



DISARMING *Pax Christi* TIMES

The Journal of Pax Christi Australia

Vol 39 No.2

June 2014

ANZAC DAY SPEECH

THE HON PETER UNDERWOOD AC, GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA,
The Cenotaph, Hobart, Friday 25th April 2014

The First World War began one hundred years ago when Britain and Germany went to war in August 1914. According to the Australian War Memorial, [quote] “Prime Minister Andrew Fisher’s government pledged full support for Britain. The outbreak of war was greeted in Australia, as in many other places, with great enthusiasm.”

That war remains the most costly conflict in terms of deaths and casualties. From a population of fewer than five million people, nearly half a million Australian men enlisted, of which over 60,000 were killed and 156,000 were wounded, gassed, or taken prisoner.

In his Remembrance Day speech last year, former Prime Minister of Australia, Paul Keating, described the start of that war in these terms, “... the horror of all ages came together to open the curtain on mankind’s greatest century of violence – the twentieth century.”

What a terrible indictment on those of us who have lived the majority of our lives in the twentieth century. Despite the fact that the last 100 years have been witness to huge technological advances, incredible scientific discoveries and great artistic achievements - all of which bear witness to the ingenuity, skill and capacity of humankind - a Prime Minister of our country describes the last hundred years as “mankind’s greatest century of violence.” If Mr. Keating is correct when he says that – and there a great

of evidence to support what he said - what do we say at this centennial commemoration of the start of World War I to all those who were killed or wounded in what was ironically called “the War to End all Wars”?

On 16th December 1918, just a few weeks after the Armistice that marked the end of that war, the English statesman and architect of the Gallipoli campaign, Sir Winston Churchill, said:

“We must look forward one hundred, two hundred, three hundred years to the time when that vast continent of Australia will look back through the preceding periods of time to the world shaking episode of the Great War, and when they will seek out with the most intense care every detail of that struggle; when ... every family will seek to trace some connection with the heroes who landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula, or fought on the Somme, or in the other great battles in France.”

Well Mr. Churchill, 100 years have passed and we are now, as you forecast we would be, looking back through the preceding periods of time and what do we see? Former Prime Minister Keating can see a 100 years of the greatest violence, no doubt having in mind the fact that a mere 20 years after the end of “the War to end all Wars”, the world plunged into World War II that raged for two years longer than the first World War; to be followed, within a mere five years, by the Korean War, and then there was

was Vietnam, which saw Australian combat troops being killed and physically and psychologically wounded during ten long horrific years. And there have been others since then; the latest in Iraq and Afghanistan. The latter turned out to be Australia’s longest war and the most favourable view of it, as articulated by the current Prime Minister, is that it ended “... not with victory, not with defeat, but with, we hope, an Afghanistan that is better for our presence here.”

Mr. Churchill’s exhortation to us was to seek out on this anniversary, with the most intense care, every detail of that struggle. Implicit in that exhortation is that we seek out the truth; the truth of the causes of that war; the truth of what happened in that war; and the truth of what we have done to avoid there being another war like it. Until we find the truth, we cannot begin to pay proper homage and respect to those who fought in that terrible conflict 100 years ago and to the many others who have subsequently fought in other wars when called upon to do so by their country. As we look backwards to try and find the truth, we would do well to bear in mind the opening sentence in Professor Joanna Bourke’s book “An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in Twentieth Century Warfare”. She wrote: “The characteristic act of men at war is not dying but killing. For politicians, military strategists and many historians, war may be about

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 Australia-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.

Disarming Times is compiled by a team of Pax Christi Australia members:

Joe Camilleri, Rolf Sorenson, Harry Kerr, Rita Camilleri and Barbara Hadkinson (Vic)
Claude Mostowik and Maggie Galley (N.S.W.)
Pancras Jordan and Claire Cooke (Qld)

Pax Christi Victoria

P.O. Box 31 Carlton Sth Vic. 3053

Tel: 03 9893 4946

Fax: 03 9379 1711

email: pax@paxchristi.org.au

Pax Christi New South Wales

P.O. Box A 681 Sydney Sth 1235,

Tel: 02 9550 3845 or 0411 450 953

Fax: 02 9519 8471

email: msecjust@smartchat.net.au

Pax Christi Queensland

P.O. Box 252 Cleveland Qld 4163

Tel: 0415 461 620

email: panjordan@yahoo.com

Unsourced material in *Disarming Times* may be copied with due acknowledgement. A copy of the publication would be appreciated. Not all views expressed in this journal are equally shared by Pax Christi Australia.

Disarming Times is printed by Arena Press
2-14 Kerr St. Fitzroy 3065 Ph 03 9416 0232

the conquest of territory or the struggle to recover a sense of national honour but for the man on active service warfare is concerned with the killing of other people.”

So, on this Anzac Day, the centennial anniversary of the commencement of World War I, how do we commemorate - that is, call to remembrance - that terrible event and all the subsequent violent conflicts in which Australia has been involved over the last 100 years - mankind's greatest century of violence? Much has been, and will be, said about the Anzac spirit, but I venture to repeat the caution that I have sounded before on this day, against glorifying war with descriptions of the mythical tall, lean, bronzed and laconic ANZAC, enthusiastically and unflinchingly carrying the torch of freedom in the face of murderous enemy fire, or as Lieutenant Colonel Burke wrote, the “bold, laughing soldiers” who “fought as they lived - bravely, openly, independently, and without fear.” Australia needs to drop the sentimental myths that Anzac Day has attracted. They are not part of the truth that Sir Winston Churchill urged us to seek out.

In his book “Anzac's Long Shadow”, James Brown, a former Australian Army Officer, writes that it is fitting on this anniversary to commemorate World War I and Australia's military campaigns and he refers to the War Memorial in Sydney's Hyde Park where an inscription urges [quote] “let silent contemplation be your offering.” But he rejects, as I do, the expenditure of many millions of dollars to embark on what he describes as “a discordant, lengthy and exorbitant four-year festival of the dead.”

The truth is that in the last 100 years, Australia has, on several occasions, engaged in conflict, sending our men and women into the business of killing and being killed. We should remember and honour all of them for they went to where they had no wish to go,

and did what they had no wish to do, because they believed that they had to do so in order to give us peace and freedom. But remembrance and honour will neither bring nor preserve the peace for which they thought they died. That is not enough. We must actively strive for peace on a daily basis and I think that we could best begin that process, and thus properly honour and remember those who were killed or wounded while their country engaged them in the business of killing, by declaring this centennial year of the start of the War to end all Wars, the *Year of Peace*.

In the spirit of true remembrance, the Year of Peace should be spent examining and talking about the causes of war and how we got involved in wars. We should spend less time studying Simpson's donkey and more time looking at why we were fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan for so long. All this is not in order to criticise past decision makers, but in remembrance of the dead, to help us avoid doing it again in some other place, simply because we failed to examine all the alternative means of resolving conflict.

In this the Year of Peace, Australia should establish an Anzac Centre for the Study of Peace, Conflict and War. This is not an original idea of mine, but was a recommendation made by the National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary set up by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's government to look at options to mark the Centenary of the First World War. The idea was that the proposed Centre be a high-profile initiative to honour the memory of the original Anzacs in the best way possible—by working towards understanding conflict and focusing attention on how the risk that future Australians will have to take part in war might be reduced. Unfortunately, the Advisory Board appointed to implement the Commission's recommendations rejected the idea. Well, if that can't be done, per-

haps in the Year of Peace it might be possible to divert some of the millions of dollars that will be spent on the "Anzac Festival" to provide proper support for the University of Sydney's Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, which after 26 years of operation is still heavily dependent on membership subscriptions and volunteers to continue its work?

It has been estimated that about 16

million people were killed in World War I. The next world war was worse. The estimated number of human beings killed in World War II range from 60 to a staggering 7016 or even 85 million, making it the deadliest war in world history. So the killing got worse as the century wore on. Surely, now that the curtains have closed on mankind's greatest century of violence, the least we can do is start

the next century with a Year of Peace and commit to setting up and maintaining or otherwise fully financing, a centre that is dedicated to the study of the nature of social conflicts, causes of violence and definitions of peace, as well as engage in research into new approaches for resolving conflicts. That would be a fitting call to remembrance. Lest We Forget.

EASTER MADE ME DO IT!

ON SCAPEGOATS, ASYLUM SEEKERS AND BEING ARRESTED

Jarrold McKenna

Easter unmask our ugly dependence on Easter unmask our ugly dependence on scapegoats. That is why Christians were unwilling to leave Scott Morrison's office without an answer to why 1,138 children were being indefinitely detained. There are 1,138 children in offshore indefinite detention. We intend to stay and pray in Morrison's office until we receive an answer as to when they will be released. We have yet to receive an answer from the Minister.

For the longer explanation as to why, this Lent, I found myself behind bars, participating in that long Christian tradition of nonviolent civil disobedience, I can't help but talk of Jesus. I want to contemplate, from this side of the Resurrection, Christ's Passion. To quote Homer Simpson: "Oh my God, I got so swept up in the scapegoating and fun of Proposition 24 [an immigration deportation bill] I never stopped to think it might affect somebody I might care about." Homer's concept of being "swept up in the scapegoating" - or, as anthropologist Rene Girard puts it, the "scapegoat mechanism" - provides a helpful way of explaining why we as Christian leaders were arrested, and why more plan to "go and do likewise."

According to Hans Urs von Balthasar, "disguised under the disfigurement of an ugly crucifixion and death, Christ upon the cross is paradoxically the clearest revelation of who God is." Christ's murder upon the cross is likewise the unmasking of our society's

ugly, evil and illogical desire for scapegoats. Easter reveals God overcoming evil with the power of nonviolent love, seen most clearly at Calvary. That is why we conducted the prayer vigil in the nonviolent, loving manner we did - a manner that was praised by the public, protesters and even the police arresting us, because our battle is not against flesh and blood, like brother Scott Morrison and his staff.

Easter reveals the violent shape of our society's scapegoat mechanisms that crucify the vulnerable. That is why we willingly accepted that we would be arrested, not willing to leave without an answer to why 1,138 children were being indefinitely detained. In so doing, our prayer was that we might witness to the unmasking of the principalities and powers that animate what we all know, but our society lives like it isn't happening: the irrational and barbaric indefinite imprisonment of some of the world's most vulnerable people and their children whose only "crime" is fleeing death.

The How: "Think of the children!"

On a recent Q & A the new Australian Human Rights Commissioner Tim Wilson called for an end to children in detention. While the Commissioner held up a hand-drawn picture from a child in detention, a familiar meme of Helen Lovejoy (yes, Reverend Lovejoy's self-righteous wife from The Simpsons) pleading, "Won't somebody please think of the

children?!" was shared on Twitter. Given that it was Lent, before drawing parallels between The Simpsons and the current Australian political situation, consider the parallels with Christ's Passion. In his brilliant new book *A Farewell to Mars*, Brian Zahnd spells out how the "religion of blame" and the "politics of power" collaborated to crucify God. History may be dictated by the victors, but "the God of history" is revealed at Calvary to be found among the victims, as the forgiving victim. For those of us who love Jesus and want to follow him, the insight that religion and politics collaborated to kill God should be no small thing. So, with "Easter eyes" - eyes, that is, sensitive to these dynamics - watch this pseudo Passion play where Mayor Quimby will be our Pilate, Helen Lovejoy our Caiaphas and Moe will voice the cries of "Crucify!" from the mob, exposing the "how" of scapegoat dynamics: I give you "*Much Abu About Nothing.*" Mayor Quimby's response to the bear (singular) is something equivalent to "Operation Sovereign Bear-Free Borders," which is in full swing by the following week in the hope of returning Springfield to a state of tranquillity. Until, that is, the angry mob returns because of the tax increases due to the cost associated with

policies addressing their irrational fear. The angry mob yells outside Mayor Quimby's office, "Down with taxes! Down with taxes!" and again, for the second time, Helen Lovejoy is heard yelling, "Won't somebody please think of the children!" Like Caiaphas, the Reverend's wife functions as an embodiment of the mob's popular sentiment, only now she is blessing the need to blame with sanctimonious indignation. "Do you not realise it is better that someone else gets it than our town fall apart?"

And Mayor Quimby, blessed with the realpolitik of Pilate, senses the mob's irrationality:

Mayor Quimby: "Are those morons getting dumber or just louder?"

Office Staff: "Dumber, sir."

Mayor Quimby: "They want the bear patrol but they won't pay taxes for it. This is a situation that calls for real leadership."

[Opens the door to his office to address the angry mob.]

Mayor Quimby: "People, your taxes are high because of illegal immigrants!!! That's right, illegal immigrants. We need to get rid of them."

True, a shared identity organised around a common irrational fear of the "other" may win votes, but it also makes the most intelligent who are whipped up in the scapegoating mechanism as dumb as the glue of hatred that holds a community together. The "glue of hate" falsely holds a mythical "us" together against the "monstrous them".

In keeping with the realpolitik of Pilate, truth becomes relativised and the desire to maintain power becomes absolute, no doubt justified with the rationale of "for the greater good" or with the sanction of the cult of a Zeus-like - certainly not Christ-like - God. (We should not pretend that the Islamophobia of supposedly "Christian" far right political parties, like *Rise Up Australia* is not animated by the same diabolical dynamic that fuelled the anti-Semitism of European "Christendom.")

"Stopping just short of yelling "Crucify! Crucify!" Moe is intoxicated,

not with his tavern's booze, but with the promise of peace and belonging that will come to the town with the scapegoating of a new "monstrous other." Moe yells from the mob, on behalf of the mob:

Moe: "Immigrants! [sic] I knew it was them! Even when it was the bears, I knew it was them."

Moe's mispronunciation and fervour for someone (other than himself) to be scapegoated might be bound up with what is revealed later in the episode, that Moe himself is an immigrant. Moe has confirmed Kierkegaard's conviction that to love a neighbour is self-denial, but to love the crowd is merely to seek to gain power and worldly advantage at the cost of others. "The crowd is untruth," Kierkegaard sharply summarises.

With "Easter eyes," we can see unmasked this collaboration between the religion of victimisation and the politics of violence. It is now, finally, in this context we hear the final cry from our Caiaphas; Helen Lovejoy

Helen Lovejoy: "Won't somebody please think of the children!?"

Won't somebody please think of the children" in the religious litany of blame translates as "stop thinking, and fear for your own children as we round up the children of those we have made into monsters." And the how of the scapegoat mechanism is complete.

The Why: Ursula Le Guin and don't think of the children. But why? If this episode of *The Simpsons* illustrates how the scapegoat mechanism works, Ursula Le Guin's haunting short story: "*The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas*" speaks to the why. Le Guin's short story is only seven pages long, the first six of which sound like a script for Australian tourism's next campaign. It describes a bright towering city by the sea with "not naive and happy children" and "mature, intelligent, passionate adults" who celebrate "the victory of life." Le Guin even stops the reader from thinking of *Omelas* as too puritanical by inviting us to "add an orgy harm-free drugs or beer for the

more modest tastes. if it would help," But then, in the final pages, Le Guin brings you into the dark secret that seems to hold this utopia together. In a dark cellar there is a child - an "it" stripped of its name. But why? Le Guin writes;

"They all know it is there, all the people of Omelas. Some of them have come to see it, others are content merely to know it is there. They all know that it has to be there. Some of them understand why, and some do not, but they all understand that their happiness, the beauty of their city, the tenderness of their friendships, the health of their children, the wisdom of their scholars, the skill of their makers, even the abundance of their harvest and the kindly weathers of their skies, depend wholly on this child's abominable misery."

As Rene Girard puts it, "*All the rancours scattered at random among the divergent individuals, all the differing antagonisms, now converge on an isolated and unique figure, the surrogate victim.*" Australia's dark secret is that there are offshore cellars with over 1,000 children locked up. But even though we know this, to talk about it or do anything about it would threaten our utopia, our Springfield, our *Omelas*.

This is why we were arrested in Morrison's office: in Slavoj Zizek's words, "This is the paradox of public space: even if everyone knows an unpleasant fact, saying it in public changes everything." As ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we choose to say something. We choose to believe in an Australia that is possible without these cellars. We choose to do so because of Easter.

The Easter alternative

So that's the bad news, how the scapegoat mechanism works, why it is such an effective cause of social cohesion, both managing internal competition and its threat of escalating violence. And while that is illuminating, it's totally depressing. We can now see clearly that the scapegoats are those we blame to keep us in the dark about

what has shaped us -, the systems that demand victims. All of this is done to keep us "safe," to maintain "order," to protect "us," to restore "peace" and to insure the next election "win."

Is there an alternative? How might we be saved from a way of life that demands the sacrifice of the vulnerable? I think Brian Zahnd is on the right track: "If nations can't hate and scapegoat their enemies, how can they cohere? If societies can't project blame onto a hated 'other', how can they keep from turning on themselves? Jesus' answer is as simple as it is revolutionary: Instead of an arrangement around hate and violence, the world is now to be arranged around love and forgiveness. The fear of our enemy and the pain of being wronged is not to be transferred through blame, but dispelled through forgiveness. Unity is not to be built around the practice of scapegoating a hated victim, but around the practice of loving your neighbour as yourself - even if your neighbour is your enemy. Jesus is trying to lead humanity into the deep truth that there is no 'them', there is only us."

With "Easter eyes," we can see that

the message of the Passion of Jesus is not that some deity, like the scapegoat mechanism itself, takes out its rage on an innocent victim so he doesn't have to take it out on all of us, eternally. That sort of "god" is a diabolical lie in Christian drag, reversing the Gospel by making it the same old bad news while concealing that Jesus is victorious over all evil, the scapegoat mechanism included. God doesn't demand blood. We do.

In Jesus, God is not just on the side of the scapegoated, God is scapegoated as "the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world." The Lamb of God is not offered to God by us, but is God offered to us as the sacrifice to end all sacrifices. God is reconciling the world to Godself, through Christ, by knowingly submitting to the scapegoat mechanism, exposing all blasphemous systems that promise order, safety, peace, protection and salvation at the cost of victims. In the Resurrection, we are all confronted with the grace of our Creator in the forgiving victim who sends with the Holy Spirit hope of a new world where no more

blood needs to be shed. And no more asylum seekers need to be indefinitely detained. As Michael Hardin puts it, *"The fact remains that as long as we imprison the innocent, and do so in the name of justice, we find ourselves amongst the persecutory mob. We can either side with the persecutors or we can, with the woman at the Cross, side with the victim."*

The Easter event exposes our national facade behind which we hide the bodies of the vulnerable, scapegoated as monsters. Easter also announces a real alternative: grace.

First we must confront the facade woven with the fabric of fear, and knitted together by the politics of power. Then we must embody the alternative. Easter means I can no longer remain silent over what is happening to asylum seekers. It is my conviction that Christian faith should look like Christ, not his crucifiers.

Easter is the reason I was arrested.

Jarrod McKenna serves as the teaching pastor at West City Church Perth.

WE ARE ALL, AS CHRISTIANS, BOUND TO BE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

Bruce Kent



Two words 'Conscientious Objection' will bring to mind World War One and the 16,000 who refused to take part when required to do so by law. . Many COs went to prison rather than take part in that war.

But in reality we are all as Christians, bound to be conscientious objectors in a much wider sense. All of us, may and probably will, sometime come to the point when we have to say: 'this I will not do' however normal or legal it may

seem to be.

My special hero is Franz Jägerstätter, the young Austrian farmer and village sacristan who was executed in 1943 for refusing to participate in Hitler's wars. There is no evidence that Franz was an absolute pacifist. He simply believed that what Hitler was doing was morally wrong and in no circumstances would he take the oath that would require him to obey any orders from the Führer

The word pacifism is now a wide one. It once meant no more than someone who pursued peace rather than war. But it has come to mean now in English someone who will never fight anyone at all under any circumstances. That excludes people like me who would certainly defend, in an immediate physical way if need be, any innocent person who was being attacked. But I

believe that war, which is collective state violence, as a means of settling disputes between countries, or within countries, today has no justification. There are too many ways available of settling disputes non violently. As the result of the work of peace makers long forgotten we now have the international structures of the United Nations, the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal court. That was not the case in 1914.

Nevertheless many even then believed that war was not inevitable and could and should have been settled by negotiation. That was the strong view of Pope Benedict XV and of the women from many countries who met in The Hague in 1915. Such opponents of the war were ridiculed and marginalised. So too were the conscientious objectors.

Many were Quakers who have, like other smaller absolutist pacifist Christian groups, given a consistent witness. But some were not absolutists but were opposed to that particular war. Some were not religious at all but thought the war, in which they would take no part, was barbaric or the result of capitalist and imperialist competition. They all had to appear in front of Tribunals. Some of those Tribunals were fair and accepted that consciences differ. Some had no time for such awkward consciences. Most who refused any part in the war effort were sent to prison where some died as a result of harsh treatment services. A few were sentenced to death although those sentences were commuted to life imprisonment. Some were allowed to work on the land. Some went into ambulance services. Some, seeing the punishments awaiting them, changed their minds.

It has taken a long time before international recognition of the right to refuse was finally granted. It was only in 1987 that the UN Commission on Human Rights recognised the universal right to conscientious objection to military service. That right is still not respected in several countries. Where does our Faith come into all this? If

we start on the Christian foundation of loving ones neighbour as oneself and of forgiving seventy times seven, faith should have a powerful effect. The enemy one kills (and most of them today are civilians) is also a child of God and a brother or sister in the human family.

All Christians who take seriously what have become to be known as Just War Principles must surely believe that war today, whatever of the past, has now no legitimacy. When is war now ever a 'last resort'?

The United Nations Charter signed in 1945 starts with a ringing call. It was established 'to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war'.

But how many have ever seen that Charter? Or heard a sermon in which it was mentioned?

Our first priority is to be peacemakers not just anti war campaigners. Praying for peace alone is not enough. Working for peace is equally important. None of us would think of achieving 'security' in our local communities by arming our houses, streets or villages, one against another. Yet that is just how the world still behaves with its arms sales and threats of retaliatory nuclear mass destruction. The global

expenditure on war and weapons of \$1.7 trillion is a gross scandal when we think of the dreadful poverty in which so many have to live. From the Campaign Against the Arms Trade, to the United Nations Association and Pax Christi many organisations are trying to build a more peaceful world. Time to invite friends and colleagues to join one of them?

Bruce Kent's career in the service for peace stretches over more than half a century. Ordained a Catholic priest in 1958, he served for some 20 years as Chaplain of Pax Christi. He retired from active ministry in February 1987. In 1980 he became General Secretary of the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. At the time of his leadership the Campaign grew

from 2,000 to 100,000 national members and from about 30 active local groups to nearly 1000. From 1985-1992 he was President of the International Peace Bureau. One of Bruce Kent's most recent initiatives is the Movement for the Abolition of War. He is currently engaged in a national 'Scrap Trident' speaking Tour.

This article has also appeared in The Way (The free newspaper of the Church in Cumbria)

CANBERRA PEACE CONVERGENCE IS A HUGE SUCCESS

Dale Hess

During the week following Easter this year people gathered in Canberra from all over Australia. The events were planned by the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN), which was formed in response to the announcement by former Prime Minister Julia Gillard and US President Barak Obama to increase Australian-US military cooperation and to increase the number of US troops stationed in and around Darwin. These moves are part of a larger repositioning by the United States called the Asia Pacific Pivot strategy. Its aim is to offset the economic, political and military rise of China.

There were two centres during the week: one centre focused on action and was located at the Aboriginal Tent Embassy across the street from the Old

Parliament Building and the other centre focused on contemplation and was located at the Silver Wattle Quaker Centre in Bungendore, NSW. On Monday there was an all-day strategy session held at Unions ACT to examine what a nation-wide peace movement structure might look like. On Tuesday a conference was held at Unions, ACT entitled, 'Towards a Peaceful and Independent Foreign Policy', with a distinguished panel of speakers in attendance, including Dr Michael McKinley, Vince Emanuele, Justin Tutty, Dr Alison Broinowski, Dr Marty Branagan, Kim Sattler, Dr David Stephens, Dr Sue Wareham, and chairpeople Dr Jenny Grounds and Humphrey McQueen. The organizers had hoped to attract 20 or 30 people. Over 100 delegates, representing 50

peace organizations came. Topics ranged from the need for Australian sovereignty in determining foreign policy, how increased militarization diminishes civil society and destroys the environment, downsizing ANZAC, the horrors of war and the long-term effects of trauma afterwards to the veterans, their families and society, the need for an Iraq War Enquiry to prevent further wars, and how the Australian Government undermines attempts to achieve a ban on nuclear weapons. On Wednesday there was open space at the Aboriginal Tent Embassy, i.e. an opportunity for various speakers to informally address the whole group. Everyone gathered to hear Graeme Dunstan give an overview, and visiting ex-US Marine, Vince Emanuele,

describe his work with veterans and others in the community in the United States to obtain better treatment for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress. (You can hear Vince being interviewed by Phillip Adams on ABC radio program, *Late Night Live*: <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/iraq-veterans-against-the-war/5431788>)

David Bradbury, the renowned filmmaker, described his new anti-war documentary films. Greg Rolles encouraged people to become part of the 100 Peace Pilgrims at Talisman Sabre (the joint war games involving about 30,000 troops from the United States and Australia to be held in July-August 2015 near Rockhampton, Queensland), Auntie Jenny Munro, sister of the former matriarch of the Tent Embassy, the late Isabel Coe, shared her vision of an Aboriginal legal framework for Australia.

On Thursday a new world record was set for the most number of demonstrations held in one day at a single place, 29 venues. A convoy of cars went to arms dealer company headquarters,

government offices, embassies – all involved in the ‘War Machine’ or in the Trans Pacific Partnership, and at each venue for 15 minutes people held up placards while a speaker gave a public address on the background of why we were protesting. Meanwhile at

Silver Wattle there was a day of prayerful reflection where inspirational stories were shared, including the screening of the film *The Narrow Path*, documenting the life of John Dear. At dusk everyone gathered at Mt. Ainslie for the lantern vigil. About 100 people silently threaded their way down the mountain in the dark, each carrying a paper lantern with a candle inside as they remembered all of those who had died in war. At the War Memorial Grounds forecourt below the group gathered around a campfire and heard choral singing and shared stories and lamentations, which often recounted painful memories of the tragedy inflicted by war. The next morning was the official Anzac march. The group joined the First Nations Peoples in commemorating the Frontiers Wars against First Nations Peoples in

Australia. The Government continues to refuse to recognize these wars, but the First Nations Peoples and their supporters were allowed to join the end of the official march. The crowd who came to see the march applauded as they went by. However when the march reached the War Memorial Grounds a line of police prevented the First Nations Peoples from proceeding any further. The crowd witnessed this and was outraged. Until Australia acknowledges the wars against the First Nations Peoples there will be no reconciliation. Overall the week was a very rich experience, providing a variety of activities. Thanks for Graeme Dunstan, Annette Brownlie, Phyllis Campbell-McRae, Ross Gwyther, Nick Dean, Hannah Middleton, Jenny Grounds, Shirley Winton, Justin Tutty, Jacob Grech, Greg Rolles, Jessica Morrison, David and Trish Johnson and many others for organizing the event. Hopefully the contacts made and the discussions held here will form the basis for developing a growing, national peace movement. *Dale Hess is committee member of Pax Christi Victoria, a Quaker and is active in Pace e Bene*

TOWARDS AN INDEPENDENT AND PEACEFUL AUSTRALIA NATIONAL CONFERENCE, CANBERRA 21-22 APRIL, 2014 Concluding Conference Statement.

Dear friends and supporters of Independent and Peaceful Australia

The statement below was unanimously endorsed at the conclusion of the IPAN national conference in Canberra attended by over 100 participants, representing 50 different peace and community organisations from around Australia. Participants came from many different walks of life and ages ranging from 20 to 93 year old.

This first national conference of Independent and Peaceful Australia Network affirms support for an independent Australian foreign policy as the most effective path for our country to build peace in the region.

It is our view that Australia's successive government policies of willingly following the US to wars, the stationing of US bases and troops on sovereign soil and the deeper integration of Australian foreign policies and military into the US war machine is a major threat to peace in the region.

- ◆ We are concerned that Australia is complicit and actively involved in the US wars of aggression. We're concerned with successive Australian governments' subservience to foreign powers' economic and military interests. We're concerned that the financial costs of militarisation and engagement in foreign wars are a burden on our country. They come at the expense of people's lives, welfare and of the environment.
- ◆ Through recent decades we have witnessed a steady increase in the level of Australia's military involvement with the US. We are concerned that Australian governments' subservience and complicity in the US Military Pivot into the Asia-Pacific is increasing the threat of war, rather than building peace and security in the region.
- ◆ We are opposed to foreign military bases and the deployment of foreign military in Australia and the Asia-Pacific. We are opposed to the integration of Australia's foreign policies and military into the US plans.
- ◆ We want to live in Australia with an independent foreign policy, under which our country is free to choose what is truly in the best interest of peace in the world.
- ◆ We also recognise that a truly independent and peaceful Australia cannot be fully realised without a just treaty with Australia's indigenous people.

22 April 2014.

THE STATE OF AUSTRALIA: OUR INTERNATIONAL STANDING

Joseph Camilleri

The conduct of Australia's foreign policy under the Rudd and Gillard governments was anything but inspiring. Under Tony Abbott, we have so far been treated to a succession of gaffes bordering on farce.

How we're doing now

Since its election victory last September, the Abbott government has managed to arouse the ire of three important neighbours (Indonesia, China and East Timor) through words and gestures that are at best ill-informed and at worst foolishly provocative.

Under Operation Sovereign Borders refugee boats are being pushed back into Indonesian waters against Indonesia's express wishes and Australian vessels have more than once breached Australia's maritime boundary. We place great store on our sovereignty, but seem strangely unable to consider the sovereignty of our neighbours.

The spying saga regarding Australian interception of the personal phone calls of Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, including Abbott's ill-judged response has added fuel to the fire. By the end of 2013 the bilateral relationship was in a state of serious disrepair, where it continues to languish.

The relationship with China is more complex and the potential ramifications of misjudgement even more serious. Though China is now by far Australia's most important trade partner, Australia has chosen to upgrade its relations with Taiwan and has sided openly and stridently with the United States and Japan in condemning China for declaring an Air Defence Identification Zone in the disputed region of the East China Sea.

To add insult to injury, Abbott described Japan as an ally (which is not technically accurate) and our "best friend in Asia." This comes at a time when Japan has one of the most nationalistic governments of its post-war history, committed to expanding the country's military arsenal and revisiting its peace constitution.

The Chinese response was predictably fierce and immediate.

In the case of East Timor, attorney-general George Brandis last December approved an AIO raid on the office of lawyer Bernard Collaery, who is acting for East Timor in its spying case against Australia. East Timor, one of the world's poorest countries, is attempting to have what it considers an unequal oil and gas treaty it signed with Australia quashed in The Hague. Much can be added to this sorry list of mis-steps. Unseemly pressure has been brought to bear on Papua New Guinea and Nauru to help the government deliver on its election promise to "stop the boats". Discussions are underway to have asylum seekers redirected to Cambodia another poor country with a deplorable human rights record. The budget deficit has also been used to justify cutting back the projected growth of Australian overseas aid by as much as \$A4.5 billion over the next four years. Yet defence spending is planned to rise to \$50 billion over the next ten years, nearly double the current defence budget.

At the UN General Assembly, Australia abstained on two key resolutions calling on Israel to cease its settlement activities, widely regarded as illegal and to "comply scrupulously" with the 1949 Geneva Convention. The resolutions were carried by an overwhelming majority of UN members, including most allies of the United States.

Australian interest in international climate change and nuclear disarmament negotiations has also visibly diminished.

Australia's relationship with China is complex and the potential ramifications of misjudgement are extremely serious.

How we got here

Striking though it is, this catalogue of policy failures does not signify a marked break with the Labor years. Neither Kevin Rudd nor Julia Gillard was able to set Australia's China pol-

icy on a sound footing. The simplistic idea that Australia could rely on China for its prosperity and the United States for its security was never seriously questioned – nor was Australia's costly and unproductive military commitment in Afghanistan.

Rudd's poorly articulated proposal for the creation of an Asia Pacific community soon fizzled in the absence of prior consultation with Asian neighbours.

Gillard oversaw the production of the *Australia in the Asian Century* white paper, but its sanitised contents, with their fixation on trade and investment opportunities, were strangely silent on the geopolitical and security implications of Asia's rise and on the cultural gap still separating Australia from its Asian neighbours.

Labor's steady abandonment of anything resembling a humane asylum seeker policy meant acceptance of a *Pacific Solution* leading first to the abortive approaches to East Timor and Malaysia and then to the re-opening of the Manus Island detention centre. And, it was Labor governments that authorised the spying operations aimed at the highest levels of the Indonesian and East Timor governments.

A Labor government did secure a seat on the UN Security Council, but it seemed averse to or incapable of crafting a coherent set of initiatives. Rudd set up a commission for the elimination of nuclear weapons, but its key recommendations were left to gather dust.

How is such lack of drive and imagination to be explained? Why is it that both major parties find it so difficult to rethink Australia's place in the world? No doubt several factors are at work.

The movers and shakers of the two major political parties and the political class at large remain profoundly insular in their thinking and parochial in their politics. They do not grasp the far-reaching regional and global

changes already underway and their dramatic impact on economy, environment, culture and governance everywhere, not least in Australia.

The reality, however, is that many of the principles and premises that have guided Australia's external relations since 1945 have lost whatever relevance they may once have had.

We are seeing an unprecedented shift in economic power and political influence away from the west and towards the east. European empires have dissolved and America's ascendancy is slowly but surely coming to an end. The old reliance on great and powerful friends – first Britain, then the United States – has reached its use-by date.

In the coming years, China, India, South Korea, Indonesia, but also Russia, Brazil and others will play increasingly important roles not just in trade and investment, but in shaping security, political and environmental agendas.

Labor did secure a seat on the UN Security Council but seemed averse to or incapable of crafting a coherent set of foreign policy initiatives.

Australia needs to work closely with middle and small powers to develop mechanisms that can help defuse maritime disputes, especially in the East and South China Seas.

The next ten years

The critical decisions Australia has to

make do not involve choosing between the United States and China, nor between China and Japan. While maintaining strong and co-operative relations with all three, it has to develop its own independent diplomacy and put an end to its subservience to US diplomatic priorities and the US military and intelligence establishments.

Australia needs to work closely with middle and small powers to develop mechanisms that can help defuse maritime disputes, especially in the East and South China Seas.

A serious policy of engagement with Asia entails, of course, more than military security and economy. The environment, human rights, poverty reduction and transnational crime require urgent attention. Where states violate the rights of their own people – whether in China, North Korea or Burma – Australia must be prepared to speak strongly on behalf of the vulnerable.

Similarly, Australia has to distance itself from surveillance activities, including those of the United States, for they erode the democratic fabric of society. Such pressure, however, is more likely to be effective if it is carefully applied in concert with others and if it engages not just government, but business and civil society.

A similar approach could facilitate a region-wide, long-term solution to the

processing and resettlement of asylum seekers.

Such a multifaceted agenda must necessarily take advantage of the opportunities for multilateral solutions and be sensitive to the diverse mindsets, interests, cultures and languages of our Asian partners

To this end, after years of neglect, it is time to revamp the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, endow it with much greater resources and skills and an enhanced capacity to support initiatives and projects in conflict prevention, mediation, peacebuilding and importantly regional and global disarmament.

In all of this, the federal government has an important initiating and coordinating role. But its efforts and resources must be carefully pooled with those of state and local governments, and with the energies and expertise of business, professional and community organisations.

Effective processes of consultation at all levels and a renewed national educational strategy will be critical to positioning Australia as a thriving, confident, internationally minded country equal to the challenges of the coming decades.

Joseph Camilleri was founding president of Pax Christi Australia, Professor of International relations and founder of the Centre for Dialogue, Latrobe University

It was observed that many State budgets are oriented towards military expenditures without free and informed consent by the public. If citizens had an opportunity through a measure of direct democracy to influence budgets (for example, if they could vote for or against expenditures on drones, missiles and submarines), they would probably vote against and propose instead a recycling of workers from the war industries into the public service domain, reorienting resources and workforce towards education, health care, food security and infrastructure.

If they could vote for the allocation of funds for research and development, they would likely vote for research into sustainable energy and efficient uses of technology rather than for research into nuclear energy or for military-related technologies.

However, none of these issues are properly presented to the public for their consideration, and decisions are taken by politicians already committed to the military-industrial complex and other lobbies.

- Report of the UN Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order, 7 August 2013 (A/68/284)

for nonviolence seeks to 'win' not by destroying or even by humiliating the adversary, but by convincing [the adversary] that there is a higher and more certain common good than can be attained by bombs and blood. Nonviolence, ideally speaking, does not try to overcome the adversary by winning over [them], but to turn [them] from an adversary into a collaborator by winning [them] over.

Thomas Merton, *Faith and Violence: Christian Teaching and Christian Practice*

BROKEN NATIONS: THREE BOOKS ON WWI.

Reviewed by Harry Kerr

The Sleepwalkers, How Europe West to War in 1914, Christopher Clark. (Allen Lane, London 2012.)
To End All Wars: How the First World War Divided Britain,

Adam Hochschild

(MacMillan, London 2011).

Broken Nations, Australians and the Great War, Joan Beaumont.

(Allen & Unwin, Sydney 2013)

There are many books on the First World War and there will be many more by 2018. As we grapple with the ANZAC legend, it is important that we in the peace movement gain an historical understanding of the events of 1914-18, of what led up to them and of what the consequences were. These three books (all of which I was able to borrow from my local library,) give us a professional and balanced picture of World War I in all its horror but with some unexpected glory.

In **the Sleepwalkers**, Christopher Clarke, Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, University, gives a detailed account of the international politics and the events which preceded August 1914. Clarke shows how the “trigger event,” the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne sparked already dry tinder. The key was great power rivalry between the empires of Austria-Hungary, Germany and Turkey and France, Britain and Russia. This rivalry was for territory in Europe and in Africa and Asia. There was more. There was the urge to dominate and the fear of being dominated. This led to arms races on land and sea which developed an unstoppable momentum. There was a belief that war was not only inevitable but was actually good for people and nations. There was the political ineptitude of leaders who did not understand their rivals or the possible consequences of their actions.

In **To End All Wars**, Adam Hochschild, journalist, writer and teacher at the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of Cali-

fornia, offers a “warts and all” picture of the conflict with a particular focus on Britain and how it affected British society. Hochschild does not spare us in his descriptions of the relentless slaughter, of the inept generals, who had no idea of how technology had changed the battlefield and whose only answer to failed offensives was to repeat the process, sending yet more young men to certain death. He tells the story of the men and women, who often a great cost, protested against the war, feminists, philosophers, trade unionists and journalists and who willingly suffered. He shows how war exposed the divisions which erupted in British society as a result of the war. The Pankhurst family, leaders of the women’s suffragette movement were deeply divided: Sylvia was a pacifist, Emmeline and Christabel committed supporters of the war effort. He shows how the greater the slaughter the more people were almost despairingly committed to the war lest the deaths and sacrifice be in vain.

In **Broken Nation**, Joan Beaumont, Professor of History at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the ANU, offers a similarly “warts and all” account of the war from an Australian perspective. Her account of the horrors of the battlefields is similar to Hochschild’s but she explores the Gallipoli campaign in some detail. Beaumont shows the ambiguity of Australian participation in the war. In 1914 Australia was not fully independent. Foreign affairs and defence were still in British hands. When Britain went to war Australia automatically followed and its troops were under British command. Australia did not claim complete independence until 1942. However, most Australians enthusiastically joined in a war “for King and empire,” encouraged by churches of all denominations. Why did they support a war which was no threat or offered little benefit to Australia? The answer can be summed up

in one word: racism. The British Empire was built on racism, the superiority of the white race and the exploitation of “lesser breeds without the law” (Kipling). Australians identified with this racism but gave it added urgency. For them the Empire was all that stood between them and being overwhelmed by the non-white races which threatened Christian civilisation. These attitudes are still around on the absurd paranoia towards asylum seekers. Beaumont’s also describes the opposition to the war. In Australia it was focussed on the left, the trade unions and the Irish Australians led by Archbishop Mannix. It climaxed in the bitterly fought referendum campaigns on conscription. After the war these deep and bitter divisions remained, compounded by grief and the disillusionment of returning soldiers.

All three books are well written, well researched and easy to read. I can recommend them. Taken together they raise some important issues.

1. Arms races make war more likely and the solution of international disputes by peaceful means more difficult. Arms races make nations feel more threatened. These threats become self fulfilling prophecies

2. War takes on a life of its own and become self justifying. The disputes which began the war fade. The aim becomes victory at all costs despite the consequences.

3. Leaders are unlikely to understand the consequences of what they are undertaking

4. In war human life becomes very cheap. People become resources to be sacrificed and replaced so that victory may be achieved. The waste of life is justified as noble sacrifice.

5. Wars do not receive universal support from citizens. Dissent is not tolerated and will be brutally crushed but heroically sustained. These things are as true to-day as they were in 1914.

(*Harry Kerr is Convenor of Pax Christi Victoria*)

A COMMON VISION – THE ABOLITION OF MILITARISM

Mairead Maguire

Mairead Maguire, peace activist from Northern Ireland and Nobel Peace Laureate 1976, argues that exactly 100 years after the start of the First World War is the time for a new start, offering new hope to humanity suffering under the scourge of militarism and wars.

SARAJEVO, Jun 5 2014 (IPS) - On this Friday, June 6, people from all corners of the world gather here in Sarajevo, to explore a plethora of ideas on the road forward to a world in peace.

Sarajevo was the scene of the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in 1914. The shot fired in Sarajevo set off a race for power, two global wars, a Cold War, a century of immense, rapid explosion of death and destruction technology, all extremely costly, and extremely risky.

The peace movement was never as strong politically as in the three decades before the First World War. It was a factor in political life, literature, organisation, and planning, the Hague Peace Conferences, the Hague Peace Palace and the International Court of Arbitration, and Bertha von Suttner's bestseller, 'Lay Down Your Arms!'

Optimism was high as to what this 'new science' of peace could mean to humankind. Parliaments, Kings and Emperors, great cultural and business personalities involved themselves. The great strength of the movement was that it did not limit itself to civilising and slowing down militarism, it demanded its total abolition. People were presented with an alternative, and they saw common interest in this alternative road forward for humankind.

What happened in Sarajevo a hundred years ago was a devastating blow from which the movement never really recovered. Now, 100 years later, must be the time for a thorough reappraisal of the merits of the original vision of disarmament, a new start offering new hope to a humanity suffering under the scourge of militarism and wars. People are tired of armaments and war. They have seen

that they release uncontrollable forces of tribalism and nationalism. We need to acknowledge that our common humanity and human dignity are more important than our different traditions. We can solve our problems without killing each other. We need to give and accept forgiveness, and choose non-killing and non-violence as ways to solve our problems.

We are challenged to build structures through which we can cooperate and which reflect our interdependence. The vision of the European Union (EU) founders to link countries together economically in order to lessen the likelihood of war among the nations is a worthy endeavour.

Unfortunately, we are witnessing the growing militarisation of Europe, its role as a driving force, under the leadership of the United States/NATO, towards rearmament and a new 'cold' war. The EU and many of its countries used to take initiatives in the United Nations for peaceful settlements of conflicts. Traditionally peaceful countries, like Norway and Sweden, are now among the most important U.S./NATO war assets. The EU threatens to end the neutrality of several nations.

Many nations have been drawn into complicity in breaking international law through U.S./U.K./NATO wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and so on. I believe that NATO should be abolished and that the United Nations should be reformed and actively take up its mandate to save the world from the scourge of war.

But there is hope. People are saying no to militarism and war and insisting on disarmament. Now is the time to take inspiration from many who have gone before us, like Bertha von Suttner, who was the first woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 1905.

It was Von Suttner who moved Alfred Nobel to set up the Nobel Peace Prize award and it was her movement and ideas that Nobel decided to support in his testament for the 'Champions of Peace', that is, those who struggled for disarmament and replacing power

with law and International relations. This 100-year-old programme for global disarmament confronted militarism in a fundamental way. It challenges today's peace movement to re-think. Is it sufficient to ask for improvements and reforms, or is it necessary to be an alternative to militarism? This dysfunctional system goes against the true spirit of humanity, which is to love and be loved and solve our problems through cooperation, dialogue, non-violence and conflict resolution.

The Sarajevo event gathers a diversity of activists together to feel the strength of being among thousands of friends and enriched by the variety of peace people and ideas. Participants will be inspired and energised to pursue their different projects, be it arms trade, nuclear, non-violence, culture of peace, drone warfare, etc. But soon they shall be back home, and know all too well how they often are being met with indifference or a remote stare.

The problem is not that people do not like what they say; what they understand correctly is that little can be done as the world is. But peace people want a different world. Diverse as their work is, a common vision of a world without arms, militarism and war is indispensable for success. Can the movement achieve real change if it does not confront and reject militarism entirely, as the aberration, or dysfunction, that it is in human history? Is it not time that all countries come together in an agreement to abolish all weapons and war, and to commit to always sort out all differences through international law and institutions?

While it is impossible in Sarajevo to make a common peace programme, it must be possible to commit to a common goal. If the common dream is a world without weapons and militarism, why not say so? Why be silent about it?

Sarajevo, where peace once ended, must become the bold starting point of a universal call for peace through the wholesale abolition of militarism.

InterPress Service News Agency June '14

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
(02) 9550 3845 or 0411 450 953**

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

QUEENSLAND

Contact:

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

**Clare Cooke SSps
mccl@holy.spirit.com.au**

Pax Christi National Council Meets on Skype

**bimonthly
for issues of national import**

**Contact:
02 9550 3845
0411 450 953**

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

BRISBANE

A MOVEMENT OF THE HEART

**A Prayer Service for
World Refugee Day**

Friday 20 June,
6.30pm; Cathedral of St Stephen,
249 Elizabeth Street, Brisbane

SYDNEY

World Refugee Day Rally

STOP THE WAR ON REFUGEES!

MARCH ON

SCOTT MORRISON'S OFFICE

Meet 12 pm.
Saturday 21 June
Monro Park near Cronulla
Station

MELBOURNE

WORLD REFUGEE DAY MARCH

Sunday 22 June City Square
1.30 pm

- ◆ **Close Manus & Nauru**
- ◆ **Fair Processing**
- ◆ **Justice for Reza barati**

VICTORIA

Agapes and Public Forums

JUNE AGAPE

SUNDAY 15 JUNE

1 p.m. Shared Lunch
2.30 p.m showing of film
"LAST EXODUS".

The situation on the ground of
the Christians of the Middle East

Shocking and compelling

Made by grassroots
Christians in Lebanon
St John's Uniting Church
Cnr Glenhuntly & Foster St
Elsternwick

AUGUST AGAPE

SUNDAY 17 AUGUST

1 p.m. Shared Lunch
Followed by conversation on
**AUSTRALIA &
NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT**
St John's Uniting Church
Cnr Glenhuntly & Foster St
Elsternwick

Anzac Centenary Coalition

Next meeting Monday 30 June
6 for 6.30 p.m .
Kildara Centre, 39 Stanhope St
Malvern

HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2014? IF NOT PLEASE DO!

To Pax Christi . (Membership is from January to December)

Name..... Address.....

.....P'code.....Phone.....

Email..... Mobile.....

ENCLOSED \$..... (Single \$35; Concession \$10; Family \$45)

Please return to: Your State Branch Treasurer (See address on Page 2)