Return to Moscow* was not shortlisted for any Australian book prize, though I entered it in all of them; that since my book’s early promotion ended around August 2017, I have not been invited to join any ABC discussion panels, or to give any talks on Russia in any universities or institutes, apart from the admirable Australian Institute of International Affairs and the ISAA.

My articles and shorter opinion commentaries on Russia and the West have not been published in mainstream media or in reputable online journals like *Eureka Street*, *The Conversation*, *Inside Story* or *Australian Book Review*. Despite being an ANU Emeritus Fellow, I have not been invited to give a public talk or join any panel in ANU (Australian National University) or any Canberra think tank. In early 2018, I was invited to give a private briefing to a group of senior students travelling on an immersion course to Russia. I was not invited back in 2019, after high-level private advice within ANU that I was regarded as too pro-Putin.

In all these ways – none overt or acknowledged – my voice as an open-minded writer and speaker on Russia-

West relations seems to have been quietly but effectively suppressed in Australia. I would like to be proved wrong on this, but the evidence is there.

This may be about “velvet-glove deterrence” of my Russia-sympathetic voice and pen, in order to discourage others, especially those working in or close to government. Nobody is going to put me in jail, unless I am stupid enough to violate Australia’s now strict foreign influence laws. This deterrence is about generating fear of consequences for people still in their careers, paying their mortgages, putting kids through school. Nobody wants to miss their next promotion.

There are other indications that Australian national security elite opinion has been indoctrinated prudently to fear and avoid any kind of public discussion of positive engagement with Russia (or indeed, with China).

There are only two kinds of news about Russia now permitted in our mainstream media, including the ABC and SBS: negative news and comment, or silence. Unless a story can be given an anti-Russian sting, it will not be carried at all. Important stories are simply spiked, like last week’s Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok, chaired by President Putin and attended by Prime Ministers Abe, Mahathir and Modi, among 8500 participants from 65 countries.

The ABC idea of a balanced panel to discuss any Russian political topic was exemplified in an ABC Sunday Extra Roundtable panel chaired by Eleanor Hall on July, 22 2018, soon after the Trump-Putin Summit in Helsinki. The panel – a former ONA Russia analyst, a professor of Soviet and Russian History at Melbourne University, and a Russian émigré dissident journalist introduced as the ‘Washington correspondent for Echo of Moscow radio’ spent most of their time sneering at Putin and Trump. There were no other views.

A powerful anti-Russian news narrative is now firmly in place in Australia, on every topic in contention: Ukraine, MH17, Crimea, Syria, the

(continued on Page 25...)



(continued from Page 24...)

Skiprals, Navalny and public protest in Russia. There is ill-informed criticism of Russia, or silence, on the crucial issues of arms control and Russia-China strategic and economic relations as they affect Australia's national security or economy. There is no analysis of the negative impact on Australia of economic sanctions against Russia. There is almost no discussion of how improved relations with China and Russia might contribute to Australia's national security and economic welfare, as American influence in the world and our region declines, and as American reliability as an ally comes more into question. Silence on inconvenient truths is an important part of the disinformation tool kit.

I see two overall conflicting narratives – the prevailing Anglo-American false narrative; and valiant efforts by small groups of dissenters, drawing on sources outside the Anglo-American official narrative, to present another narrative much closer to truth. And this is how most Russians now see it too.

The Trump-Putin summit in Helsinki in July 2018 was damaged by the Skripal and Syria fabrications. Trump left that summit friendless, frightened and humiliated. He soon surrendered to the power of the U.S. imperial state as then represented by [Mike] Pompeo and [John] Bolton, who had both been appointed as Secretary of State and National Security Adviser in April 2018 and who really got into their stride after the Helsinki Summit. Pompeo now smoothly dominates Trump's foreign policy.

### Self-Inflicted Wounds

Finally, let me review the American political casualties over the past two years – self-inflicted wounds – arising from this secret information war against Russia. Let me list them without prejudging guilt or innocence. Slide 20 – Self-inflicted wounds: casualties of anti-Russian information warfare.

Trump's first National Security Adviser, the highly decorated Michael Flynn lost his job after only three weeks, and soon went to jail. His successor H R McMaster lasted 13 months until replaced by John Bolton. Trump's first Secretary of State Rex Tillerson lasted

just 14 months until his replacement by Trump's appointed CIA chief (in January 2017) Mike Pompeo. Trump's chief strategist Steve Bannon lasted only seven months. Trump's former campaign chairman Paul Manafort is now in jail.

Defence Secretary James Mattis lasted nearly two years as Secretary of Defence, and was an invaluable source of strategic stability. He resigned in December 2018. The highly capable Ambassador to Russia Jon Huntsman lasted just two years: he is resigning next month. John Kelly lasted 18 months as White House Chief of Staff. Less senior figures like George Papadopoulos and Trump's former lawyer Michael Cohen both served jail time. The pattern I see here is that people who may have been trying responsibly as senior U.S. officials to advance Trump's initial wish to explore possibilities for detente with Russia – policies that he had advocated as a candidate – were progressively purged, one after another. *The anti-Russian U.S. bipartisan imperial state is now firmly back in control. Trump is safely contained as far as Russia is concerned.*

Russians do not believe that any serious detente or arms control negotiations can get under way while cold warriors like Pompeo continue effectively to control Trump. There have been other casualties over the past two years of tightening American Russophobia. Julian Assange and Chelsea Manning come to mind. The naive Maria Butina is a pathetic victim of American judicial rigidity and deep state vindictiveness.

False anti-Russian Government narratives emanating from London and Washington may be laughed at in Moscow, but they are unquestioningly accepted in Canberra. We are the most gullible of audiences. There is no critical review. Important contrary factual information and analysis from and about Russia just does not reach Australian news reporting and commentary, nor – I fear – Australian intelligence assessment. We are prisoners of the false narratives fed to us by our senior Five Eyes partners U.S. and UK.

To conclude: Some people may find what I am saying today difficult to

accept. I understand this. I now work off open-source information about Russia with which many people here are unfamiliar, because they prefer not to read the diverse online information sources that I choose to read. The seesaw has tilted for me: I have clearly moved a long way from mainstream Western perceptions on Russia-West relations.

Under Trump and Pompeo, as the Syria and Iran crises show, the present risk of global nuclear war by accident or incompetent Western decision-making is as high as it ever was in the Cold War. The West needs to learn again how to dialogue usefully and in mutually respectful ways with Russia and China. This expert knowledge is dying with our older and wiser former public servants and ex-military chiefs.

*These remarks were delivered by Tony Kevin at the Independent Scholars Association of Australia in Canberra, Australia on Wednesday.*

**Tony Kevin** is a retired Australian diplomat who was posted to Moscow from 1969 to 1971, and was later Australia's ambassador to Poland and Cambodia. His latest book is *Return to Moscow*, published by UWA Publishing.

This article was originally published by "[Consortium News](#)" - -

*“Now we're in a situation where democracy has been taken into the workshop and fixed, remodelled to be market friendly. So now the United States is fighting wars to install democracies. First is was topple them, now it's install them. And the whole rise of corporate-funded NGOs in the modern world, this notion of CSR, corporate social responsibility--it's all part of a New Managed Democracy. In a sense, it's all part of the same machine.”*

— Arundhati Roy, [Things that Can and Cannot Be Said: Essays and Conversations](#)

**THEY ARE NOT HEROES***Stop Telling Veterans That They Are Heroes*By **Caitlin Johnstone**September 18, 2019 "Information Clearing House" -

**R**epublican Congressman Dan Crenshaw has a popular post going around on Twitter at the moment admonishing Senator Bernie Sanders for saying that the US government should not go to war if it can't afford to take care of its veterans.

"Watching Bernie pander to different groups to get their vote has always disgusted me, but now it's personal," Crenshaw tweeted. "I didn't go to war so that you would take care of me, Bernie. I went because I wanted to serve and our country needed it."

This "look at me, I'm a veteran" song and dance is par for course with Crenshaw, a former Navy SEAL who lost an eye to an improvised explosive device on his third deployment in America's evil and unjustifiable Afghanistan occupation. When Crenshaw says "I went because I wanted to serve and our country needed it," he is being delusional, and feeding into his delusion allows him to continue dominating public discourse with obnoxiously propagandistic takes like the notion that the US should continue its forever war without even so much as ensuring that it can take care of the people whose lives are chewed up and spat out by the imperial war machine.

Dan Crenshaw did not serve his country. Dan Crenshaw is not a hero. Dan Crenshaw participated in a military occupation that after 18 years and counting has claimed tens of thousands of lives for no benefit to any ordinary American at all. All he served during his time in that country was the geostrategic imperialist agendas of unaccountable government agencies and the profit margins of war plutocrats, yet upon returning home he's been able to convert his stint as a glorified hired thug into social collateral which got him elected to the US House of Representatives and secured him a punditry platform from which he can spout war propaganda. All because people agree to play along with the completely nonsensical narrative that US war veterans are heroes.

You see this time and time again: a completely fact-free fairy tale about heroism and fighting for freedom is treated as unquestionable dogma by a populace who has agreed to treat US war veterans with reverence and respect, despite the fact that they chose to pour their time and energy into what is literally the most unhelpful and destructive endeavor that you could possibly devote yourself to. This unquestioning reverence is then consistently twisted into leverage for war propagandists to use in glorifying acts of mass military slaughter which benefitted no one and made the whole world worse.

The tightly controlled narrative about American veterans being heroes is always, always, *always* used to advance war propaganda and *never* to accomplish anything that is of service to mankind. It's an impulse which serves no one but the powerful. Of course veterans of US wars should be taken care of, and taken care of far better than they currently are, but not because they are heroes. Rather, they should be cared for because they spent time in a highly traumatic environment which sends home many highly traumatized people who will need a lot of help in order to reintegrate into society in a healthy way. What they went through was a horrible tragedy that nobody should ever have to go through, not a glorious thing that more people should aspire to enlist into.

It is more cognitively comfortable for veterans and their families to maintain the fairy tale that those who helped facilitate US imperialism are heroes who did something helpful and meaningful, but the fact that human minds are preconditioned to select for cognitive ease is a glitch in our operating systems which causes unhelpful cognitive biases; it's a flaw we need to overcome, not a virtue to be coddled. By continuing to coddle it you are facilitating war propaganda, and war propaganda is the indispensable foundation of war itself. By facilitating war propaganda you are participating in the war machine as surely as someone who takes up arms and fights in it, only less honest because, as Representative

Crenshaw's face attests, at least someone who takes up arms is putting some real skin in that monstrous game.

It's like veterans are engaged with us in a bizarre live action role-playing game, where they pretend to be the heroes and the rest of us pretend to be the thankful civilians whose freedoms they fought for. But continuing to LARP with them in this way creates nonsense like we see in Crenshaw's tweet, and in the ridiculous smears against NFL players choosing to take a knee during the national anthem, and in the bleating of "Support our troops!" as a one-line shutdown of anyone who protested the Iraq invasion.

Don't participate in that stupid, war-facilitating, power-serving LARP. Don't say "Thank you for your service" to veterans. Don't pretend to agree with them when they claim to have fought for your freedom and democracy. Openly disagree with people who promulgate this narrative. Treat Veterans Day and Memorial Day as days of grieving and truth-telling, not celebration and glorification. The worshipful propaganda narratives that have been built up around veterans are an important cog in the war machine's consent factory, and they should be attacked as unapologetically as war propaganda narratives about what's going on in Syria or Iran.

"But Caitlin!" you may say. "What about World War Two veterans?"

Well, fine, but they're in their nineties now and you should probably be telling them whatever they want to hear anyway. And while we're on the subject, do you notice how far back you had to reach in US history to find a war in which veterans arguably fought for a just cause? The fact that the last possible example is on the cusp of living memory tells you all you need to know about your impulse to argue with me on this one.

I'm not saying to be mean to veterans, and I'm not saying veterans are bad people, in fact, one of the most heinous injustices about these corporate wars is that they turn many of our finest and bravest young people toward the very most toxic and pernicious ends possible. Many of them sincerely

*(continued on Page 33...)*



**NUCLEAR INSANITIES**

***“Crazies” in Charge of America’s “Nuclear Button”: Trump’s New (Acting) National Security Adviser Said Nuclear War with USSR Was Winnable***

Questioning “mutual assured destruction,” Charles Kupperman called nuclear conflict “in large part a physics problem.”

By **Nick Robins-Early**

hostilities would have on the planet’s health and global politics.

Kupperman, appointed to his new post on Tuesday after Trump fired his **John Bolton** from the job, argued it was possible to win a nuclear war “in the classical sense,” and that the notion of total destruction stemming from such a superpower conflict was inaccurate. He said that in a scenario in which 20 million people died in the U.S. as opposed to 150 million, the nation could

comments during an interview with Robert Scheer for the journalist’s 1982 book, “With Enough Shovels: Reagan, Bush, and Nuclear War.”

The National Security Council did not immediately respond to questions on whether Kupperman, 68, still holds the same views of nuclear conflict as he did in the early 1980s. Kupperman’s seemingly cavalier attitude toward the potential death of millions of people was criticized at the time both by Democratic politicians and arms control experts.

“It seems reasonable to suggest the crazies are in charge of the nukes,” **Jeremy Stone**, president of the Federation of American Scientists, wrote about Kupperman and his colleagues in 1984.

Contemporary nuclear experts similarly criticize Kupperman’s beliefs as wrongheaded and dangerous.

“Kupperman’s comments might as well have come straight from the script of (the film) ‘Dr. Strangelove.’ He was part of a group of defense analysts at the time who weren’t shy about sharing such views,” said Kingston Reif, director for disarmament and threat reduction policy at the Washington-based Arms Control Association, who first noted Kupperman’s views in a Twitter post in January when Kupperman was hired as the deputy national security adviser.

“The simple fact is that a nuclear war can’t be won and must never be fought,” Reif said.

**“Kupperman’s comments might as well have come straight from the script of ‘Dr. Strangelove.’”**

But rather than being sidelined as a relic of Cold War hubris, Kupperman now holds one of the most powerful positions in the White House. Although his role is temporary, civil rights groups have also already called on him to resign over his extensive ties to the Center for Security Policy, an anti-Muslim think tank founded by conspiracy theorist Frank Gaffney.

Gaffney is a prominent anti-Muslim activist who repeatedly promoted the conspiracy theories that members of President Barack Obama’s

*(continued on Page 28...)*



Global Research, September 18, 2019  
[HuffPost](https://www.globalresearch.ca/trump-acting-national-security-adviser-said-nuclear-war-ussr-winnable/5689500) 13 September 2019

“Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose”,

“The more things change, the more they stay the same”, **Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr**, (*Les Guêpes*, July 1848)

\*\*\*

**President Donald Trump’s acting national security adviser, former Reagan administration official Charles Kupperman, made an extraordinary and controversial claim in the early 1980s: nuclear conflict with the USSR was winnable and that “nuclear war is a destructive thing but still in large part a physics problem.”**

Kupperman’s suggestion that the U.S. could triumph in a nuclear war went against dominant theories of mutually assured destruction and ignored the long-term destabilizing effects that such

then emerge as the stronger side and prevail in its objectives.

His argument was that with enough planning and civil defense measures, such as “a certain layer of dirt and some reinforced construction materials,” the effects of a nuclear war could be limited and that U.S. would be able to fairly quickly rebuild itself after an all-out conflict with the then-Soviet Union.

“It may take 15 years, but geez, look how long it took Europe to recover after the Second World War,” Kupperman said.

Referring to the Japanese city on which the U.S. dropped the first atomic bomb in 1945, he also claimed that

“Hiroshima, after it was bombed, was back and operating three days later.”

At the time, Kupperman was executive director of President Ronald Reagan’s General Advisory Committee on Arms Control and Disarmament. He made the



(continued from Page 27...)

administration were working to enforce Islamic law in the U.S., that the Muslim Brotherhood had infiltrated top levels of government and that Obama was secretly Muslim himself. Kupperman served on the board of directors for Gaffney’s Center for Security Policy between 2001-2010.

“CSP has continuously promoted Islamophobic conspiracy theories, and anyone, like Mr. Kupperman, who has so closely associated with them for so long is — at the very least — complicit in their brand of anti-Muslim bigotry and should not be entrusted with one of the highest-ranking security roles in the United States,” Council on American-Islamic Relations Executive Director **Nihad Awad** said Tuesday.

Before joining the NSA, Kupperman served as an informal adviser to Bolton and worked as a defense industry executive at Boeing and Lockheed Martin. He was a critic of the Iranian nuclear deal and in 2017 co-signed a letter to Trump backing Bolton’s plan to withdraw from the agreement.

**Here are excerpts of Kupperman’s comments from his interview with Scheer:**

**On what kind of life we could visualize after a nuclear attack:**

*It means that, you know, it would be tough. It would be a struggle to reconstitute the society that we have. It certainly wouldn’t be the same society [as] prior to an exchange, there is no question about that. But in terms of having an organized nation, and having enough means left after the war to reconstitute itself, I think that is entirely possible. It may take 15 years, but geez, look how long it took Europe to recover after the Second World War.*

**On disagreeing with the Physicians for Social Responsibility organization’s view of nuclear war:**

*Scheer: But in terms of nuclear war, do you factor in what those doctors were saying?*

*Kupperman: Yes, that is why I want to have a civil defense system, because it can be very effective in reducing casualties. That is my point. If doctors are so concerned about it, the answer isn’t necessarily disarming the United States or cutting our weapons programs. ... it might be having a civil defense program. You*

*can make a very good case that is exactly what those doctors ought to be shouting for.*

*Scheer: But they say that it is impossible to protect the population from nuclear attack.*

*Kupperman: Yes, but the thing is, nuclear weapons have certain effects and if you take steps to deny those effects, you save a lot of people. And unless you are right in the middle of ground zero, you are not going to have a lot of burn victims if you take those steps. And if you evacuate these people out of the targeted areas, or what you think are targeted areas, they are not going to get burned or destroyed.*

**On society surviving nuclear war:**

*Scheer: Is it possible to survive it with your civilization intact?*

*Kupperman: Well, it is possible to survive it with a certain amount of society intact, it depends on what steps we take to ensure that survivability. It certainly won’t be the same as before the war. But generally societies have been intact — like Germany and Japan and Western Europe in the Second World War weren’t the same after the war as they were before. But generally societies have been intact.*

*The question really gets down to political credibility in the conduct of your foreign policy. If you look like you are serious about defending yourself and your allies with real civil defense programs and other measures, I think that has political credibility with the adversary. An adversary isn’t going to take somebody seriously if they don’t take steps to protect themselves. Nuclear war is a destructive thing, but it is still in large part a physics problem.*

*Scheer: What do you mean?*

*Kupperman: Well, sheltering yourself against nuclear effects can be done, it just depends on how much effort and money one wants to spend on it, but a certain layer of dirt and some reinforced construction materials can assure the survivability of somebody, assuming they aren’t at ground zero of a detonation. Hiroshima, after it was bombed, was back and operating three days later. So it is certainly a destructive weapon, and nobody wants*

*a nuclear war, but I don’t think the United States in the past has been serious enough about planning for its survival in the event of a nuclear war...*

**On winning nuclear war “in a classical sense”:**

*Kupperman: It depends on what one considers all-out. If the objective in a war is to try to destroy as many Soviet civilians and as many American civilians as is feasible, and the casualty levels approached 150 million on each side, then it’s going to be tough to say you have a surviving nation after that. But depending on how the nuclear war is fought, it could mean the difference between 150 casualties and 20 million casualties. I think that is a significant difference, and if the country loses 20 million people, you may have a chance of surviving after that.*

*Scheer: Would that mean the other nation would survive as well? You’re not talking about winning a nuclear war, you’re talking about a stalemate of some kind.*

*Kupperman: It may or may not be a stalemate, depending on who had more surviving national power and military power.*

*Scheer: So you think it is possible to win?*

*Kupperman: I think it is possible to win, in the classical sense.*

*Scheer: What does that mean, “in the classical sense”?*

*Kupperman: It means that it is clear after the war that one side is stronger than the other side, the weaker side is going to accede to the demands of the stronger side.*

\*

**Nick Robins-Early** is a Senior World News Reporter, HuffPost.

The original source of this article is [HuffPost](#)

Copyright © [Nick Robins-Early, HuffPost](#), 2019

“When the white man turns tyrant, it is his own freedom that he destroys.”  
— George Orwell, [Shooting an Elephant](#)

**POETRY**

From *A German War Primer* (1938)

Translated by Lee Baxendall, H.R. Hayes, Lesley Lendrum and John Willett

**AMONGST THE HIGHLY PLACED**

It is considered low to talk about food.  
The fact is: they have  
Already eaten.

The lowly must leave this earth  
Without having tasted  
Any good meat.

For wondering where they come from and  
Where they are going  
The fine evenings find them  
Too exhausted.

They have not yet seen  
The mountains and the great sea  
When their time is already up.

If the lowly do not  
Think about what's low  
They will never rise.

**THE BREAD OF THE HUNGRY HAS  
ALL BEEN EATEN**

Meat has become unknown. Useless  
The pouring out of the people's sweat.  
The laurel groves have been  
Lopped down.  
From the chimneys of the arms factories  
Rises smoke.

**THE HOUSE-PAINTER SPEAKS OF GREAT TIMES TO  
COME**

The forests still grow.  
The fields still bear  
The cities still stand.  
The people still breathe.

**ON THE CALENDAR THE DAY IS NOT YET SHOWN**

Every month, every day  
Lies open still. One of those days  
Is going to be marked with a cross.

**THE WORKERS CRY OUT FOR BREAD**

The merchants cry out for markets.  
The unemployed were hungry. The employed  
Are hungry now.  
The hands that lay folded are busy again.  
They are making shells.

**THOSE WHO TAKE THE MEAT FROM THE TABLE**

Teach contentment.  
Those for whom the contribution is destined  
Demand sacrifice.  
Those who eat their fill speak to the hungry  
Of wonderful times to come.  
Those who lead the country into the abyss  
Call ruling too difficult  
For ordinary men.

**WHEN THE LEADERS SPEAK OF PEACE**

The common folk know  
That war is coming.  
When the leaders curse war  
The mobilization order is already written out.

**THOSE AT THE TOP SAY: PEACE AND WAR**

Are of different substance.  
But their peace and their war  
Are like wind and storm.

War grows from their peace  
Like son from his mother  
He bears  
Her frightful features.

Their war kills  
Whatever their peace  
Has left over.

**ON THE WALL WAS CHALKED:**

They want war.  
The man who wrote it  
Has already fallen.

**THOSE AT THE TOP SAY:**

This way to glory.  
Those down below say:  
This way to the grave.

**THE WAR WHICH IS COMING**

Is not the first one. There were  
Other wars before it.  
When the last one came to an end  
There were conquerors and conquered.  
Among the conquered the common people  
Starved. Among the conquerors  
The common people starved too.

**THOSE AT THE TOP SAY COMRADESHIP**

Reigns in the army.  
The truth of this is seen  
In the cookhouse.  
In their hearts should be  
The selfsame courage. But  
On their plates  
Are two kinds of rations.

**WHEN IT COMES TO MARCHING MANY DO NOT  
KNOW**

That their enemy is marching at their head.  
The voice which gives them their orders  
Is their enemy's voice and  
The man who speaks of the enemy  
Is the enemy himself.

**IT IS NIGHT**

The married couples  
Lie in their beds. The young women  
Will bear orphans.

**GENERAL, YOUR TANK IS A POWERFUL VEHICLE**

It smashes down forests and crushes a hundred men.  
But it has one defect:  
It needs a driver.

*(continued on Page 33...)*



## HOLLYWOOD PROPAGANDA

### *Hollywood reboots Russophobia for the New Cold War*

by Max Parry

August 30th, 2019

**I**t is an age-old question as to the extent art reflects the world we live in. Bertolt Brecht allegedly said to the contrary that art was “not a mirror held up to reality but a hammer with which to shape it.” The Marxist German playwright devised theatrical methods designed to distance the audience from the staged drama while drawing self-reflexive attention to the contrived nature of the spectacle itself. The idea was that by estranging the spectator and encouraging critical examination, they would come to view society’s manmade injustices as similarly unnatural and be given agency to transform them in the real world. One of the implications of Brecht’s notion was that art in its more conventional forms often functions as a tool of mass persuasion for those in power to reinforce those inequities. Marx and Engels themselves professed to have learned more about the contradictions of French society from the novels of Honoré de Balzac, which upheld the monarchy and the Church, than any historians or philosophers of their day. At its very worst, artistic mediums can be used by governments to manipulate a nation’s attitude towards other countries in order to justify war.

Brecht’s life and work coincided with the development of the film industry. However, most productions influenced by his ‘epic theatre’ were art-house and foreign films while commercial, mass-market Hollywood movies placed greater emphasis on appealing to the emotions over intellect. However, there were some exceptions such as Charlie Chaplin who not coincidentally was persecuted for his politics by the House of Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) during the Red Scare. In the Cold War, Tinseltown played an important role in the cultural battlefield against the USSR and anti-Soviet paranoia was an ever-present theme in American cinema for decades, from the McCarthy era until the Berlin Wall fell. Contemporaneously, a revival of geopolitical tensions between the United States and the Russian Federation — which many have dubbed

a second Cold War — has seen the return of such tropes on the silver screen. Most recently, it has resurfaced in popular web television shows such as the third season of Netflix’s retro science fiction/horror series *Stranger Things*, as well as HBO’s miniseries *Chernobyl*, which dramatizes the 1986 nuclear accident in Soviet Ukraine.

It was a famous cinematic work that many believe ominously foreshadowed Chernobyl in Andrei Tarkovsky’s 1979 science fiction film, *Stalker*, less than a decade prior to the calamity. It is unlikely that HBO would have been as interested in green-lighting a five-part program on the disaster without the current hysteria surrounding the unproven allegations of Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election and ‘collusion’ between Moscow and the Trump campaign. ‘Russiagate’ has become a national obsession and suddenly the very idea of corruption and intrigue has been made synonymous with the Kremlin. Hollywood liberal figures have been some of the hoax’s biggest proponents, including the show’s writer, Craig Mazin. It is equally as hard to imagine Americans themselves being as captivated by a re-enactment of the nuclear accident without the current political climate of fear-mongering bombarding them every day in corporate media. From the perspective of the U.S. political establishment, what better way to deflect attention away from its own sins than onto a manufactured adversary?

For instance, a recent Columbia University study found that sections of the Marshall Islands, which the U.S. acquired from Japan following WWII and conducted countless nuclear tests nearby in the Pacific, is significantly more radioactive than Chernobyl. The highest radiation levels were found on the Bikini atoll, where evacuated islanders were initially told they could return shortly after tests began in 1946 but have been waiting more than seventy years to come home. On other coral atolls in the island country such as Rogelapp, the U.S. Navy allowed the native population to return too soon knowing full well the food and water were highly contaminated, resulting in a

generation with high birth defects and cancer rates. The U.S. ceded the territory in 1994 only after the Marshallese negotiated a meager \$150 million in damages for their mistreatment while permitting the establishment of a U.S. ballistic missile defense test site targeting China. Unfortunately, the pressitutes are too preoccupied with sensational coverage of the recent accident at the Russian military base in Nyonoska, salivating at another prospective Chernobyl. Not to mention, the ongoing cover-up of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in 2011 in the U.S. vassal state of Japan.

Already featuring a non-native cast and in the English language spoken with British accents, HBO’s *Chernobyl* is loaded with historical inaccuracies. The narrative takes many liberties both for the purpose of entertainment value and to create blatant propaganda seemingly as intent on discrediting socialism as it is in demonizing Moscow. This is unsurprising considering that screenwriter Craig Mazin is not only an establishment liberal with Putin derangement syndrome but a vocal critic of Bernie Sanders who has even ludicrously attempted to tie the Senator from Vermont to Russiagate on social media. Mazin has virtue signaled about the show as a parable about global warming (“*the flaws that led to Chernobyl are the same flaws shown by climate deniers*”) while simultaneously denouncing the candidate in the 2020 Democratic field with arguably the most comprehensive climate plan, leaving aside whether Sanders’ New Dealism is genuine socialism. For centre-rightists, the climate crisis is not tied to capitalism which as Marx reportedly said, “tends to destroy its two sources of wealth, nature and human beings” but is merely the failure of individual corrupt leaders like Trump. Early on in the series, Mazin invents a fictional elderly Soviet official who points to a bust of Vladimir Lenin while invoking socialism to silence those urging an immediate evacuation of Pripjat in the initial days of the disaster.

Mazin takes further artistic license to assign a protagonist in the story in

(continued on Page 31...)



(continued from Page 30...)

Valery Legasov (played by Jared Harris), the high-ranking chemist who led the inquiry of the disaster and testified before the International Atomic Energy Agency before committing suicide in 1987. The story deviates from factual events in order to portray the scientist as a honest official blowing the whistle on a bureaucratic government. While his sworn statement was indeed straightforward, in real life Legasov did not blame reactor design flaws and deviate from the official government account of “human error” or breach of protocol as portrayed in the series, nor was he a witness in the trial of the nuclear plant operators who were found to be at fault. This is entirely a work of fiction designed to depict an incompetent and secretive Soviet government to be the cause of the accident. One would have no idea this same state was capable of inventing human space travel or industrializing an agrarian society in a single decade, a feat which took the British more than a century to accomplish. Not to mention that the accident occurred while the USSR was undergoing market-oriented reforms, a period in which the Soviet economy was at its most *de*-centralized and on the verge of collapse during *perestroika*.

At every turn, Legasov is up against cartoonish authoritarian officials who attempt to cover-up the severity of the catastrophe, including one particularly absurd scene when a Soviet apparatchik threatens to throw him out of a helicopter to his death if he does not explain how a reactor works. The Soviet working class are not spared either, as miners are coerced at gunpoint by Soviet troops at the order of the coal minister to dig a sarcophagus underneath the reactor to prevent radioactive contamination of the country’s water supply with the promise of financial reward. However, by all accounts no such use of the military ever took place and is contradicted by Legasov’s own statements which were not nearly as critical of state management as represented. The scientist had also attempted to take his own life once before while in the hospital suffering from radiation exposure, a more likely motive for his suicide. It is also rumored that the real reason for the Kremlin’s

‘secrecy’ about Chernobyl was that Pripyat was home to more than just a reactor-grade power station but possibly an undisclosed missile launching site or a facility producing warheads, with the meltdown a case of deliberate cyber sabotage by the C.I.A..

The series even finds time to rewrite WWII history in a scene where a stubborn babushka refuses to evacuate Pripyat, claiming to have endured worse surviving the Banderite hoax of the Holodomor. There was indeed a famine (throughout the entire USSR), but using the reconstruction of the tragedy to insert Ukrainian nationalist propaganda and Nazi myths of deliberate starvation is part of the West’s ongoing whitewashing of Ukrainian Nazi collaborators whose ultra-right descendants were instrumental in the 2014 Maidan coup. It is an insult to the Soviet people who sprung to action voluntarily and heroically to prevent the disaster from worsening to what could have left much of Europe uninhabitable, killed millions and caused incalculable damage to the environment. Then again, the West has never given the Soviets credit for defeating Germany, so it is to be expected they wouldn’t truly acknowledge the sacrifices made in Chernobyl.

During the 1980s as the Cold War reached a crescendo, Hollywood was churning out anti-Soviet movies marketed at teens like *Red Dawn* where a group of adolescents defend their small midwestern town from a fictional Soviet invasion. The same premise has been recycled for the most recent season of Netflix’s popular *Stranger Things*, a sci-fi horror vehicle carrying on the genre’s legacy of association with cold war paranoia going back to the 1950s with classics like *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* which evoked domestic fears about communist infiltration in the form of an alien invasion. Stylishly imitative of the 1980s with a synth-heavy soundtrack, the first two seasons saw its young characters living in a fictional Indiana town, some of whom possess telekinetic powers, who battle paranormal beings from another dimension called the “Upside Down” on which a nearby U.S. Department of Energy facility has been secretly performing experiments.

The third season takes a different turn, however, where the adolescents go up against “evil Russians” and “Soviet scum” infiltrating the U.S. Perhaps it was for the better that Chernobyl decided to use British actors speaking in their own tongue because the Russians in *Stranger Things* are cartoonish, brute thugs that resemble Ivan Drago from *Rocky IV*. Even more absurdly, the children discover that a new local shopping mall in the town putting mom-and-pop stores out of business has been constructed by Russian operatives (not by multinational chains as it was in real life under Reaganism) to hide an underground laboratory. The preposterous sequence can only be interpreted as an expression of the anxiety underlying the U.S. decline and fear of the ascendancy of Moscow on the international stage. Like *Chernobyl*, the nostalgia-driven program disparages socialism as much as it villainizes Russia, including one ludicrous scene where a 10-year old black girl agrees to help the other kids on the condition they agree to give her free ice cream from the mall shop where several of the teens work. She then proceeds to lecture them on the purported benefits of trickle-down theory, because if anyone can appreciate the alleged rewards of Reaganomics with the reduction of social programs and spending cuts, it would be an African-American child during the 1980s.

It is apparent that the caricature of the Soviet Union in both productions is really a stand-in for the present-day Russian government under Vladimir Putin. As only American exceptionalism could permit, Hollywood did not hold the same disdain for his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin, whose legacy of high inflation and national debt have since been eliminated. In fact, most have forgotten that the same film industry community outraged about Russia’s supposed interference in the 2016 U.S. election made a celebratory movie back in 2003, *Spinning Boris*, which practically boasted about the instrumental role the West played in Yeltsin’s 1996 reelection in Russia. The highly unpopular alcoholic politician benefited

(continued on Page 32...)



(continued from Page 31...)

from a near universal media bias as virtually all the federation's news outlets came under the control of the 'oligarchs' (in America known simply as billionaires) which his economic policies of mass privatization of state industry enriched overnight. Yeltsin initially polled at less than 10% and was far behind Communist Party candidate Gennady Zyuganov until he became the recipient of billions from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) thanks to his corrupt campaign manager, Anatoly Chubais, now one of the most hated men in all of Russia. After the purging of votes and rampant ballot-box stuffing, Yeltsin successfully closed the gap between his opponent thanks to the overt U.S. meddling.

*Spinning Boris* was directed by Roger Spottiswoode, who previously helmed an installment in the James Bond series, *Tomorrow Never Dies*. The 1997 entry in the franchise is one of thousands of Hollywood films and network television shows exposed by journalists Matthew Alford and Tom Secker as having been influenced or directly assisted by the Pentagon and CIA in their must-read book *National Security Cinema: The Shocking New Evidence of Government Control in Hollywood*. Based on evidence from documents revealed in Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, their investigation divulges the previously unknown extent to which the national security complex has gone in exerting control over content in the film industry. While it has always been known that the military held sway over movies that required usage of its facilities and equipment to be produced, the level of impact on such films in the pre-production and editing stages, as well as the control over non-military themed flicks one wouldn't suspect to be under supervision by Washington and Langley, is exhaustively uncovered.

As expected, Hollywood and the military-industrial complex's intimate relationship during the Cold War is featured prominently in Alford and Secker's investigative work. It is unclear whether HBO or Netflix sought US military assistance or were directly involved with the national security state in their respective productions, but these

are just two recent examples of many where the correlated increase in geopolitical tensions with Moscow is reflected. The upcoming sequel to DC's *Wonder Woman* set to be released next year, *Wonder Woman 1984*, featuring the female superhero "coming into conflict with the Soviet Union during the Cold War in the 1980s", is yet another. Reprising her role is Israeli actress and IDF veteran Gal Gadot as the title character, ironically starring in a blockbuster that will demonize the Eurasian state which saved her ethnicity from extinction. Given the Pentagon's involvement in the debacle surrounding 2014's *The Interview* which provoked very real tensions with North Korea, it is likely they are at least closely examining any entertainment with content regarding Russia, if not directly pre-approving it for review.

Ultimately, the Western panic about its imperial decline is not limited to assigning blame to Moscow. Sinophobia has manifested as well in recent films such as the 2016 sci-fi film *Arrival* where the extra-terrestrials who reach Earth seem more interested in communicating with Beijing as the global superpower than the U.S. However, while the West forebodes the return of Russia and China to greater standing, you can be certain its real fear lies elsewhere. The fact that *Chernobyl* and *Stranger Things* are as preoccupied with portraying socialism in a bad light as they are in rendering Moscow nefarious shows the real underlying trepidation of the ruling elite that concerns the resurgence of class consciousness. The West must learn its lesson that its state of perpetual war has caused its own downfall or it could attempt a last line of defense that would inevitably conscript all of humanity to its death as the ruling class nearly did to the world in 1914 and 1939.

**Max Parry** is an independent journalist and geopolitical analyst. His work has appeared in publications such as *The Greenville Post*, *OffGuardian*, *CounterPunch* and more. Max may be reached at [maxparry@live.com](mailto:maxparry@live.com)

This article was posted on Friday, August 30th, 2019

## HAMAS

*Hamis hails decision of EU court to remove it from terrorist list*

By MEM

September 08, 2019 "[Information Clearing House](#)" –

**T**he Islamic Palestinian movement, Hamas, hailed on Friday a European court decision to remove it from the world's terrorist list, a statement confirms.

Hamas spokesman, Hazim Qassim, declared in the statement that the decision "is positive and a right step in the right direction."

Qassim added "we hope that this decision will lead to completely remove the name of the movement from any unjust list."

Meanwhile, he insisted that "resisting the Israeli occupation is legal according to the international conventions and laws."

He stressed that "classifying Hamas or any of the Palestinian resistance factions as terrorist organisations is completely unjust and not fair for the legal struggle of the Palestinian people against the occupation."

The Hamas official reiterated that this movement "will continue practicing its right to defend the Palestinian people and protect them until the achievement of their freedom and the right to establish an independent Palestinian state."

Hamas's statement came following a press release made by Hamas lawyer, Khalid Al-Showly, in which he announced "the European Court of First Instance in Luxembourg decided on Thursday to remove the Hamas movement, and its armed wing Al-Qassam Brigades, from the world's list of terrorism."

Al-Showly explained that the decision of the court is not final, but the previous decisions on the reinsertion of Hamas and its military wing on terrorist lists "are null and void".

Regarding the importance of this ruling, Al-Showly stated that "Hamas is the party which challenged these decisions and the importance of this

(continued on Page 33...)



*(continued from Page 29...)*  
 General, your bomber is powerful.  
 It flies faster than a storm and carries more than an elephant.  
 But it has one defect:  
 It needs a mechanic.

General, man is very useful.  
 He can fly and he can kill.  
 But he has one defect:  
 He can think.

**Bertolt Brecht**

*(continued from Page 26...)*  
 enlisted due to an impulse to help make the world a better place; it's the same impulse which led Julian Assange to set up a leaking outlet to help expose unaccountable power structures, the only difference is that Assange saw clearly through the fog of propaganda and they did not. But the reverence and fairy tales have got to go.

There are no war heroes. There are only war victims. It's time to grow up and stop pretending otherwise.

*(continued from Page 32...)*  
 ruling is that it is nullifying these decisions.”  
 In such cases, to be unlisted from a blacklist is a long process with many challenges against decisions being taken on political grounds.  
*This article was originally published by "MEM" - -*

**Caitlin's** articles are entirely reader-supported, so if you enjoyed this piece please consider sharing it around, liking her on [Facebook](#), following her antics on [Twitter](#), checking out her [podcast](#), throwing some money into her hat on [Patreon](#) or [Paypal](#), or buying her book [Woke: A Field Guide for Utopia Preppers](#).  
<https://caitlinjohnstone.com>

✂ Cut here

MEMBERSHIP – JUST PEACE Qld Inc. PO Box 573, COORPAROO QLD 4151			
Title	First Name/s	Surname	
Address			PC
Ph (H)	(W)	Mob.	
Email #:			
I have enclosed a cheque/ money order/ cash to the value shown being payment for (please tick) membership for: <input type="checkbox"/> Family - \$30 <input type="checkbox"/> Single (waged) - \$20 <input type="checkbox"/> Concession - \$10 <input type="checkbox"/> Donation \$ .....                Direct Debit: BSB 814 282 A/C No.303 85606 (Your NAME as reference)			
Office use only Membership valid from: ___/___/___ until ___/___/___ Nominated by: _____ Seconded by: _____			
<b>NOTE:</b> The Just Peace Management Committee has decided that, given the types of activities Just Peace undertakes, public liability insurance cover will not be carried.			

✂ Cut here

Please post to the following address:  
**Membership Coordinator**  
**Just Peace Queensland Inc**  
**PO Box 573**  
**Coorparoo Qld 4151**

Or telephone **Beth** on **3398 6844** (H)  
 Or email **Beth** (see *Just Peace* web site for contact address)

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

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

Disclaimer: Whilst specific approval to publish material from non-Just Peace sources has not generally been sought or obtained, such material has been published, wherever possible, with due acknowledgement of the sources, which are generally publicly-available. Just Peace states that it has not deliberately set out to infringe any copyright restrictions, and hopes that the publication of material obtained from other sources will be seen to have been done with the intention of spreading such material to a wider audience.

**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.