



DISARMING Pax Christi TIMES

— *The Journal of Pax Christi Australia* —

Vol. 35 No.3

Spring 2010

Losing in Afghanistan:

Whatever we are trying to do in Afghanistan, it isn't working . . .

By Marjorie Cohn *

July 7, 2010

Pax Christi has joined with other groups in a campaign to break the silence about the 'out of sight out of mind' unwanted war in Afghanistan that has already killed 17 Australian soldiers and countless thousands of Afghan civilians. Most Australians as well as Americans oppose the war. This article by Marjorie Cohn reveals the depth of disillusionment and concern about many aspects of the war on the Afghani people and why we should continue to campaign to get our troops out.

Last week, the House of Representatives voted 215-210 for \$33 billion to fund Barack Obama's troop increase in Afghanistan. But there was considerable opposition to giving the President a blank check. One hundred sixty-two House members supported an amendment that would have tied the funding to a withdrawal timetable. One hundred members voted for another amendment that would have rejected the \$33 billion for the 30,000 new troops already on their way to Afghanistan; that amendment would have required that the money be spent to redeploy our troops out of Afghanistan. De-

mocrats voting for the second amendment included House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and nine Republicans. Both amendments failed to pass.

The new appropriation is in addition to the \$130 billion Congress has already approved for

McChrystal believes that you can't kill your way out of Afghanistan. 'The Russians killed 1 million Afghans and that didn't work.'

Iraq and Afghanistan this year. And the 2010 Pentagon budget is \$693 billion, more than all other discretionary spending programs combined.

Our economic crisis is directly tied to the cost of the war. We are in desperate need of money for education and health care. The \$1 million per year it costs to maintain a single soldier in Afghanistan could pay for 20 green jobs.

Not only is the war bankrupting us, it has come at a tragic cost in lives. June was the deadliest month for U.S. troops in Af-

ghanistan. In addition to the 1,149 American soldiers killed in Afghanistan, untold numbers of Afghan civilians have died from the war - untold because the Defense Department refuses to maintain statistics of anyone except U.S. personnel. After all, Donald Rumsfeld quipped in 2005, 'death has a tendency to encourage a depressing view of war.'

There are other 'depressing' aspects of this war as well. As Gen. Stanley McChrystal reported just days before he got the axe, there is a 'resilient and growing insur-

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DISARMING TIMES

A quarterly journal of Pax Christi Australia. It aims to provide members and interested peacemakers with peace news and views both local and international. We endeavour in each edition to reflect the three-fold emphasis of Pax Christi which engages members in study, Non-violent action and prayer for peace, justice, human rights, development and inter-faith and inter-civilisation dialogue.

PAX CHRISTI AUSTRALIA

Is an Australian-wide

Christian Peace Movement, affiliated with Pax Christi International.

Human rights, justice and integrity of creation are central to its work.

We take a stand against militarism, nuclear weapons and the arms race

As an ecumenical Christian movement Pax Christi fosters the spiritual and scriptural dimensions of peace-making.

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Disarming Times is printed by Arena Press
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What's Next for the Nuclear Disarmament Movement?

It could be said that many advocates of nuclear disarmament felt considerable elation at the election of Barack Obama in 2008. In the previous years, the Bush administration had scrapped the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty, refused to support ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, championed the development of new U.S. nuclear weapons, and abandoned arms control and disarmament negotiations. Obama, by contrast, not only promised to reverse these priorities, but — during and after his campaign — stated his commitment to building a nuclear-free world.

It can also be said, there was a sense of letdown among disarmament activists in April 2010, when the Obama administration's long-awaited Nuclear Posture Review showed no significant departures from previous U.S. nuclear doctrine. Furthermore — in an apparent attempt to secure Republican support for Senate ratification of nuclear disarmament treaties — the administration began championing a 10-year, \$180 billion plan to "modernize" the U.S. nuclear weapons complex. Nevertheless, the successful negotiation of the New START Treaty with Russia and the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, scheduled for May at the United Nations, raised expectations for substantial progress on banning the bomb.

Here in Australia the May 2010 NPT review conference, particularly, provided the focus for nuclear disarmament movement. Led by ICAN and a small number of other NGO's and peace groups, including, liaised with DFAT (Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade) - responsible for negotiations at the Review Conference in New York and advocated Australia take a strong stand on nuclear disarmament. At the follow-up meeting with DFAT after the Review, ICAN summed up the reaction of all around the table that from the standpoint of the disarmament groups the NPT conference resolution was a serious disappointment. Highlighting the fact that the resolution largely restated past commitments, and failed to break new ground.

The Review resolutions - arrived at by consensus, urged nations with the largest nuclear arsenals to lead efforts toward disarmament, called on all nations to agree to more thorough inspections of their facilities, and announced plans for the convening of a conference in 2012 "on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons." Where do these small incremental steps lead us?

Lawrence Wittner, who is professor of history at the State University of New York/Albany, asks in his latest book "Confronting the Bomb: A Short History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement" (Stanford University Press): Can this mixture of somewhat mundane incremental steps and a dazzling long-range vision — the vision of a nuclear-free world — be sustained?

In answer he claims: *It will require activists willing to put significant efforts into securing immediate gains on the road to their long-term goal, and vigorously champion their long-term goal as they engage in immediate struggles. Over the course of history, this has always been a tricky balancing act for social change movements. But with wise leadership and a committed following, there is no reason that the nuclear disarmament movement — which, after all, has campaigned against the bomb, with some effectiveness, for 65 years — cannot manage it in the future.*

Continued from Page 1

agency' with high levels of violence and corruption within the Karzai government. McChrystal's remarks were considered 'off message' by the White House, which was also irked by the general's criticisms of Obama officials in a Rolling Stone article. McChrystal believes that you can't kill your way out of Afghanistan. 'The Russians killed 1 million Afghans and that didn't work.'

He and his successor, Gen. David Petraeus, likely disagree on the need to prevent civilian casualties (known as 'Civ Cas'). McChrystal instituted some of the most stringent rules of engagement the U.S. military has had in a war zone: 'Patrol only in areas that you are reasonably certain that you will not have to defend yourselves with lethal force.' Commanders cannot fire on buildings or other places if they have reason to believe civilians might be present unless their own forces are in imminent danger of being overrun. And they must end engagements and withdraw rather than risk harming noncombatants. McChrystal knows that for every innocent person you kill, you create new enemies; he calls it 'insurgent math.' According to the Los Angeles Times, McChrystal 'was credited with bringing about a substantial drop in the proportion of civilian casualties suffered at the hands of NATO's International Security Assistance Force and its Afghan allies.'

While testifying in Congress before he was confirmed to take McChrystal's place, Petraeus told senators that some U.S. soldiers had complained about the former's rules of engagement aimed at preventing civilian casualties.

According to the Rolling Stone article, Obama capitulated to McChrystal's insistence that more troops were needed in Afghanistan. In his December 1 speech at West Point, the article says, 'the president laid out all the reasons why fighting the

war in Afghanistan is a bad idea: It's expensive; we're in an economic crisis; a decade-long commitment would sap American power; Al Qaeda has shifted its base of operations to Pakistan. Then,' the article continued, 'without ever using the words 'victory' or 'win,' Obama announced that he would send an additional 30,000 troops to Afghanistan, almost as many as McChrystal had requested.'

Both Obama and Petraeus no longer speak of 'victory' over the Taliban; they both hold open the possibility of settlement with the Taliban. Indeed, Maj. Gen. Bill Mayville, chief of operations for McChrystal, told Rolling Stone, 'It's not going to look like a win, smell like a win or taste like a win.'

The majority of Americans now oppose the war in Afghanistan. Fareed Zakaria had some harsh words for the war on his CNN show, saying that 'the whole enterprise in Afghanistan feels dis-

CIA director Leon Panetta admitted that the number of Al Qaeda left in Afghanistan may be 50 to 100, Fareed Zakaria asked, 'why are we fighting a major war' there?

proportionate, a very expensive solution to what is turning out to be a small but real problem.'

Noting that CIA director Leon Panetta admitted that the number of Al Qaeda left in Afghanistan may be 50 to 100, Zakaria asked, 'why are we fighting a major war' there? 'Last month alone there were more than 100 NATO troops killed in Afghanistan,' he said. 'That's more than one allied death for each living Al Qaeda member in the country in just one month.' Citing estimates that the war will cost more than \$100 billion in 2010 alone, Zakaria observed, 'That's a billion dollars for every member of Al Qaeda thought to be living in Afghanistan in one year.' He queried, 'Why are we investing so much time, energy, and effort when Al Qaeda is so weak?'

And Zakaria responded to the argument that we should continue fighting the Taliban because they are allied with Al Qaeda by saying, 'this would be like fighting Italy in World War II after Hitler's regime had collapsed and Berlin was in flames just because Italy had been allied with Germany.'

There is also division in the Republican ranks over the war. Republican National Committee chairman Michael Steele made some gutsy comments about the war in Afghanistan, saying it is not winnable and calling it a 'war of Obama's choosing.' (Even though George W. Bush first invaded Afghanistan, Obama made the escalation of U.S. involvement a centerpiece of his campaign.) Steele said that if Obama is 'such a student of history, has he not understood that, you know, that's the one thing you don't do, is engage in a land war in Afghanistan? Everyone who has tried, over 1,000 years of history, has failed.' Interestingly, Republicans Lindsey Graham and John McCain slammed Steele and jumped to Obama's defense. Rep. Ron Paul, however, agreed with Steele, saying, 'Michael Steele has it right, and Republicans should stick by him.'

Obama will likely persist with his failed war. He appears to be stumbling along the same path that Lyndon Johnson followed. Johnson lost his vision for a 'Great Society' when he became convinced that his legacy depended on winning the Vietnam War. It appears that Obama has similarly lost his way.

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She is the author of *Cowboy Republic: Six Ways the Bush Gang Has Defied the Law*; and co-author of *Rules of Disengagement: The Politics and Honor of Military Dissent*. Her anthology, *The United States and Torture: Interrogation, Incarceration and Abuse*, will be published in 2010 by NYU Press.

CommonDreams.org

Papuan Struggle Enters New Phase

By Jason MacLeod who teaches civil resistance at the University of Queensland and is researching Papuan non-violent social movements. (July 9 2010)

In early July twenty thousand indigenous Papuans, many in indigenous dress, walked and danced their way through the streets from Kotaraja to the city centre in Jayapura. Shops shut in the busy student suburb of Abepura and in the downtown business centre, unwittingly turning the march into a strike. Thousands more converged on the Provincial Parliament building in the capital, occupying it overnight. Demonstrators completely overwhelmed police through sheer volume of numbers. This is the largest civilian based mobilisation since the Papuan Spring of 1998-2000.

Jason MacLeod claims that:

This is the most significant development in West Papua for over ten years although you would not know it from the lack of coverage in the mainstream news.

A brief update:

After occupying parliament for two days the police threatened to use force to disperse the crowd (about 1500 stayed overnight). The protest leaders then called the occupation off.

Significantly all protesters – moderates and radicals alike – withdrew in an orderly and disciplined manner. (Remember the last time there was an occupation like this – when students blockaded the road between Jayapura and the airport in March 2006 over the Freeport mine – it ended up in a riot with Indonesian security personnel stoned to death, retaliatory action by the paramilitary police with student dormitories ransacked and scores killed, beaten and tortured, hundreds of students fleeing to PNG, and a severely traumatised student

population that is only regrouping now).

This is not a radical protest although student activists from both the KNPB (West Papua National Committee) and WPNA (West Papua National Authority) are involved. However the protest is led by respected church leaders and backed by the Majelis Rakyat Papua (MRP – or indigenous Papuan upper house). Moderate NGO leaders are also involved. In fact, all components of Papuan society are involved.

There are now negotiations and political manoeuvrings to try and secure Papuan political leaders support to hand back Special Autonomy

Papuans have called for foreign governments to withhold all funds for Special Autonomy until there has been a dialogue with Jakarta to resolve the crisis.

To what extent the Papuan civil service (PNS) is being drawn in is not yet clear, but there is widespread dissatisfaction with Special Autonomy by members from the PNS who are a major beneficiary of Special Autonomy along with the Papuan political elite.

Equally true we know militias have been armed and that the police are out in force but it is not clear what their movements will be.

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Popular Resistance:

After more than forty years of harsh occupation there is a new feeling amongst Papuans in Indonesia's restive Pacific periphery. Groups previously divided are now working together towards the same goal: **a rejection of Special Autonomy, commonly known as Otsus: a package of finance, policy and legislation introduced by Jakarta in 2001 to quell Papuan demands for independence.**

The occupation of the parliament building has been brewing for years but the plan took shape over the last month.

On 9-10 June the Papuan Peoples Assembly (Majelis Rakyat Papua or MRP), a kind of rubber stamp Indigenous senate, held an open forum to evaluate Otsus. The conclusion was that Otsus had failed, or "totally failed" as Papuans emphasise. The reasons are clear. Otsus promised protection and prosperity. Instead torture and human rights violations by the security forces worsened, migrants continued to pour into the province, further marginalising indigenous Papuans, and the multinational oil, gas, mining, and timber companies (like BP and Freeport-Rio Tinto) continued to operate business as usual, safe in the knowledge that the military is keeping a repressive lid on boiling Papuan anger. As Benny Giay, a spokesperson for Forum Demokrasi Rakyat Papua Bersatu (the Democratic Forum of the United Papuan People or FORDEM for short) who organised the demonstration says, "Otsus threatens the existence of indigenous Papuans in the land of their ancestors. That is why we say Otsus has totally failed."

On 18 June 15,000 Papuans from seven districts coordinated by the United Democratic Forum of Papuan People converged on the DPRP to officially hand over the people's decision. FORDEM leaders demanded that the DPRP sign an agreement to hand back Otsus to Jakarta in no less than three weeks. Yesterday the DPRP's time was up.

In the past the Papuan movement has been targeting Jakarta and the international community, asking others to give them independence while their own political representatives wait on the next injection of cash from Jakarta. This time is different. Papuans are targeting their own leaders. FORDEM is demanding that the provincial legislature in Papua (the DPRP) convene a special session to return Special Autonomy to Jakarta. The goal may be more modest than independence, but it is more achievable. Papuans are getting their own house in order.

That doesn't mean it will be easy. Papuan political parties are banned. All the political parties represented in Papua are national Indonesian parties with their head office in Jakarta. Papuan political interests are marginal to elites in Jakarta. At the grassroots, Jakarta may have lost its legitimacy years ago but Papuan's political representatives sing to Jakarta's tune. If FORDEM can secure the DPRP's agreement to hand back Otsus then Papuan non-cooperation with Jakarta will be total.

Papuans understand Jakarta will do everything they can to derail and dilute Papuan demands including using force if they believe they can get away with it. The pretext for

this will be to prevent a referendum on Papuan independence, Jakarta's worst nightmare. A number of Papuan leaders know this but are under intense pressure from grassroots constituents to accept nothing less. But to push for a referendum now could mean risking losing everything else as well. The challenge for Papuan strategists is to secure tangible victories that Jakarta will concede to, but also one they can sell to the restive masses that have come to the capital to usher in independence. At the least that

will include concessions like opening up Papua to international journalists, releasing political prisoners, and ensuring there is freedom of expression. But for a people who value dialogue, Papuans also want Jakarta to listen to them, to sit down and talk about their grievances. This includes the fraudulent transfer of sovereignty from the Dutch to the Indonesian government during the 1960s.

Publicly, Provincial Parliamentarians are still refusing to meet with the protesters, although privately a block of ten have said they support FORDEM's demand. This morning after negotiation with protest leaders police have extended the permit to protest for another day. As one protest leader says, "We have won one day. We are building the Papuan spirit to struggle."

Whether the Papuan protesters win their immediate goal for a special parliamentary session to return Otsus to Jakarta is not yet clear. But for now Papuans have won valuable political space.

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. . .self-sacrifice and the doing of duty; it is rare that the soldier's primary role of 'killing' is voiced. The reports of Australian soldiers at Gallipoli recall that they were renowned for their willingness to bayonet the Turkish soldiers.

The book is a helpful reminder that Edwardian notions of nationhood involved blood sacrifice. The new co-option of Anzac day seems to be reaching back to those Edwardian attitudes, avoiding and forgetting the carnage and disillusionment of World War 1 and the rest of the century. They also observe sharply that Australian invasion of other countries, which serve local; political ends, is met by a great reluctance to acknowledge (Paul Keating apart) that the European occupation of this country was an invasion.

These comments have not done justice to this important book. It is a challenging contribution to the discussion about 'identity'. It will help us as we try to avoid the deceptive allure of militarism.

Wes Campbell
11th June 2010

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BOUGAINVILLE LOSES A BRAVE ADVOCATE

A tribute to Waratah Rose Gillespie by Clive Porabou.— Bougainvillean peace maker and activist, song writer, singer and film maker

Waratah Rose Gillespie sadly left this world during the night after sharing the Sunday Agape with Pax Christi members where she championed the cause of humans rights for Bougainville and addressed the renewed threats from the reopening of Rio Tinto copper and gold mine at Panguna. She was an activist to the end. Pax Christi has been long aware of her passion for justice and human rights, and especially her active campaign in the 1990s against the military blockade on the island of Bougainville off Papua New Guinea when she founded the Bougainville Freedom Movement. Waratah was a lawyer who also wrote books and produced films about her experiences and observations. She was a political prisoner in Fiji in the first military coup in 1987, and acted as a human shield during the 2003 Iraq war. Her work in human rights spanned more than 40 years and began with protests against the "White Australia" immigration policy, which was ended in 1975. Her compassionate life of commitment to human rights will long linger as an inspiration to many.

I first heard of Rosemarie Gillespie during the height of the Bougainville Civil war. As a young freedom fighter I didn't get to meet her personally at that time. But in 1992 I saw her several times during that year filming and taking reports of the atrocity and brutality the PNG Defence Forces were committing to my people.

In fact that is where my interest in filming rose, when I thought that a native Indigenous person should do this. I went to the neighbouring Solomon Islands in 1994 and settled there. In early 1997 I borrowed a video camera from a Bougainville supporter and went back to my motherland for filming, and without any formal training in filming but came up with the expression during the height of the civil war: "Mekim Na Save" - Do it and know it.

Since then the last I heard of Rosemarie was that she was banned from entering Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. In 2003 when I asked a Bougainville supporter in Australia about her, he told me that she was in Iraq as a human shield.

In 2005 I went back to my motherland again filming, I went through South Bougainville and visited the run down hospital, saw that they were in need of medicine.

I sent an email to Rosemarie asking if she could arrange medicines for the hospital in Buin, South Bougainville. This

is because in the past she had brought in as many boxes of medicine she could bring into Bougainville which in many cases she wasn't allowed to.

She replied to me and gave me some contacts but then it never happened as peace was gaining momentum and the news was coming out that Bougainville was alright now.

When the Papua New Guinea Government granted Autonomous Government to Bougainville in 2005, the mining Company Bougainville Copper Limited come out clear and talked about returning back to the Island and re-opening the Panguna mine.

I went back to my motherland and filmed and interviewed the rural people of what they thought of BCL returning back to re-open the mine. When I was working on this film I told Rosemarie of the project I was working on. She replied and told me that she was interested and would like to work together with me. She funded the sound track of the video "Panguna Mine Dilemma" that I produced.

In 2008 she asked me if I would like to come to Australia to attend a conference and speak at the forums. In the past I used to say no to others who invited me, but this time I said yes, because for the simple reason that Rosemarie had been to Bougainville and she knows and cares about us and our struggle. Finally in 2009 I made it to Aus-

tralia and when I entered Sydney terminal she was waiting for me. I had not sent her my photo but she saw me, a black man and asked me: "Are you Clive?"

After that I worked with her for the campaign to save my motherland and the future generations to say no to mining which destroyed our land and environment. I used to wonder why did she leave her job and comfort in serving the indigenous people of Bougainville and around the world? The answer is I guess: she wants a world where Indigenous people will enjoy their world without outsiders controlling them and save their land for gardening and not mining.

Before each talk we gave together I played my guitar and sang a song about my motherland and Rosemarie used to tell me that is a lovely song. Finally on the 20th of June, in Melbourne when I talked with her for the last time, in regards to our struggle for independence and to say no to mining she told me and Joanne (President of the Indigenous Women's Movement in Bougainville) that we have a big job ahead and we must go on. The forum organized by Pax Christi went really well and we enjoyed it very much, not knowing that the next day Rosemarie will leave us. I took her last photo that day and we separated. At 5:53am I got a call from Joanne that Rosemarie had a stroke and the Doctors

are saying she will not make it back.

I prayed to my God that she can make it back, but the good Lord took her away from us. Many Indigenous Bougainvillians will miss her and we have been hoping that after we become an Independent Island Nation she will be invited to Mekamui/Bougainville, unfortunately that will not happen as she left us unexpectedly.

She will be remembered by the future generations of Bougainville when they read her book "Running with Rebels," which I and Joanne will work hard to donate to the schools on Bougainville.

I owe her a lot and she is the champion in my life, she brought me to Australia and introduced me to many good people, without her I wouldn't have come this far.

She supported me in my music and filmmaking, as most of my songs and video are about our struggle. After Kirrallee, her daughter told me that mum is no longer with us, I felt like a bullet was going through my heart. I will always remember her all my life.

Clive Porabou

A TRIBUTE TO FR. CYRIL HALLY

Most readers of Disarming Times would know Cyril Hally through his long term commitment to Pax Christi or his massive contribution to understand and practice of Mission in the church. Dan McAloon freelance journalist in Catholic media pays tribute to this extraordinary man of peace..

Few who met who met Fr Cyril Hally in the decades that he was active in the Australian Church were not impressed by his sharp intellect, abiding spirituality and lifelong 'youthful' enthusiasm for the cause of bringing the Kingdom of God into existence on Earth. He lectured in missiology, missionary anthropology, mission history, and later, peace and ecology. He helped missionaries who now work in many parts of the world "to read the signs of the times" as Pope John XXIII said.

Over years he built up an extraordinary network in many areas of life. Fr. Gary Walker noted "He touched the lives of hundreds if not thousands of people with his vision and understanding of what was happening to the Church and the world."

Born at Temuka, South island, New Zealand in 1920, at age 19 Cyril entered the St Columban Missionary Society seminary in Essendon Melbourne. The Columbans foundation was to take the Gospel

into China and it was there that Cyril expected to spend his ministry. But it was not to be. Within a few years of his ordination, Mao's communist revolution saw the suppression of foreign missionaries and imprisonment of Catholic bishops, priests and religious under charges of anti-revolutionary activities.

Fr Cyril instead became a chaplain to Asian students in New Zealand. He later studied in Rome and graduated with a licentiate in Canon Law. In 1951, he was sent to Japan but he was only there for just over a year before he was recalled to the staff of the Columban seminary in Sydney.

After studying linguistics at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, he joined the staff at St Columban's seminary at Dalgan Park, Co Meath, Ireland. The Irish Columban ecological activist and author, Fr Sean McDonagh, a seminarian then, vividly recalled Cyril's weekly class in Gregorian Chants for the discourses into anthropology, linguistics, or current affairs like the Vietnam War.

"The phrase I remember most from Cyril's lips was 'in my opinion'. Cyril expected missionaries to have opinions about a range of broad issues based on solid reflection and research." said Fr McDonagh.

When describing the Church's mission in the contemporary world "enculturation"

was a word often used by Fr Cyril to explain the openness and respect which missionaries should take to the indigenous cultures of people they will live with. Fr Cyril's long held belief was that New Testament's strength lay in its ability to adapt to its host society without any diminishment of its gospel truths.

In the post-Vatican II Church, Cyril was appointed to a church 'think tank' in Brussels, 'Pro Mundi Vitae' which specialised in in-depth studies on topics and issues of the Church that needed researching. In 1972 he was made First Secretary to the National Catholic Missionary Council, Sydney, set up by the Australian Bishops Conference.

For many years Fr Cyril was Director of the Columban's Pacific Mission Institute and lectured missionaries who were heading for cross-cultural mission in Australia or other parts of the world. He was awarded the inaugural Philia Prize for vision and initiative in religious work in Australia. He was a leading light in the ecumenical peace and justice group "Pax Christi". In 2002 Catholic Earthcare Australia inaugurated the annual Cyril Hally Lecture on the ecology.

Cyril Hally's life was so rich that each area of his work and interest deserves a chapter in his biography. Those of us who know well his association with Pax Christi have been nourished and enriched. We will miss him. Cyril - rest in peace.

Burma's 2010 elections reveal ugly truths.

Naing Ko Ko

"The people of Burma have been sharing its pain with the lack of freedom, down into zero degrees over the past four decades. The fundamental question is – when will the military generals hand over the power to a fairly elected government? The logical answer appears as not any time soon."

Surprisingly, the military junta of Burma has enjoyed being a media celebrity during the build up to the 2010 elections. The junta announced that a potential election would be held at the end of this year, as an attempt to "guide flourishing democracy". The people of Burma have been sharing its pain with the lack of freedom, down into zero degrees over the past four decades. It would be easy to advertise an election since so many things have gone wrong for the people since 1990. The fundamental question is – when will the military generals hand over the power to a fairly elected government? The logical answer appears as not any time soon.

Most of Burma's neighboring countries seem to prefer that the outcome of the election brings a new regime to Burma, although the trends are not so great for this either. Both the election and the general-dominated-regime are similar to the twin-ugly sisters, but this election will be the uglier one. Nothing can express the beauty on the political landscape of this election, because, the generals have created a unilateral game. No development is convincing to right the direction toward democracy and peace, although the junta has promised occasionally to reinstall these aspects in Burma. However, the generals are marketing their election at the international arena, in particular at the countless meetings of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Recently, 20 military generals have changed from their military uniform to civilian clothes to contest this election, even though they still squat in power and have declared an

election commission, which is composed of ex-generals.

The major problem with this election is the prohibiting of public assembly and the annihilating of freedom of speech. Another utterly ugly fact is that this election is being held while thousands of people have been locked up for being pro-democratic, and millions of ethnic minorities have been slaughtered since the regime came into power. On top of this, almost all of the state's media outlets, newspapers, radios and televisions, have been assigned as the junta's spin-doctors for the election. As well as the internal media being under control, international election monitoring teams are officially rejected and visa applications of global journalists are banned. With all this taking place, it is certain that there will be no free and fair election in Burma under the military's election council, only a hybrid ontology: bulletocracy and helmetocracy.

The numbers of political parties have mushroomed to contest this upcoming election. In the short term, they are spoiled with attention by exiled media and are being encouraging by them, however, in the long term, the political pictures of Burma reflects a typical picture. The people's excitement towards the election is evidently difficult to find out due to the lack of quality media being brought out of Burma. No one running for elections has developed any significant policies yet. Parties' leaders must develop and promote their social, economic and political policy rather than parroting on

about rhetoric statements and quasi-democracy models. No political party has proclaimed their policy. Simultaneously, some new faces who join the contest for power, have appeared by branding themselves as the "third-forced" to get a piece of bulletocracy and helmetocracy. Those chameleons have not brought any new policy either, and are just bowing to the generals will.

On top of this, there is no clear time frame or procedure to hand over the state power after the election. The election contestants are obligated to follow the orders and commands from the senior general Than Shwe. No one knows what will happen next, either when the election will happen or how the minority parties will line up against the regime. But what the generals do sentimentally believe is that they can sell their bulletocracy to the neighboring countries, especially, China, India, Thailand, Singapore and ASEAN. As long as the gas, teak and minerals are still being traded, international legitimacy for the Burmese regime is of little interest to its neighbors. Burmese generals are breaking the record in the rise of an illiberal democracy and are making a new one: the rise of bulletocracy in the Asian Century.

We need to remember that both the election laws and the constitution of Burma were promulgated by the military generals. The latest 2008 constitution was plotted by 110 members of the 440-seat People's Parliament (Pyithu Hluttaw), and ensures that 56 members of the 224-seat National Parliament (Amyotha Hluttaw)

will be selected by the military generals. Technically this means that a quarter of parliamentary seats were reserved for unelected military generals. Equally, the constitutions, the election laws, as well as the election commissions have been hegemonized by the military generals. Not surprisingly, there is zero-space for individual liberty, for people participa-

tion in the decision making process and the market.

The empirical fact is that the authentic and legitimate leader both at home and abroad is Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The trump card is in her hands. Thousands upon thousands of democracy activists have been selflessly following her leadership in domestic and international

arenas. The game is not over yet and her leadership is still overwhelmingly dominated by the new generations of Burmese. The struggle between the legitimate democrats and illegitimate bureaucrats will continue over the next decades as long as these military thugs hijack power.

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL1006/S00221.htm>

Please avoid legitimizing Myanmar's military regime

BY Aung Din, Washington D.C | Tue, 07/20/2010 9:48 AM | Opinion

The military regime's plan to hold an election in Myanmar in 2010 has attracted the international community's attention. Many hope that this election will be a small step towards democracy and positive change. For those who live in pluralist societies, an election sounds encouraging.

This will not be the first election the regime held. After taking over power through bloodshed in September 1988, the regime held an election in 1990 to place its favored party, the National Unity Party (NUP), into power. To secure the NUP's victory, the regime jailed democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi and other senior leaders of her party, the National League for Democracy (NLD).

However, to the surprise of the regime, the NLD won a landslide victory, securing 82 percent of the parliamentary seats. As the election result was not in their favor, the regime refused to transfer power. Instead, many elected representatives were arrested, tortured, imprisoned and driven out of the country. Now the regime has called for an election again after twenty brutal years. This time, the regime is prepared not to have history repeat itself. Its 2008 Constitution, the product of a 13-year-long process grants supreme power to the military.

A set of unfair and unjust electoral laws are in place. The regime's handpicked election com-

mission is up and running. Restrictions on political parties are overwhelming, including forcing them to expel party members who are in prison for their political activity.

The regime's prime minister has formed a new party, the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), and declared to secure the victory. The Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), the regime's rough equivalent of Hitler's Brown Shirt, is campaigning for the USDP and preparing to control all polling stations.

The USDA's involvement in the assassination attempt on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and its violent attack against anyone challenging the regime's rule are well documented. Any candidates not anointed by the regime will face severe scrutiny over their campaign funds and any connections with foreign organizations. The commission is ready to declare their victory void if they win.

The NLD and its ethnic allies made the right decision not to participate in this corrupted process. This election is designed to legitimize and legalize military rule in Myanmar. The international community should follow the NLD in not recognizing this electoral farce.

Despite being forced to disband, the NLD has not quit politics. It quit playing the regime's game. The NLD continues to exist as a political force regard-

less of whether the regime recognizes it or not.

The NLD still believes meaningful political dialogue between the military, democracy forces and ethnic representatives is the only means to solve the Myanmar's wrenching problems peacefully.

There may be other democrats. But they do not represent the majority of the people of Myanmar, like the NLD and Aung San Suu Kyi. Her popularity remains unchanged as the one and only national figure who can bring real national reconciliation to Myanmar. Any political process without her will never be successful and this election will be void of legitimacy.

The international community should denounce it and pressure the regime to establish a meaningful political dialogue without further delay. We expect and implore the international community will stand firmly on the side of truth, justice and democracy. Supporting this election will only provide the regime with the legitimacy it seeks while undermining Myanmar's democracy movement.

The writer served over four years in prison as a political prisoner due to his leading role in the nationwide pro-democracy uprising in Myanmar in 1988. He is now the executive director of the Washington, DC-based US campaign for Myanmar.

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2010/07/20/please-avoid-legitimizing-myanmar%E2%80%99s-military-regime.html>

BOOK REVIEW:

What's wrong with ANZAC? The Militarisation of Australian History.

Ed. Henry Reynolds and Marilyn Lake.

By Peter Jones

I came to Australia from Britain in 1976 at a time when Anzac day was winding down and there was controversy over feminists using Anzac Day to remember women who were victims of rape in modern war.

I was puzzled by this as Europeans remembered war on November 11th (the end of the First World War) with two minutes silence but they did not have a national holiday and the focus on the Dawn Service and the march afterwards that I found in Australia. Nor was there anything like the influence of the RSL or the media coverage given to Bruce Ruxton as a national figure, who I later discovered had not even seen active military service.

The Bob Hawke years worried me as he swung towards the glorification of Gallipoli, a disastrous defeat caused by British military incompetency. What other country celebrated such a disaster as a national day? Paul Keating seemed to understand this in part but swung the focus to Kokoda as an expression of Australian mateship in conflict. I watched uneasily in the early 1990s as the issue seemed to become linked to justifying Australia's participation in someone else's wars, first the British Empire till 1941 and after that the United States.

The Howard years capped it. Swarms of young backpackers descended on Gallipoli on April 25th and the Department of Veteran Affairs appeared to have unlimited funds for history competitions for schools to glorify mateship and the Anzac spirit, with prizes given to winning students of visits to Canberra and Gallipoli on April 25th.

Greg Sheridan in his review of the book for "The Australian" skirted the issue by deriding academics who get government fund-

ing and saying they have no business to raise this concern as a result. However as a teacher I have been asking myself for some years why all this money appears to be coming out of Veterans Affairs on these issues when it didn't before? How much is it tied in with the focus on Gallipoli and reviving Anzac Day with the elephant in the room being support for participation in US interventionism in Iraq and Afghanistan and huge blowouts in the military budget when we are told to tighten our belts in other areas of government expenditure?

Brendan Nelson, as Minister of Defence, capped the Values debate earlier this decade with his assertion of the role of Simpson and his donkey as the epitomic of the Anzac spirit equalling Australian Values, though a few courageous voices were raised to question his understanding of these values in light of the human rights record of the Howard years and treatment of the boat people. After that, attention swung back to the Western Front and Fromelles so now we have the pilgrimage to Gallipoli, walking the Kokoda Track, plus an increasing focus on the military disasters of the Western Front.

With perfect timing, Henry Reynolds and Marilyn Lake published their new book of essays "What's wrong with Anzac? The Militarisation of Australian History" to coincide with Anzac Day 2010 as Kevin Rudd geared up to focus on the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings while Tony Abbott said that if elected, he would increase the ADF presence in Afghanistan.

Predictably the conservative's flagship, "The Australian," rolled out Geoffrey Blainey and Greg Sheridan to get stuck into the book, with the latter predictably deriding the book as coming from the

ideological Left stable so not worthy of serious consideration.

In fact the opposite is the case, as not only do these essays raise the issue of the militarisation of Australia's history in recent years by both the Hawke-Keating Labor government and the dark Howard decade that followed but they ask some basic questions about why the Anzac myth is used not only to justify Australia's participation in foreign wars as well as ignore Australia's position in the world in 1901.

This was a time when Australia led the world in democracy, the secret ballot, votes for women, and our standard of living. Somehow we have been taught since then that Australia only found its identity at Gallipoli and subtly this has been extended to justify continued participation in the foreign wars of our great and powerful friends.

Henry Reynolds also raised the pertinent question of whether the ANZAC myth has been used to cover Australia's White History and Aboriginal resistance, with John Howard's political agenda being to ignore what he saw as the Black Armband view of history and Australia's Black history.

Other contributors referred to the existence of the earlier peace movements - going back to the Boer War - which have remained largely ignored, perhaps to justify the line that those who criticise Anzac Day are "traitors" as Marilyn Lake found when she published her original opinion piece in "The Age" in 2005. It is now seen as disloyal to criticise our brave soldiers doing their patriotic duty and this becomes a cover for not criticising our presence in Iraq and Afghanistan, so what has changed since Viet Nam and why?

Marilyn Lake and Carina Donaldson ask what happened to the anti-war movement after the early 1970s with a focus on the sentiments expressed in "One Day of the Year" then go on

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to ask how Anzac Day has been rehabilitated and why the anti-war movement seems to have faded away.

Three more chapters develop this theme of how Anzac Day and the Anzac spirit have been rehabilitated, with the emphasis on the way in which the Department of Veterans Affairs has taken over from the RSL in celebrating the Anzac spirit while the day itself has been transformed in the last decade under John Howard and Kevin Rudd "into a festival of national pride and collective rejoicing."

The Epilogue asks about ways in which history is used to define our national heritage and national values, suggesting that we might look to alternative national traditions "that give pride of place to equality of opportunity and the pursuit of social justice; the idea of a living wage and sexual and racial equality."

The final flourish is one that we can identify with, "The key premise of the Anzac legend is that nations and men are made at war. It is an idea that had currency a hundred years

ago, Is it now time for Australia to cast it aside?"

Can we answer that and come up with a strategy on how to achieve this today as the war in Afghanistan drags on and the military budget calls for tens of billions of dollars to go on modernising our military forces well into the 21st century with hardly a voice raised against it?

Peter D. Jones is a member of the Quakers and teaches at the Quakers school in Tasmania.

Identity and Anzac by Rev Wes Campbell, Uniting Church Chaplain Melbourne University

Australian identity is contested space. Over the past decade phrases such as 'history wars', 'black armband' and 'Anzac' became part of the debate about what it is to be 'Australian'.

I come to these questions having been formed by Wittgenstein's notion of language games' the notion of the 'social construction of reality', and theologian George A. Lindbeck's notion of a 'cultural linguistic community' (in *The Nature of Doctrine*).

[Add to this mix the observation that the military know how to form the identity of their recruits: with uniforms, drills, induction into the history of their unit, songs, flags, medals, and so on. This is a sort of 'catechetical formation', similar to the early church's practice of forming a Christian identity through baptism, regular participation in the liturgy, eating the Lord's Supper, sharing meals and supporting the poor. (I would observe that the military organisations know how to form their soldiers better than the church now does.) It is reported - as I recall - that the incessant drilling and training in the military forces is necessary to create a learned 'instinct' that can be called on under battle conditions. Apparently the usual human instinct - when hearing loud noises- is to freeze. Also, when called on to shoot another human being, the usual human response

is to avoid killing. The training creates an instinctive response that overrides that reluctance, following orders instead.]

These reflections have been prompted by the book, *What's Wrong With ANZAC?*, by Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds with Mark McKenna and Joy Damousi, New South Book, 2010.

In this book the authors explore how the Anzac myth has been formed. They explore early Australian attitudes to war, the relationship of 19th Century Australia to the British Empire, the debate in Australia about participation in overseas wars, the anti-war movement. Significantly the strength of the anti-war movement between the wars is documented (including Methodist Conferences and ministers, the SCM, the Womens International League for Peace and Freedom, etc.) They do observe that much of this movement faded away with the onset of World War 2. Regarding Australian readiness to support the 'Imperial war effort', in the Boer then the First World War, the authors note that a significant number of European countries refused to join the war:

The special importance of the book comes with the description of recent political actions which serve to militarise

Anzac Day. The formerly powerful RSL has been sidelined by the Department of Veterans Affairs. New ways of marking the day, including Prime Minister Bob Hawke's presence at Gallipoli for the dawn service, are serving to recast the day. Where earlier commemorations were sombre recollections of the cost of war, a new element of celebration was introduced by Prime Minister John Howard.

The authors explore how, with the breakdown of 'Christian society', Anzac Day would appear to take on the role of civil religion, developing a new heroic myth, with notions of 'sacrifice', 'freedom' and 'spirit'. This involves a developing cult of the warrior. Where some talk of a 'resurgence' of Anzac Day, the authors argue that it is rather a 'revolution' or 'transformation' of the day. Moreover, in the context of the 11th September 2001, the Bali bombing and the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, Anzac Day serves a militaristic purpose. Criticism of Anzac now equates to criticism of Australian soldiers serving overseas. The point is made (Reynolds) that the descriptions of Australian soldiers speak of their courage and . . .

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NOTICE BOARD

NEW SOUTH WALES Pax Christi Meetings

We normally meet on the First Monday of each month at 6.00pm for shared meal that members bring and the meeting follows at 6.30 pm..

**Contact: Claude Mostowik
0295503845 or 0411450953**

The venue: MSC Justice and Peace Centre, 15A Swanson Street, Erskineville. 2 minutes walk from Erskineville Station.

QUEENSLAND Pax Christi Meetings

Pax Christi Queensland Branch meets monthly.
Contact:

**Pancras Jordan OP
0415 461 620
panjordan@yahoo.com**

**Clare Cooke SSps
mccooke@msn.com**

VICTORIA Agapes and Public Forums

Agape August 15th 12:30

Kildara Centre 39 Stanhope Street
Malvern

Towards Nuclear Abolition update on NPT review Conference 2010 and Australia's role and contribution.

Speaker Tim Wright—peace and disarmament campaigner

September 17 18 19

National Pax Christi Conference and Meeting at Kildara Centre
(see details opposite)

Agape: October 17 12:30

St John's Elsternwick
Muslim / Christian Dialogue in conjunction with Centre for Dialogue.

AGM November 21

Pax Christi Victoria invites all members to our Annual General Meeting at the Kildara Centre Malvern

Agape December 12 12:30

At St. John's Elsternwick
Israel/Palestinian conflict or possible review of our campaign to get Australian troops out of Afghanistan.

National Conference and Meeting

**Theme: Towards a Culture of Peace
A new Approach to security for Australia**

Programme:

**Friday September 17 Gathering 5:00pm Evening Meal 6:00
7:30 pm Keynote Address: A New Approach to Security for Australia speaker: - Nic Maclennan; 9:30 reflection (Wes Campbell)**

Saturday

9:30 War and Peace in Australian Identity : speaker- Marilyn Lake (Professor of History—Co-author of What's wrong with Anzac?)

11:15 Redefining Security in International Relations—Moving towards Cooperative Security and Human Security. Steph Cousins

1:30 Towards a Culture of Peace—the Faith Community Contribution - interactive session

5:00 Afghanistan: A Test case for Australia—developing a new security approach: speaker - Joe Camilleri

6:60 Evening meal (vegetarian) and Social

Sunday:

National Meeting of Pax Christi business: Towards a strategy for Pax Christi Australia

1:00 lunch and closing

I/We wish to apply for or renew membership of the International Christian Peace Movement - Pax Christi Australia. Membership is from January to December)

(Please tick box if you wish to receive you copy of Disarming Times by E-mail)

Name:.....Address.....

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Please return to: Your State Branch Treasurer, [See address on Page 2]