

DISARMING Pax Christi TIMES

The Journal of Pax Christi Australia

Vol 42 No.4

December 2017

“Prospects for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons and for Integral Disarmament” His Holiness Pope Francis

Address to Participants in the International Symposium “Prospects for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons and for Integral Disarmament”

Dear Friends,

Joffer a cordial welcome to each of you and I express my deep gratitude for your presence here and your work in the service of the common good. I thank Cardinal Turkson for his greeting and introduction.

In this Symposium, you have met to discuss issues that are critical both in themselves and in the light of the complex political challenges of the current international scene, marked as it is by a climate of instability and conflict. A certain pessimism might make us think that “prospects for a world free from nuclear arms and for integral disarmament”, the theme of your meeting, appear increasingly remote. Indeed, the escalation of the arms race continues unabated and the price of modernizing and developing weaponry, not only nuclear weapons, represents a considerable expense for nations. As a result, the real priorities facing our human family, such as the fight against poverty, the promotion of peace, the undertaking of educational, ecological and healthcare projects, and the development of human rights, are relegated to second place (cf. Message to the



Fr. Claude Mostowik, President of Pax Christi Australia, with Pope Francis

Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, 7 December 2014).

Nor can we fail to be genuinely concerned by the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental effects of any employment of nuclear devices. If we also take into account the risk of an accidental detonation as a result of error of any kind, the threat of their use, as well as their very possession, is to be firmly condemned. For they exist in the service of a mentality of fear that affects not only the parties in conflict but the entire human race. International relations cannot be held captive to military force, mutual intimidation, and the parading of stockpiles of arms. Weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, create nothing but a false sense of security. They can-

not constitute the basis for peaceful coexistence between members of the human family, which must rather be inspired by an ethics of solidarity (cf. Message to the United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, 27 March 2017). Essential in this regard is the witness given by the Hibakusha, the survivors of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, together with other victims of nuclear arms testing. May their prophetic voice serve as a warning, above all for coming generations!

Furthermore, weapons that result in the destruction of the human race are senseless even from a tactical standpoint. For that matter, while true science is always at the service of humanity, in our time we are increasingly

Contents

Pope Francis on Nuclear Disarmament.....	p 1
ICAN wins Nobel Peace Prize..	p 3
Landownership, a traditional birthright.....	p 3
Challenging Nuclearism.....	p 4
A century of refugees.....	p 6
Kindness of Manus Detainees...p	7
The Pope & the Rohingyas.....	p 8
Remembrance Day.....	p 9
Advent Reflection.....	p 11

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.*
www.paxchristi.org.au

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: mscjust @smartchat.net.au

Pax Christi Queensland
PO Box 305
Carina QLD 4152
Tel: 0415 461 620
email: pancrasjordan@gmail.com

Un sourced 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

troubled by the misuse of certain projects originally conceived for a good cause. Suffice it to note that nuclear technologies are now spreading, also through digital communications, and that the instruments of international law have not prevented new states from joining those already in possession of nuclear weapons. The resulting scenarios are deeply disturbing if we consider the challenges of contemporary geopolitics, like terrorism or asymmetric warfare.

At the same time, a healthy realism continues to shine a light of hope on our unruly world. Recently, for example, in a historic vote at the United Nations, the majority of the members of the international community determined that nuclear weapons are not only immoral, but must also be considered an illegal means of warfare. This decision filled a significant juridical lacuna, inasmuch as chemical weapons, biological weapons, anti-human mines and cluster bombs are all expressly prohibited by international conventions. Even more important is the fact that it was mainly the result of a "humanitarian initiative" sponsored by a significant alliance between civil society, states, international organizations, churches, academies and groups of experts. The document that you, distinguished recipients of the Nobel Prize, have consigned to me is a part of this, and I express my gratitude and appreciation for it.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* of Pope Paul VI. That Encyclical, in developing the Christian concept of the person, set forth the notion of integral human development and proposed it as "the new name of peace". In this memorable and still timely document, the Pope stated succinctly

that "development cannot be restricted to economic growth alone. To be authentic, it must be integral; it must foster the development of each man and of the whole man" (No. 14).

We need, then, to reject the culture of waste and to care for individuals and peoples labouring under painful disparities through patient efforts to favour processes of solidarity over selfish and contingent interests. This also entails integrating the individual and the social dimensions through the application of the principle of subsidiarity, encouraging the contribution of all, as individuals and as groups. Lastly, there is a need to promote human beings in the indissoluble unity of soul and body, of contemplation and action. In this way, progress that is both effective and inclusive can achieve the utopia of a world free of deadly instruments of aggression, contrary to the criticism of those who consider idealistic any process of dismantling arsenals. The teaching of John XXIII remains ever valid. In pointing to the goal of an integral disarmament, he stated: "Unless this process of disarmament be thoroughgoing and complete, and reach men's very souls, it is impossible to stop the arms race, or to reduce armaments, or – and this is the main thing – ultimately to abolish them entirely" (*Pacem in Terris*, 11 April 1963).

The Church does not tire of offering the world this wisdom and the actions it inspires, conscious that integral development is the beneficial path that the human family is called to travel. I encourage you to carry forward this activity with patience and constancy, in the trust that the Lord is ever at our side. May he bless each of you and your efforts in the service of justice and peace.

ICAN WINS NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

Interview with Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN, following the announcement of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize on 6 October 2017. The interviewer is Adam Smith, Chief Scientific Officer of Nobel Media.

Adam Smith: First of all congratulations on the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to ICAN.

Beatrice Fihn: Thank you, this is very, very surreal. .

AS: In their statement the Norwegian Nobel Committee describe a new momentum behind efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Where do you think that new energy is coming from?

BF: I think it comes from just mobilising people around the world. I think with 21st century, having, using weapons of mass destruction to kill civilians is no longer acceptable. The Cold War is over a long time ago, we can no longer accept these weapons and I think that perspective has really mobilised a new generation of campaigners and the people who have been working on this for a very long time.

AS: Last month the majority of nations voted to adopt a new treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons. That has still to be ratified but what do you think the treaty will achieve when ratified?

BF: I think it will achieve a lot of pressure on states to sign the treaty. There's a lot of governments who have not yet signed it so it increases the pressure on them. It stigmatises nuclear weapons. It declares under international law that these weapons

are unacceptable and now illegal as well, so I think it's a very strong signal to nuclear arms states that they have to disarm and it's not just, it's not just a symbolic treaty, it will have concrete impact



Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN, with the signed UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, 7 July

on policies and practice.

AS: Thank you. And what do you think the award of the Nobel Peace Prize will do for your work at ICAN?

BF: Oh it will mean everything for us. I think it's really, you know, we're a small organisation. We have a lot of organisations that are members but have worked with little resources and lack of media attention to this issue and kind of ignored by mainstream media so I think this will really, this will mean the world to us. This is going to change everything.

AS: And ICAN is a collective of worldwide partner organisations isn't it?

BF: Yes we are 468 organisations. In

101 countries.

AS: That's truly a worldwide movement.

BF: Yes.

AS: And lastly, if individuals want to get involved in your campaign, what can they do to help?

BF: I think they can get really active, demand their governments to sign this treaty and to ratify this treaty. Make sure to challenge policies that rely on nuclear weapons, even in countries that don't have nuclear weapons that are part of nuclear weapons alliances. Countries can sign this treaty and should sign this treaty and should reject nuclear weapons. So there's lot of potential to get involved.

AS: So if people want to put pressure, what's the best thing they could do?

BF: Demand their governments to sign this treaty.

AS: Right. Ok. And lastly you as executive director, how do you feel about this news?

BF: Completely overwhelmed right now. I feel like I can't really think very much.. Extremely happy. This has been a collective work by so many people around the world for a long time and it's just a really a huge honour for all of us to receive this.

AS: Once again many congratulations on the award and thank you very much for speaking to us. Thank you.

BF: Thank you very much.

LANDOWNERSHIP A TRADITIONAL BIRTHRIGHT.

Mothers who against reopening Panguna mine

The reasons why the majority womenfolk of Bougainville are saying No to reopening the Mine are as follows. Bougainville has a matrilineal lineage to qualify for kinship. In the 1960's it was women who led the protests against CRA/BCL. Two decades after it is still the women who triggered the anger of the menfolk to take action. Violation of land rights, destruction of properties and traditional sacred grounds, serious damage to the environment, deposits of toxic chemicals into the rivers, lack of shareholding,

inadequate levels of royalties, and above all the realisation that foreign concepts were about to rule the entire laws. These being the burning issues, we're no longer a race of people to be blindly led by puppets who cannot choose their destiny. The constitution drafted at Colonial days at the lease areas and the higher level with the ABG advisor Tony Regan, re-drafted Mine Act. Foreign Exploiters do not value the Land and Environment. They're only interested in the minerals which are wealth on our soil.

Being mothers of a society who are also custodians we will strive to make sure change happens. We do not want deprivation to build dominion in our midst. We ask the global communities to recognise our plight, to ensure that we're not treated like a species of gullible and unintelligent species of animals to be experimented upon for the greed of those who gamble their lives upon extractive industrialism that leaves an indigenous group of people bare and losers of their livelihood. I state this believing in a God.

CHALLENGING NUCLEARISM: THE NUCLEAR BAN TREATY ASSESSED

Richard Falk

On 7 July 2017 122 countries at the UN voted to approve the text of a proposed international treaty entitled 'Draft Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.' It is incredible that it took 72 years after the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to reach the point of setting forth this unconditional prohibition of any use or threat of nuclear weapons. The core obligation of states that choose to become parties to the treaty is very sweeping.

The Nuclear Ban Treaty (NBT) is significant beyond the prohibition. It can and should be interpreted as a frontal rejection of the contention that the retention and development of nuclear weapons is a proven necessity given the way international society is organized. It is a healthy development that the NBT shows an impatience toward and a distrust of the elaborate geopolitical rationalizations of the nuclear status quo that have ignored the profound objections to nuclearism of many governments and the anti-nuclear views that have long dominated world public opinion. The old reassurances about being committed to nuclear disarmament as soon as an opportune moment arrives increasingly lack credibility as the nuclear weapons states, led by the United States, make huge investments in the modernization and further development of their nuclear arsenals. Even more telling was the failure to seize the window of opportunity in the mid-1990s as the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union collapsed to pursue nuclear disarmament with due diligence.

Despite this sense of achievement surrounding the NBT process, it must be admitted that there is a near fatal weakness, or at best, a gaping hole. True, the support of 122 governments lends weight to the claim that the international community, by a significant majority has signalled in an obligatory way a repudiation of nuclear weapons for any and all purposes, and formalized their prohibition of any action to the contrary. The

enormous fly in this healing ointment arises from the refusal of all nine nuclear weapons states to join in the NBT process. As well, most of the chief allies of these states that are part of the global security network of states relying directly and indirectly on nuclear weaponry also boycotted the entire process. It is also discouraging to appreciate that several countries in the past that had lobbied against nuclear weapons with great passion such as India, Japan, and China were notably absent, and also opposed the prohibition. This posture of undisguised opposition, must be taken extremely seriously. It includes all five permanent members of the Security Council and such important international actors as Germany and Japan.

The NATO triangle of France, United Kingdom, and the United States, three of the five veto powers in the Security Council, angered by its inability to prevent the whole NBT venture, went to the extreme of issuing a Joint Statement of denunciation, the tone of which was disclosed by a defiant assertion removing any doubt as to the abiding commitment to a nuclearized world order: "We do not intend to sign, ratify or ever become party to it. Therefore, there will be no change in the legal obligations on our countries with respect to nuclear weapons."

The depth of disagreement is set forth very aggressively in the joint statement: "A purported ban on nuclear weapons that does not address the security concerns that continue to make nuclear deterrence necessary cannot result in the elimination of a single nuclear weapon and will not enhance any country's security, nor international peace and security. It will do the exact opposite by creating even more divisions at a time when the world needs to remain united in the face of growing threats, including those from the DPRK's ongoing proliferation efforts." In effect, these leading NATO members, armed with nuclear weapons and enjoying Security Council veto power, are making two interrelated claims—that the NBT

offers no practical solutions to such current challenges as those posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile program and by dividing the world between those that have or depend on nuclear weapons and those who want to prohibit and eliminate them there is a loss of the kind of unity that is needed to force North Korea to back down.

It is correct that the NBT will not by itself lead to nuclear disarmament as it is not presently backed by a single one of the nine nuclear weapons states, but the civil society backers of the treaty and the 122 approving governments accept their responsibility to work toward implementation, which means changing the climate of opinion sufficiently so that the states with weapons will later adhere to the treaty. On the more practical side of the joint statement's position, it should be obvious by now that coercive diplomacy (sanctions plus threats of military attack) have not achieved results. What seems far more promising is a combination of the norms embodied in the NBT together with what I would call 'restorative diplomacy,' that is, an effort to ensure North Korea's security by means other than nuclear deterrence, via guarantees, economic assistance, and the end of provocative military training exercises and weapons deployments. Restorative diplomacy is not hampered in any way by the NBT, and is likely greatly aided by this comprehensive commitment to reject nuclear weapons and their purported security roles.

The body of the joint statement contends that global security depends upon maintaining the nuclear status quo, as bolstered by the Non-proliferation Treaty of 1968 and by the unprovable assertion that it was "the policy of nuclear deterrence, which has been essential to keeping the peace in Europe and North Asia for over 70 years." It is relevant to take note of the geographic limits associated with the claimed peace-maintaining benefits of nuclear weaponry, which ignores the ugly

reality that devastating warfare has raged throughout this period outside the feared mutual destruction of the heartlands of geopolitical rivals, a central shared forbearance by the two nuclear superpowers and other nuclear powers throughout the entire Cold War. During these decades of rivalry, and subsequently, the violent dimensions of geopolitical rivalry have been effectively outsourced to the non-Western regions of the world, causing massive suffering and widespread devastation for many vulnerable peoples throughout the Global South. Such a conclusion suggests that even if we were to accept the claim on behalf of nuclear weapons as deserving of credit for avoiding a major war, specifically a nuclear World War III, that 'achievement' was accomplished at the cost of millions, probably tens of millions, of civilian lives in non-Western societies. Beyond this, the achievement, such as it was, involved a colossally irresponsible gamble with the human future, and succeeded as much due to good luck as to the hyper-rationality attributed to deterrence theory and practice.

This reliance on the NPT to justify opposition to the NBT is at the root of these diametrically opposed views of collective security. The joint statement strongly asserts that the NPT/deterrence approach to collective security is the only way to end the impasse blocking moves toward nuclear disarmament, but extensive international experience suggests just the opposite conclusion. Namely, that NPT/deterrence is a management approach developed by the leading nuclear weapons states, and especially by the three governments issuing the joint statement. For these governments it is a greatly preferred alternative to the disarmament approach that motivates the NBT supporters. This comparison of approaches discloses a fundamental intellectual and political distinction that should be clearly articulated and understood.

NBT does not itself challenge the Westphalian framework of state-centrism by setting forth a framework of global legality that is issued under the authority of 'the international community' or the UN as the

authoritative representative of the peoples of the world. Its provisions are carefully formulated as imposing obligations only with respect to 'State parties,' that is, governments that have deposited the prescribed ratification and thereby become formal adherents of the treaty. Even Article 4, which hypothetically details how nuclear weapons states should divest themselves of all connections with the weaponry limits its claims to State parties, and offers no guidance whatsoever in the event of suspected or alleged non-compliance. Reliance is (mis)placed in Article 5 on an essentially voluntary commitment to secure compliance by way of the procedures of 'national implementation,' that is, it specifies no binding constraints on State parties that violate the NBT.

The treaty does aspire to gain eventual universality through the adherence of all states over time, but in the interim the obligations imposed are of minimal substantive relevance beyond the agreement of the non-nuclear parties not to accept deployment or other connections with the weaponry. The NBT proceeds on a basis in which the only truly binding obligations under international law that limit the freedom of sovereign states arise from the consent of their governments, and the clearest expression of consent is a negotiated and ratified international agreement in the form of an international treaty.

Given these shortcomings, is it nevertheless reasonable for nuclear abolitionists to claim a major victory by virtue of tabling such a treaty? Considering that the nuclear weapons states and their allies have all rejected the process of treaty making, and even those within the circle of the intended legal prohibition reserve a right of withdrawal, the NBT is likely to be brushed aside by cynics as mere wishful thinking and by dedicated anti-nuclearists as more of an occasion for hemlock than champagne. The cleavage between the nuclear weapons states and the rest of the world has never been starker, and there are no signs on either side of the divide of making the slightest effort to find common ground. Indeed, there may be no common

ground. As of now, it is a standoff between two forms of asymmetry. The nuclear states enjoy a preponderance of hard power, while the anti-nuclear states have the upper hand when it comes to soft power, including solid roots in 'substantive democracy,' 'global law,' and 'natural law.' At stake here is the tension between the managerial and transformational approaches to nuclear weapons and nuclearism.

Drawing the main conclusion from deeds as well as words, it is evident for all with eyes that want to see, that the nuclear weapons states as a group have opted for deterrence as a permanent security scheme and their version of the non-proliferation regime as its principal management mechanism. In this security system it is hardly surprising that the legal mandate issued by the ICJ to negotiate nuclear disarmament has been totally ignored.

One contribution of the NBT is to convey to the world the crucial awareness of these 122 countries, as reinforced by global public opinion, that the deterrence/NPT approach to global peace and security is neither prudent nor legitimate nor a credible pathway leading over time to the end of nuclearism.

In its place, the NBT offers its own two-step approach—first, an unconditional stigmatizing of the use or threat of nuclear weapons to be followed by a negotiated process seeking nuclear disarmament. Although the NBT is silent about demilitarizing geopolitics and conventional disarmament, it is widely assumed that later stages of denuclearization would never be implemented unless they included these broader assaults on the war system. The NBT is also silent about the relevance of nuclear power capabilities, which inevitably entail a weapons option given widely available current technological knowhow. The relevance of nuclear energy technology would also have to be addressed at some stage of nuclear disarmament to address concerns about possible diversion to military uses.

Having suggested these major shortcomings of treaty coverage and

and orientation, can we, should we, cast aside these limitations, and join in the celebrations and renewed hopes of civil society activists to rid the world of nuclear weapons? I think, with a realistic sense of what has been achieved and what remains to be done, that the NBT should be treated as a historic step forward. It gives authoritative legal backing to the profound populist stigmatization of nuclear weapons, and as such provides anti-nuclear civil society forces with a powerful instrument to alter

the climate of opinion in the nuclear weapons states. The Joint Statement is helpful, as well, in a perverse sort of way, undermining the tendency for activists to relax after achieving a provisional goal, in this case the NBT. We should all remember that there have been many lost opportunities and unfulfilled hopeful pledges in the past to get rid of the nuclear shadows haunting the human future. The most recent such instance was Barack Obama's speech of 2009 in Prague envisioning a world without

nuclear weapons that was received with great acclaim and earned the new U.S. president a Nobel Peace Prize, but brought the world not one step closer to getting rid of the weaponry.

Richard Falk, Albert G. Milbank Professor Emeritus of International Law, Princeton University served as the United Nations Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur for the Occupied Palestinian Territories from 2008-14.

A CENTURY OF REFUGEES: TODAY'S STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS

A Sermon preached in La Cathédrale de Notre Dame de Paris by Meurig Williams, Anglican Archdeacon of France & Monaco

The privilege of preaching at the Armistice Commemoration in Notre Dame de Paris on 11th November 2017, when the Battle of Passchendaele was the focus, provided an opportunity to remember how those who died in the suffocating quagmire of Flanders 100 years ago have no acknowledged 'place' where they fell. Similarly, those fleeing war in North Africa and the Middle East in recent years, who have been drowned in the Mediterranean, highlight the extent to which refugees are often the silent, unremembered casualties of war. I also wanted to remember the Welsh poet Hedd Wyn, who died in the first few hours at Passchendaele in 1917, and explore how his poetry, and the events after his death, might speak to our current political insecurities in Europe.

As we gather in one of Europe's iconic spaces, on one of the iconic dates of modern European history, it's worth pausing for a moment to allow the vastness of this holy and beautiful place to impregnate our consciousness. This is a place that has shaped, and will continue to shape, peoples' national and religious identity. It is a place to which countless millions, down the centuries, have come for inspiration, sanctuary and shelter, for an encounter with the searing reality of God; where sorrows, hopes, joys and longings have been intensely expressed. It is a place where the abundant, unfettered love of God meets our primitive human yearning for love, for recognition, for protection, for a place to belong. Having this place into which we bring all our memories and hopes is a privilege we should feel acutely, today. A

Century on from the horrors of Passchendaele, which has been the focus of so much remembering this year, we know that many who lost their lives in that bloody, suffocating, quagmire of senseless despair have *no place*. Their bodies are mingled with the soil of Flanders: their names, faces, voices and memory dislocated from their human uniqueness, as the place where they fell lies unmarked, unacknowledged. No memorial. No individuality. No place.

As we contemplate the unmarked expanses of Northern France, as well as Belgian Flanders, T.S. Eliot's words remind us that, amid the bleakness of all forgotten and dislocated places, God remembers:

There is holy ground and the sanctity shall not depart from it

Though armies trample over it, though sightseers come with guide books looking over it...

From such ground springs that which for ever renews the earth...

The French philosopher, Michel Foucault who died in 1984, speaks to our remembering, today. 'The anxiety of our era' he wrote 'has to do fundamentally with place.' When we think of war in the present moment, and the contemporary victims of war, his words have a particular resonance. Place matters to human identity and human flourishing. Displacement is an intolerable strain. The Twentieth, and now the Twenty-First, Century has become the era of refugees. We are reminded of this, to devastating effect, and with depressing regularity,

every time we watch the news. Displaced people are the casualties of war and political brutality. One hundred years ago, the churned and choking soil, on the farmland between Ypres and Roeselare, consumed the ripped and bloodied bodies of its unnamed victims. Today, the Mediterranean between Africa and Europe provides the unmemorable depths into which so many wearied, fearful and desperate bodies have fallen. Their faces, their names, their uniqueness lost beneath the cruel swell, as they urgently sought a place of safety, where ruthless regimes could no longer harm them.

Our reading from the Letter to the Hebrews, addressed to a community in upheaval and bewilderment, dislocated from their native cultural and religious moorings, speaks to our contemporary anxieties. As it recalls the story of Abraham, the great exemplar of faith for Jews, Christians and Muslims, we are reminded of how Abraham left a known and settled place, abandoned the securities of home and cultural familiarity, seeking an unknown place in an unknown future. It reminds us that one of the present-day anxieties about place is not simply to do with where we currently belong, or where we feel safe and fulfilled. It is about future destinations, too. This, I sense, is where the story of Abraham sits uneasily with our present-day cultural anxieties in Europe..

Few of us are immune to a growing, shallow, populist rhetoric, which has not only lost its historical and moral

bearings, but also shows worrying signs of contempt for democracy. We are all-too-aware of how this is fueling an ugly tribalism in many parts of the world. It wants to say that a sense of place is not so much a gift to be shared with the rest of our human race; but something to be defended against others – especially if those others are different from us, or are minorities in our native lands.

In stark contrast, the author of the Letter to the Hebrews praised those millions of unknown, unknowable people, strangers and pilgrims as they are called, who represent the unknown, unknowable millions who have no settled place on this earth, because their goal was above and beyond the menacing political and cultural dogma that can fan the fires of hatred and exclusion. Their focus was not their own self-interest; but that homeland which is God's eternal gift to all the peoples of the earth. They desired a better country, a better future, built on the foundation of God's just and gentle rule: a peaceable kingdom where none are enslaved, despised or excluded.

The visceral experience of exile, which runs right through the Jewish and Christian scriptures, was powerfully expressed by one of Passchendaele's first victims: my fellow Welshman, Ellis Humphrey Evans. A shepherd and poet from Meirionnydd, he is now remembered by his bardic name, Hedd Wyn. He was fatally wounded in the first few hours of 31st July 1917 at Pilckem Ridge, as the heavy rain of the previous week intensified. The ground underfoot became a morass of impenetrable sludge, and his battalion faced a German strong-point. Just over a month later, he would be declared the winner of the poetic chair

at the National Eisteddfod, held that year in Birkenhead. As the trumpets sounded, and the winner was asked to identify himself, it was announced that he had been killed in action, and the bardic chair was draped in black. At this year's National Eisteddfod on Anglesey, that same 'black chair' was placed alongside the winning chair of this year's winning poet. That 'black chair' was made by another of the worlds displaced people, the Flemish craftsman, Eugeen Vanfleteren, a carpenter born in Mechelen, just North of Brussels. He had fled to England on the outbreak of war and had settled in Birkenhead. In a strange land, his skills were welcomed as a gift and not rebuffed as a threat.

Hedd Wyn stands in the prophetic tradition of the war poets of the First World War, as he railed against human folly, and the arrogance that assumes that blinkered political ideologies, and the demonizing of other cultures, races and languages is the solution to our insecurities. Here, he recalls the great biblical lament of the Exiled Jews, Psalm 137, in a poem that proved to be hauntingly self-descriptive:

*Why must I live in this grim age,
when, to a far horizon, God
has ebbed away, and man, with rage,
now wields the sceptre and the rod?
Man raised his sword, once God had gone,
to slay his brother, and the roar
of battlefields now casts upon
our homes the shadow of the war.
The harps to which we sang are hung,
on willow boughs, and their refrain
drowned by the anguish of the young
whose blood is mingled with the rain.*

As we gather here, today, with Passchendaele casting its long shadow over our remembering; and as we recall the sacrifice of all those who

now lie buried beneath the mud of Northern France and Flanders, who gave their lives for a more just and secure future, we are challenged by a vision of that other country: that eternal homeland which is our goal and our hope.

Do we, as people who prize justice and truth, have a deeper and enriching vision to offer a world which has lost its bearings? Do we care that the future of this world should be nourished by a more generous, sacrificial vision of what it means to be human under God?

As we ponder the privilege of being in this place, we owe it to those who have died, and who might be otherwise forgotten and displaced in human history, to ask these questions.

We owe it to them to keep these questions in clear focus as we go about our everyday lives, making everyday decisions: in the places where we meet people, make choices and spend our money. We owe it them to do our ordinary, everyday things in a way that promotes society's cohesion and flourishing, that recognises the value of those who are strangers and pilgrims, because we know only-too-well – in this City and in many other places across the world – that the forces of terror and hatred and exclusion can so easily make this world an unbearable place. We owe it to those who died in the stench and squalor of Flanders and Northern France. We owe it to them, who died with the belief that human societies and human lives need to be rid of political posturing and aggressive arrogation. We owe it to them who, we trust and pray, have a place beyond the brutal battlefields of this world: another country, where God is not ashamed to be their God – and ours.

CHRISTIAN LEADER OVERWHELMED BY KINDNESS OF MANUS DETAINEES

Anne Lim

Australian Christian leader Jarrod McKenna says he was overwhelmed and humbled by the Christ-like kindness he was shown by detainees in the Manus Island detention centre during a visit this week. McKenna and Anglican Parish Priest Father Dave Smith were smuggled into

the detention camp by supportive local Christians and spent seven hours talking with many of the 340 men detained there.

The pair heard why the men in the camp fear to leave it and filmed interviews with many refugees and asylum seekers.

When the religious leaders attempted to leave, the PNG Navy gave chase. Father Dave, priest of Holy Trinity in Dulwich Hill, managed to escape on to the boat, but McKenna and his camerawoman Olivia Rousset, were hit by a navy stoplight as they ran through the tropical swamp between the ocean and

the centre. As McKenna and the centre. As McKenna fell and sliced open his ankle on a piece of metal, he heard a voice say: "Brother, take my hand."

His saviour was Adam, a tall young man from Darfur, who McKenna had prayed with earlier after hearing his story of having family members killed in the genocide.

"We had to stay the next 24 hours in the centre waiting for when it was safe for us to go again. The men called us Australia's first detainees. And the most moving thing was, they used their limited water source to wash our feet. That was the moment that really got to me when I couldn't hold the tears back," he tells *Eternity*.

"As a pastor, we do foot washing as the first act after baptism of new Christians. For me, it's incredibly powerful and here is this man who Australia has rejected and they're washing the blood and the mud off my feet with their limited water which they've collected."

McKenna was moved by the fact that Adam was the same age as his son, Tyson, who is at university and saving up to go travelling with his friends. "Adam has spent the past nearly five years in that centre and he didn't find a safe place in Australia but, as an Australian, he gave me safety, so it was incredibly moving."

McKenna says it was like being born "again, again" to experience the care the detainees extended to them.

"And with their limited Betadine and bandages they took care of us, they shared their food and for a whole day they took care of us. And it was the most humiliating expression of compassion in my life."

McKenna, who lives with newly arrived refugees at the First Home project in Perth, said many Australians do not realise how many persecuted Christians are at the Manus centre.

"A guy said to me 'I was feeling like God no longer heard my prayers here' – it was just so heart-breaking – but since seeing you and Father Dave I feel God hasn't forgotten, that the church hasn't forgotten us, that our brothers and sisters in Australia, they love us. It was very overwhelming."

After returning to Australia on Tuesday, McKenna was horrified to see some of the friends he made on Manus being beaten as they were moved out of the centre by police later this week.

"The news yesterday that police have forcibly removed people from the camp, and arrested journalist Behrouz Boochani, who we spent hours with in the camp, horrifies me."

"The police have now destroyed all of the men's possessions, food and water. It is even more obvious and urgent that the Australian government must evacuate these men immediately to safety in Australia," McKenna said. Father Dave said he had enormous respect for the brave men he met in

the camp.

"They find their strength in community, in supporting each other, and I would be proud to have them as neighbours. But the Australian government is attempting to break up their community, destroy their support structures, in order to force them to endure years more of indefinite detention. It is absolutely inexcusable."

ABC has reported this today that all refugees have been moved from the decommissioned Manus Island detention centre to a new camps. Tim Costello from World Vision is on Manus Island this week on a fact finding mission with World Vision and Oxfam. He told ABC Radio National that he had seen the new camps and they were not up to standard. On Twitter, Costello said,

"Today we've watched already another six buses from the naval base, being transported out. They looked angry, they looked dismayed. They were putting up the finger to Australia. But what we know is even if all are moved out today, if Mr Turnbull and Mr Dutton think the problem is solved, you're wrong. The problem has just shifted a few kilometres. Without hope, without a solution, this problem goes on. And it remains Australia's responsibility."

Anne Lim is editor of "Eternity"

PAPAL "FAILURE" TO NAME THE ROHINGYAS

Jacob Kavunkal, SVD

The divine 'Ruah' (breath, air, life, spirit) is still working," said most Catholics and others, when Pope Francis was elected as the 266th successor to Peter on March 14, 2013. The four years of his papal ministry had been years of challenges. He worked hard to wake up the Catholic Church and the world at large to the heart of the Gospel, Love and Compassion. An expression of this concern was his plea for the Rohingyas. And yet, it is no secret that most international agencies experienced certain disappointment that the Pope did not use the term during his recent visit to Myanmar.

Realizing how the crisis of the Rohingyas was a leading challenge of Myanmar along with poverty and underdevelopment more so in the absence of full political freedom, the papal silence was puzzling for many. On the other hand, one cannot fail to appreciate the very choice of Myanmar, with less than a million Catholics, for the papal visit.

What motivated the Pope was not so much of keeping his credibility as much as to achieve his end, that of bringing greater relief to the Rohingyas. He perceived rightly how his use of the term would only increase violence not only against the Rohingyas,

but even to others, Pope Francis used every available opportunity to bring the responsible parties to dialogue so that the message may get across, leading to a change even if it took time. Francis' chief concern was to get the message conveyed, even if only step by step. Francis described the situation, the rights, inclusive rights of all, and citizenship, including during his private conversations with the military and the national leaders. In fact, his meeting with the military leaders was an example of dialogue, allowing the other to speak so that the dialogue and reflection can continue to the common good, without .

denouncement and offense.

I am inclined to suggest that Francis offers an example to the United States and the rest of the world, to pick a leaf as to how to engage the North Korean leaders to political dialogue for the good, not only of North

Korea but for the good of the entire world. This may begin by accepting the reality that North Korea is a nuclear power and respecting it, could deal with the North Koreans as equal partners for the welfare not only of the North Koreans but for the world

as a whole. Such a scenario could be described as the presence of God today in the world!

Fr. Jacob Kavunkal SVD teaches missiology in Yarra Theological Union and is a member of the Christi Victoria Committee

ON REMEMBRANCE DAY WHAT SHOULD WE REMEMBER?

Hannah Middleton

First: I acknowledge Cammeraygal people of the Dharug nation

The eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month was the time of the Armistice between WWI Allies and Germany in 1918.

World War I was fought from July 28, 1914 to November 11, 1918 mobilizing 70 million military personnel. 16 million died in this war -- 9 million combatants and 7 million civilians.

After World War Two, Armistice Day was renamed Remembrance Day to commemorate those who were killed in both World Wars. Today the loss of Australian lives from all wars is commemorated on Remembrance Day.

Wars are still with us, fueled by a global arms industry and competing international interests seeking resources and hegemony.... So the number to remember is still growing. So today, on November 11, we are invited to remember the dead in World War 1 and subsequent wars.

As a lifelong peace activist – but not a pacifist -- I would like today to ask:

What are we told to remember and what should we remember?

Remembrance Day is not simply an historical commemoration. It deals with historical events but it contains a clear political agenda and there is a profound dishonesty in what is said and what is not said.

I am sure that many of you saw reports of the re-enactment of the October 1917 Light Horse charge at Beersheba.

The flags flew, stirring music played, horses whinnied (and don't we love animals!) descendants in replica uniforms spoke proudly of their ancestors, some wept...

Politicians spoke of the heroic fallen who changed the course of war ...

All of this was true But what was unspoken, what was not said?

For example, the land where the

charge took place was home to 90% Arabs. Yet no Palestinians were invited to the re-enactment. Israeli flags were flown but the state of Israel did not exist at that time.

With the 1926 Balfour Declaration, the British colonial power promised Palestine, a land that was not theirs, to the Zionist movement, ignoring the rights of the indigenous Palestinian people. This declaration paved the road to Palestinian dispossession and the systematic denial to this day of their right to self-determination.

But we are not encouraged to remember things like this.

There is often a profound dishonesty in the language of what is said in so much of Remembrance Day ceremonies:

It is said the soldiers of the First World War and subsequent wars make 'the ultimate sacrifice'. But actually they don't sacrifice themselves, politicians and generals sacrifice them. There is a stark difference.

Australian soldiers are described as 'the fallen'.

Ken Inglis writes:

... soldiers of the Queen did not stagger or sink or topple or have bits blown off, but fell, to become not quite simply the dead but the fallen, who cleanly, heroically, sacrificially gave their lives in war.

And so, we came to speak not of precisely how they died (eviscerated, burnt, drowned in mud, of thirst and by bleeding out and screaming for their mothers in no man's land) but rather just that they "fell".

We speak of those who fell. We do not speak of the fact that they were sent overseas to kill.

There is much talk of dying and of sacrifice, but we are almost never asked to remember the killing and the carnage inflicted on distant countries in our name.

In recent years war has become a dominant feature of Australian his-

tory. Rather than recognising our role in conflict – so often as pawns of powerful empires – we have ignored it and transformed our participation into something much more palatable through the creation of false historical memories.

Mark McKenna has written:

"It seems impossible to deny the broader militarisation of our history and culture: the surfeit of jingoistic military histories, the increasing tendency for military displays before football grand finals, the extension of the term Anzac to encompass firefighters and sporting champions, the professionally stage-managed event of the dawn service at Anzac Cove, the burgeoning popularity of battlefield tourism (particularly Gallipoli and the Kokoda Track), the ubiquitous newspaper supplements extolling the virtues of soldiers past and present, and the tendency of the media and both main political parties to view the death of the last World War I veterans as significant national moments.

The myth has become dominant in today's political culture because it has been heavily promoted by recent Australian governments, first by Hawke in the 1980s, continued by Keating and most heavily promoted by Howard.

A particularly worrying development has been the deliberate targeting of children. Schools across the country are bombarded with free material including films, books, CDs and posters. Subsidies are provided for trips to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. Essay competitions award winners with fully funded tours of European and Middle Eastern battlefields. This version of our history conveys the appalling and false ideas that nations are made in war not in peace, on battlefields not in parliaments; that soldiers not statesmen are the nation's founders; that the bayonet is mightier than the pen.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has provided material that teaches that our national values, national identity, and our development as a nation have been achieved through our military engagement in foreign wars.

In fact events which have contributed to the formation of the Australian nation have predominantly taken place in peacetime -- events including the ending of transportation in 1840, the Eureka Stockade in 1854, the first Australian Trade Union Congress in 1879, the publication of *The Man from Snowy River* in 1895, Federation on May 9 1901, the Harvester minimum wage decision in 1907, and the suffrage movement with [women's suffrage](#) for state elections in all states and territories in 1911.

The Australian Constitution was created by men who had never been to war, such as Alfred Deakin, Edmund Barton and Charles Kingston. Contrary to the popular idea that Australian values were forged in military service, the majority of Australian nation-builders, including John Curtin and Robert Menzies, never served in war.

However, we should never forget that this process also includes 40,000 years of indigenous history with the final 200 years plus years of the Frontier Wars, murder, dispossession, exclusion and impoverishment. This was clearly an event which was not peaceful and which had a profound impact on the Australian character.

Militarising our history helps create an environment conducive to war, making it easier for Australian governments to commit to conflict and harder for critics to engage in a serious national debate.

The heroic image of the digger makes it easier to politically justify wars our powerful friend wants to wage and harder to question the costs of war both human lives and billions of dollars.

To challenge our involvement in wars is demonised as cowardly attacks on the men and women in the front line. The prestige of the armed forces shields the politicians from legitimate scrutiny.

The relentless focus on our military history reinforces war, violence and military solutions as key options to resolve international conflict.

The packaged version of the past is

used to promote unquestioning respect for the military and acceptance of military action as an effective and legitimate way to solve problems. We are taught to see the military as a feasible and successful mode of conflict resolution.

Criticism is buried beneath the compulsion to be patriotic and stand by our troops. It provides a means by which Australian governments neutralize dissent about any commitment to war.

The majority of the Australian people did not support Australia's involvement in the 2003 Iraq war but once the commitment had been made, the Howard government made it difficult to critique the war on the grounds that the men and women deployed to fight in it must be supported.

There have been valiant peace movements in Europe and in Australia who campaigned for solutions that were better than war. They were arrested, demonised, swept aside by jingoism, simply ignored. Yet they were right.

But we are not invited to remember them — even when the same situation arose over Iraq, even when the same situation faces us today over the Korean Peninsula.

Criticising the myths is a serious thing for it is criticism of the evil and folly of war and of Australia's role as a pawn in international conflict. It is criticism of Australian defence policy and exorbitant defence spending — now \$87 million every single day — and criticism of our relationship with the US.

In Australia to decision to send young men and women to kill and be killed in war can be made by the Prime Minister alone.

We pride ourselves on being a democratic country but as the events of 2014 and 2015 showed, a prime minister can still send Australian troops into action without democratic constraint, parliamentary debate, or public accountability.

The late former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser has written:

The way we went to war in 2003, as one of three members of the Coalition of the willing, with the United States and the United Kingdom, represented a betrayal of democratic standards and a betrayal of Australian values.....

The closeness of our relationship with the United States ... means that

we no longer have an independent capacity to stay out of America's wars... When those hard-hitting, three-service forces in Darwin are used to support a conflict in which America is involved, and when Pine Gap is used to target not only drones, but advanced American weapons systems, how can an Australian Prime Minister stand up in the Parliament and say Australia is going to pass this one by? The Prime Minister would not be believed. Australia could not stop America using those facilities...."

Very many Australians believe that it is essential and urgent that the power to declare war or to stay at peace be transferred from the Executive to Parliament.

But none of all this will be mentioned in official Remembrance Day ceremonies.

All of what I have said means no disrespect to soldiers who fought and died. They were told they had to defeat the Hun on the western front or the gooks in Vietnam or the rag heads in Iraq and Afghanistan. They obeyed and did their best in indescribably appalling situations.

The guilty are the ones who sent them, lied to them about why they were there, who sacrificed them for economic and political advantage

On Armistice Day, the flags fly, the solemn music plays, the veterans, the widows and the grandchildren wear the medals and weep, the leaders speak of "fallen heroes". There are headstones and wreaths and memorials and speeches. They promise "We will remember them".

But we hear nothing about the wounded and maimed, the countless men stricken by shell shock, by post traumatic stress disorder, the disfigured men who were shunned; the rampant alcoholism and morphine addiction; the terrified kids and battered wives, and the suicides.

Perhaps it is easier to remember the fallen with a poppy and a parade than to confront the reality. Perhaps it is politically more expedient.

So we must ask on Remembrance Day... **what should we remember?**

Dr Hannah Middleton is Guest Lecturer at the Centre for Peace & Conflict Studies, University of Sydney. Former Executive Officer of the Sydney Peace Foundation.

Mark 13.24-37

As Advent begins, we realise that Christmas is coming. It is a time of great busyness with all the preparations, the end of year functions, buying of presents, writing cards and letters. Is this really what Advent is all about? Advent is certainly a time of getting ready, but it is not just about preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus. It is about Jesus' coming again and what that means for us and for the world in which we live. To-day's gospel suggests that it is the time to wake up, to be alert, to look the world in the eye, but to discern the action of God and the coming of Jesus and to be ready to meet him in what is going on in the world and in what is happening to us.

To-day's gospel a passage we would rather not hear. It's frightening and confusing. Jesus looks at the temple, the centre and the sign that God is in charge, the sign of continuity and hope. He says: *"As the end approaches, there will be a time of great chaos and trauma on the earth. Then, in the days after that, it will seem as though the whole cosmos is going berserk. The sun will go black, the moon will not shine, the stars will come crashing to earth, and the elemental powers of the universe will be shaken.* Why would Jesus talk like this?

The passage strikes a chord. It speaks to some of our deepest anxieties. The threat of nuclear annihilation has come back into our lives with the crisis on the Korean peninsula. One nuclear explosion could cause a nuclear winter which could devastate the food supply for the whole world. Our world seems to be dominated by crazy leaders whom no one can control. There are millions of people who have had to run away from their homes and countries and struggle to survive in squalid camps or drown as they try to escape in leaky boats. We are horrified by what is being done to people on Manus Island in our name, by what is being done to the Rohingyas in Myanmar and the horror and terror of Syria and Iraq.

This week-end's weather reminds us of the reality of climate

change. Rain destroys crops that have been worked for. Farmers in Africa sell their daughters because they can't feed their families because the rain has stopped. The Barrier Reef is dying and the oceans are turning to acid. All this is because of human activity. Some people suggest that by 2050 southern Australia will be too hot and too dry to support human life. Last week we seemed set for a long hot and dry summer. This week it might be a cold wet summer. Who knows? What is going on? It's tempting to feel that these things are beyond us, that there is nothing we can do so we might just as well go with the flow and enjoy Christmas.

Mark writes his gospel at a time of catastrophic conflict in Jerusalem. Some Jews had rebelled against the imperial power and set up an alternative government. Rome hit back hard and razed Jerusalem to the ground. They completely destroyed the temple, the symbol of God's presence with his people, the building that reminded people who they were. For Jews all over the Roman Empire it was like Mecca is to Muslims to-day. The question for the new and struggling Christian communities was: *Who are we in the midst of this total devastation? Where is God now? Has God abandoned us?*

These are questions we should ask too when we open our eyes to what is going on in the world and where it is heading. *What sort of world are we leaving for our grandchildren? Is it already too late to change our ways and to make a difference?* Jesus answers that we must be alert and awake up to what is going on, to why it's happening and who is behind it, however confronting that may be. I was reading an article on North Korea recently which looked back to the final days of the Korean war. It said this: *For the next two years, the American air force carried out massive bombing sorties. About 635,000 tons of high explosives and chemical weapons were dropped – that was far more than was used against the Japanese in the Second World War. In all, 8 million to 9 million Koreans were killed. Whole families were wiped out and practically no families alive in Korea today are without close*

relatives lost at that time. Memories of those horrible days, weeks and months of fear, pain and death seared the memories of the survivors, and according to most observers they constitute the underlying mindset of hatred and fear so evident among North Koreans today. They will condition whatever negotiations America attempts with the North. This helps us to look at the Korean crisis realistically.

Jesus goes much further: He says that these things are signs that he is coming. God will act decisively. God is doing something new that will shake us out of our comfort zone once and for all. So while we do not dodge the realities of what is happening, we look forward in hope because God is doing something new. We look for signs of God at work and where God is calling us to work. They won't be obvious. That is why Jesus says we must stay awake and be alert because we don't know the day or the hour when Jesus will suddenly come into our lives and into our church and point us in a complexly new direction. We must learn how to read the signs. When the buds come on the trees we know that spring is on the way. When the green is turning red we know its autumn and harvest time.

Act for Peace, who run the Christmas bowl are advertising for people to spend three months in Palestine in the midst of the conflict there to live among the people, the guide children to school everyday through military checkpoints, to show people that Christians on other parts of the world care. *This is a sign.* Last week a group of Christians were before the courts in Alice Springs. They had broken into the Pine Gap base and prayed for peace there. *This is a sign.* We are celebrating the award of the Nobel Prize for Peace to ICAN for achieving the proposed treaty banning nuclear weapons. Many see it as a futile gesture. *But this is a sign.* Two Christian ministers from Australia secretly got themselves inside the Manus Island detention centre to bring support to the people there as the PNG government was dismantling their camp. (See p 7). What they

Continued on p 12

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, 21 Swanson Street, Erskineville. 2 minutes walk from Erskineville Station

QUEENSLAND

Pax Christi Meetings

Pax Christi Queensland

Pancras Jordan OP

0415 461 620

pancrasjordan@gmail.com

Clare Cooke SSpS

mccl@holyspirit.com.au

**Pax Christi National Council
Meets on Skype no less**

**than bimonthly
for issues of national import**

Contact:

02 9550 3845

0411 450 953

VICTORIA

ANZAC DAY

25 APRIL 2018

11.00 AM, ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL MELBOURNE

Truly, we will remember them.

An Ecumenical Service of Lament, Repentance and Hope for the Centenary of the First World War, Remembering 1918, the ending of "The War to End All Wars."

& Pope Francis' Call to move from Just War to Just Peace those who said no to war, the Aboriginal wars.



Advent reflection, contd. from p 11

found there was that the asylum seekers including some Christian asylum seekers were caring for them, sharing their meagre food and water. *This is a sign.* These are all signs that the Lord is coming. We pray that God will open our eyes to the signs, guide us as we seek to respond to them to discover the true meaning of Christmas.

Australia must not follow the US over a cliff on Jerusalem

The Australia Palestine Advocacy Network condemns Trump's decision to move the US Embassy to Jerusalem and calls on Julie Bishop to confirm Australia's Embassy will stay in Tel Aviv.

"Trump's announcement throws a match into the tinder-box of Palestinian frustration" said Bishop George Browning, President of the Australia Palestine Advocacy Network "Trump's decision is a unilateral move of interference that shows complete disregard for the foundations of peace negotiations".

"The right-wing extremists have taken over Israel and the White House" continued Bishop Browning, "Australia must stay with the international consensus and keep our Embassy in Tel Aviv".

In Australia Christian Zionists and conservative Liberals such as have been agitating for Australia to also move our Embassy to Jerusalem. Jerusalem being a shared capital of both Palestine and Israel has been a cornerstone of all negotiations, as the city is so central to both parties.

"Trump's announcement gives Israel a green light to take whatever it likes by force" continued Bishop Browning. "What is holding back real peace is Israel thinking it can take whatever it likes and get away with it".

"Polls consistently show Australians want our Government to actively support Palestinian independence" continued Bishop Browning, "Australia must unequivocally rule out any move of our Embassy".

**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 your copy of Disarming Times by e-mail)**

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

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

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

ENCLOSED \$..... (Single \$35; Low income \$20; Family \$45)

Please return to: (New South Wales) P.O. Box A 681 Sydney Sth 1235,

All others: P.O. Box 31 Carlton Sth Vic. 3053