



SEEK THE TRUTH AND SERVE HUMANITY

the Beacon

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EDITORIAL

The 6 August 1945 is a day imprinted on the minds of the world's people and must never be forgotten. On that day the US government ordered the dropping of two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, bombs called 'A Little Boy' and the other 'Fat Man'. The destruction was appalling, immediate and long lasting and killed and continues to kill ordinary people going about their lives. Roughly 90,000 died in Hiroshima immediately, and 39,000 in Nagasaki, with deaths continuing for months as people succumbed to radiation burns and other illnesses resulting from this bombing.

Bertrand Russell said of this: 'The use of two different kinds of atomic bombs on the two cities suggests calculated experimentation at the cost of thousands of lives.' Then, there was one nuclear state, and now there are nine.

Enter the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) that was established in 2007 by the Australian Medical Association for Prevention of War.

From this small but vitally important beginning ICAN has now become a global network of over 105 organisations in 102 countries.

For its humanitarian work for peace, last year it was awarded the world's most prestigious award, the Nobel Peace Prize. It is the first Australian group to receive this great honour.

So where were the Federal Government tributes paid to ICAN for this honour? Was there a public ceremony to recognise this great Australian award in the name of peace? The answer is no, because our Federal Government refused to acknowledge the award. It refused to publicly honour the receivers of the world's greatest public award.

It was left to a group of students in year eleven to express the views of the vast majority of Australians.

The full text of what they said is in *Beacon*, but the spirit of the Australian people was embodied in their words:

This nuclear test ban treaty embodies a real hope for another way of doing business, of settling disputes, of approaching conflict and of negotiating respectful, dignified peace.

Shame on the Turnbull government for its refusal to acknowledge this important contribution to world peace; shame on them for evading their responsibilities to the Australian people; and shame on them for failing to make the world a safer place.

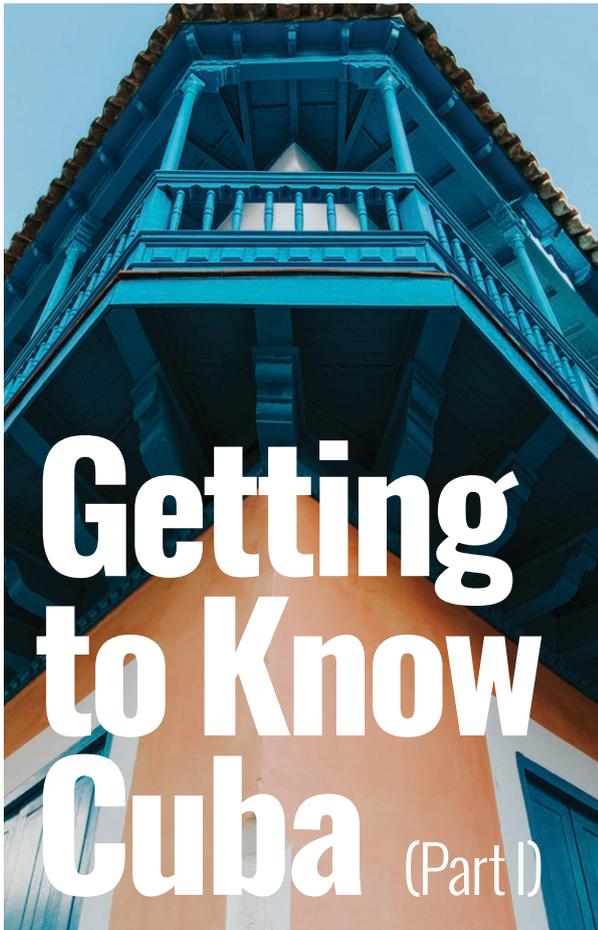
The Melbourne Unitarian Peace Memorial Church commends the work of ICAN, expresses its pride in the amazing results of their work and commits to working with them to rid the world of this appalling tribute to man's wasted scientific efforts. Wasted in the creation of a weapon that can destroy the world rather than concentrating on solving the many economic, environmental and health problems of the people.

On 7 July last year, ICAN and its international partners were successful in persuading 122 nations to adopt a historic global agreement to ban nuclear weapons. This is the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Regrettably, Australia did not sign.

ICAN says 'Nuclear weapons are the most destructive, inhumane and indiscriminate weapons ever created ... The use of a large number of nuclear weapons would disrupt the global climate, cause widespread agricultural collapse and famine ...'

In the UN debate many nations expressed their concern about the 'catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from the use of any nuclear weapons and recognise the need to completely eliminate such weapons'.

We must be vocal and unrelenting and insist that our government signs this agreement. ☺



Cuba is a nation that is notoriously hard to get to know. Decades of unrelenting US-backed propaganda has flooded our country, determined to prevent us from gaining a genuine understanding of the Caribbean island and its socialist revolution. Today, most people associate Cuba with just a few icons—old cars from the 1950s, rolling tropical landscapes, Che Guevara, and a socialist system that we are led to believe has failed. Yes, there are old cars in Cuba, and its weather is sublimely tropical, and Che Guevara did indeed play an important role in the island's turbulent history. But Cuba is no failure, and neither is socialism. Anyone who has been to Cuba or has conducted genuine research into its history, will rather, find a stunning array of successes, of extensive social achievements, of unmatched international aid to developing nations, and all in spite of a brutal economic war perpetuated against this small country by the US Empire.

Now, more than ever, it is essential to get to know the real Cuba. With the election of a new president earlier this year and the cautious expansion of small private enterprise associated with tourism, Cuba's enemies have fanatically preached of the end of socialism, and the final victory of the US and Miami expat community. This could not be further from the truth. Cuba has not succumbed to capitalism, and the US has definitely not won the battle of ideas.

Today, I would like to blend research with travel journal, highlighting many of Cuba's outstanding achievements since the 1959 revolution and providing a counter-argument to the fraudulent opposition to Cuban socialism. In addition, I will provide an analysis of the contemporary situation in Cuba, including my own observations and reflections from my visit to Cuba with my family at the beginning of last year. I believe that the best way to get to know this enigmatic island is to hear first-hand from someone who has visited and experienced it.

On our first full day in Havana we met up with our friends from ICAP, or the 'Institute of Friendship with the Peoples' – the Cuban government organisation that is associated with the Australia-Cuba Friendship Society. They showed us around some of Havana's most iconic locations: the great seawall known as the Malecon; El Morro, the imposing Spanish-era fortresses looking out over the bay; and of course Habana Vieja, or Old Havana. This part of the city, with its stunning Spanish colonial architecture now extensively restored, has developed into the most popular tourist area in Havana. These streets were full of small shops selling a variety of things from everyday items and clothes to tourist trinkets and food. The streets were lively with conversation, with shop sellers selling their wares, people on the street just talking, or an impromptu game of backgammon in any of several squares. Like all streets in Cuba, these narrow cobblestones streets also managed to accommodate, old cars, bicycles and the occasional horse and cart without issue, as if by magic. Here in Old Havana there were also state-run shops with traditionally made perfumes and aftershaves, fine tobacco and cigars, hand-painted fans, and of course, Cuban rum.

Santa Clara, nestled firmly in the middle of Cuba, was a truly beautiful site to behold. Long, clean streets and pink-flowered trees dotted this quaint Cuban city. The central square was particularly evocative, where a great blossom tree and immaculately painted pagoda overlooked the everyday comings and goings of Santa Clara's citizens. We stayed with an absolutely lovely couple, Yeni and Juan-Havierre. Both were incredibly grateful to the Cuban revolution for the education, amongst many other benefits, that they received for free, as does their child now. We enjoyed a few nights together lambasting the US blockade and toasting Fidel. Now, it is impossible to visit Santa Clara without visiting the spectacular mausoleum of Che Guevara. Che was, of course, a man who encapsulated the vitality and vision of the revolution, and it was absolutely touching to see the homage being paid to this great man in Santa Clara, a city that was under his command during the revolution. Cuba is a country that rightfully celebrates its heroes, and as we left we saw a swarm of little Cuban school children, eagerly awaiting their entry into the mausoleum to learn about Che's history with Cuba, and Cuba's history with Che.

We saw several groups of school children, out and about during our visit. Education is obviously one

of the key successes of the revolution and central to Fidel Castro's notion of fighting with ideas. An understanding of the past is essential in moving forward, and the Cuban curriculum places great importance on teaching its own history and that of Latin America, and seeing the region in the context of the rest of the world.

The next city we arrived in was Cienfuegos, which I have to admit was my least favourite city. It is, however, one of the most popular tourist destinations for the Cubans themselves, as numerous people would tell us. We stayed with a family whose roots lay in the United States – our host's father, who had been commodore of the Cienfuegos Yacht Club in his day, was personal friends with Fulgencio Batista, brutal dictator of the island prior to the revolution. They bemoaned the loss of their privileged life under capitalism, and it is little wonder that they viewed the revolution with contempt. Although this family were incredibly friendly and hospitable, we found it somewhat difficult to feel at home here, given my family's great support for Fidel Castro and the revolution. Such individuals are of course in the minority in Cuba, with the vast majority of people we met being supportive of socialism. Our last night was spent in an old, Batista-era hotel that had been refurbished into a restaurant. As we sat there eating our dinner, next to an elderly Russian couple, we could see the row of seaside villas and boating clubs that had once been restricted to the capitalist class in pre-revolutionary Cuba. How happy I am that those days of excess and debauchery were long gone.

Trinidad, a UNESCO world heritage site and attractive city of cobblestone streets and vibrant yellow houses, was where we stayed next. Expertly restored by the Cuban government, Trinidad is very much a 'tourists' city'. Tablecloths, blankets and guayaberas hand-crafted in Trinidad were all on sale in the street markets, and I couldn't help but purchase one of the iconic Cuban shirts for myself. Trinidad was also an excellent site to learn about the distinctly Cuban religion Santeria, a fascinating fusion of Christianity introduced by the Spaniards and African religions carried to the Caribbean during the harrowing slave trade era. Cuba is of course a secular society where no religion is dominant. The Catholic Church once enjoyed a staggering amount of control and influence in Cuba, and collaborated with Batista prior to the revolution. Quite rightly, I believe, the revolution greatly curtailed the power of the Catholic Church, confiscating its immense land holdings and distributing them amongst the impoverished peasantry.

Camaguey, the 'city of theatres', is perhaps one of the best places in Cuba to witness the immense support for the arts that the revolutionary government has provided. Large, colonial-era theatres have been restored and now put on a diverse array of performances, free of charge to all Cubans. Such cultural patronage and unfettered access to entertainment is virtually unheard of in the rest of

the world. Museums, art shows and cultural sites are commonplace in every city, and within easy reach of any and all Cubans. In addition, following the revolution, casas de la trova were founded across the country, even in the most rural and inaccessible locations. These venues host cultural nights, musical performances and art exhibitions available for everybody to enjoy. What is more, local artists are the mainstay of these casas, which means any individual can enjoy the support of Cuba's many artistic industries.



THE CUBAN CURRICULUM PLACES GREAT IMPORTANCE ON TEACHING ITS OWN HISTORY AND THAT OF LATIN AMERICA, AND SEEING THE REGION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE REST OF THE WORLD.

Holguin is a small city one encounters as they head further eastward. I can't honestly say I remember much about this location. There weren't any overly significant revolutionary sites, nor were there a great array of natural vistas to enjoy. But it was here that I noticed the small things, intangible things that I felt throughout Cuba. The fact that children can run around together until late without fear of anything happening to them, or the sense of community one feels when in the central plaza, watching friends and family en masse, exchanging stories and discussing the day's events. 🍷 (END OF PART I)

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Peter William Ford (born 27 June 1947) is a retired British diplomat who was ambassador to Bahrain from 1999–2003 and to Syria from 2003–2006 (Wikipedia)

'Information Clearing House' – My focus today will be on the methods the mainstream media use to promote war, consciously or unconsciously, and to prevent people from realising what is really going on. We might call these methods weapons of mass deception.

The media are on trial. But what are they on trial for exactly? Not long ago the media were on trial in the form of the Leveson enquiry, for being too tabloidish. Poking in people's dustbins, that sort of thing.

The Leveson enquiry however was almost trivial – where the media are most criminally dangerous is over issues of war and peace.

What's needed is a new Leveson, but with a very different and much more important charge: the aiding and abetting of warmongering.

My focus today will be on the modus operandi for this warmongering, the methods the mainstream media use to promote war, consciously or unconsciously, and to prevent people from realising what is really going on. We might call these methods weapons of mass deception.

THE IRAQ BAMBOOZLEMENT

It's worth bearing in mind that this expression, weapons of mass deception, was popularised in the aftermath of the Iraq conflict, when it became apparent that we had all been had.

Ostensibly, if you recall, the Iraq war was about weapons of mass destruction, WMD. Except, as it turned out, there were no WMD in Iraq. Not even a damp squib. It was all an enormous fabrication – aided and abetted by a supine media that swallowed government bunkum wholesale.

A media which snapped to attention once the 'intelligence community' spoke, once those ubiquitous anonymous 'sources' let the media in on the privileged secret of what was happening, or, as it turned out, was not happening.

A media which took as gospel the 'dodgy dossier' which Blair used to bamboozle us into attacking a country which posed no threat to Britain, which had never lifted a finger against us.

DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN: DOUMA

The full panoply of weapons of mass deception was in evidence during the recent crisis over an alleged chemical weapons attack in Douma.

Note the word 'alleged'. It has yet to be proven that there was any incident involving chemical weapons. Any incident at all.

This may seem like an enormous thing to say – that there was no chemical use at all, in the face of all that evidence, the videos, the intelligence reports, is this presumptuous person saying he knows better than the 20 odd members of NATO? – but always remember Iraq.

Iraq weapons inspectors Hans Blix and Scott Ritter said that the 'intelligence community' was talking total horse feathers about Iraqi WMD and were dismissed as cranks. But as it happens they were right. The emperors of intelligence had no clothes.

The crucial point here with Douma is that the media, oblivious of past experience in Iraq, jumped immediately and uncritically to the conclusion that the incident was what the governments of Britain, France and America claimed it was, namely 'another use of chemical weapons by Assad'.

Watching the BBC, ITV and Sky, or reading the *Times* or the *Guardian*, it was as though all the news people thought it was their patriotic duty to sing to the government's tune.

They closed down their critical faculties, put their responsibilities as apparently serious news reporters on pause, snapped to attention and parroted the government talking points.

I was interviewed at one point by Naga Munchetty on BBC Breakfast. She spoke as though the alleged incident was an established fact. I reminded her that the BBC was showing over and over again a video clip which was unverified, giving it a spurious authenticity.

This, as it turned out, was the very nub of the matter because we bombed Syria essentially on the basis of this single endlessly repeated clip. And how did she respond? Instead of addressing the point she snorted huffily and said that 'Assad had a track record of this sort of thing', so the clip was probably genuine. In other words she parroted the government line, she took it upon herself to act as though she were the government spokesperson.

Similarly with John Boulton of Sky News. In my interview with him I launched my own weapon – a sound bite. I said that over Douma there was 'not even a dodgy dossier. Not even a dodgy dossier'. Did Boulton acknowledge that it was indeed a bit odd that the government case hadn't been set out in black and white anywhere? Of course not. Instead, giving himself the last word, he intoned 'well, no doubt we will be given the file a bit later'. Well, actually, we weren't.

We weren't because the government case was so thin that they weren't going to risk putting anything down on paper that might later be held against them, like Blair's dodgy dossier. All the government said was that media reports, social media chatter and witness reports of use of chemical weapons were corroborated by intelligence reports that helicopters were in the vicinity at the time and only the government side had helicopters.

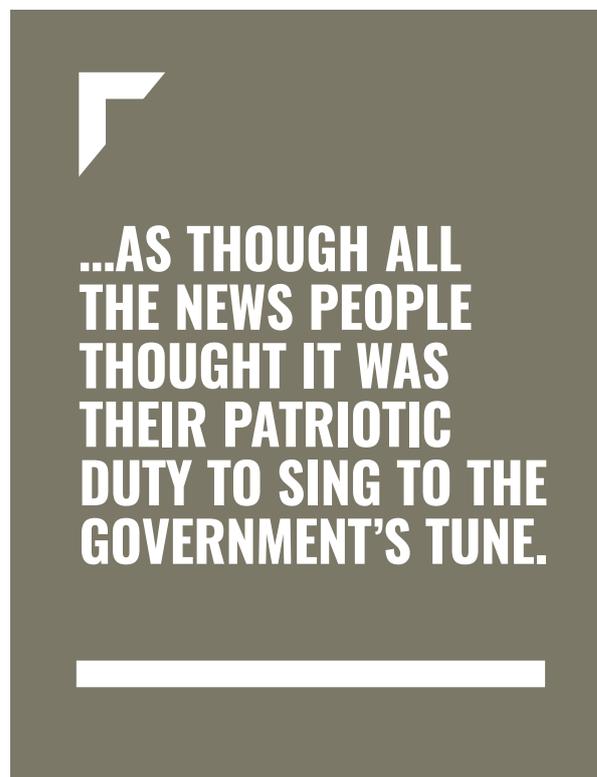
Our world leading, exemplary state broadcaster, the BBC, took this fatuous claim totally at face value. Defence correspondents dutifully trotted this out as definitive proof. Not one defence correspondent bothered to examine who these witnesses were – Jihadi medical and propaganda auxiliaries, as it happens, on the UK, Saudi and US payrolls (the White Helmets).

Not one defence correspondent scrupled to point out that the presence of helicopters proved nothing, that no one disputed that bombing with conventional bombs was happening, that it was the nature of the payload that mattered. No, these correspondents seemed to see it as their mission to act as the government's press agents. Which is what they actually are.

A WEDDING, AND OUR FUNERAL

A parenthesis. The media will say, with some reason, that they go after the government all the time on many issues. Indeed they do. In matters which require little courage, like accusing the government of neglecting the NHS. How brave! But once the totem of 'national security' is invoked the media unfailingly go into cringe mode and take everything the government says at face value.

Now there is a thesis waiting to be written on why this should be so. I suspect it has something to do with our illusions of imperial grandeur – did you see the royal wedding by the way? Wasn't Harry handsome in his military uniform? All that attention to her dress and not a single line written to query why the groom had



to strike a military figure? It wasn't mandatory for him to wear a uniform.

It seems fairly evident that our media are prone to sharing, indeed propagating, our illusions of grandeur and that they fall rapidly into line once the issue involves the military and the security state.

THE SECRET POLICEMAN'S SPEECH

Witness the reverence shown recently to Andrew Parker, head of MI5. He made a speech at an international conference which was carried live on national TV. Live! Even Boris Johnson doesn't get that amount of attention. In Parker's speech he went further than ministers have done in excoriating Russia.

Did any of the mainstream media voice even a squeak about the constitutional propriety of our head secret policeman telling us what to think? Of course not. Matters are so rotten among the elite of this country that the Deep State now comes out into the open.

Parker's words were treated with more respect than Moses coming down from Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments. Did any of the mainstream media question in the least way any of his superficial arguments, which were begging to be challenged? Of course not. We in this country know our place, when we have to tug our forelocks to the great security panjandrums.

JINGOISM

Going back to Douma. Once the balloon went up we all had to endure the jingoism of the media and the glorification of war. The devastating accuracy of our boys in blue operating out of that relic of empire, our base in Cyprus.

Not one defence correspondent pointed out that the targets hit the alleged weapons storage depots and research facilities, had been inspected by the weapons inspectors

from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons just a few months earlier and given the all clear.

Let that sink in: yes, we, alongside the US and France, launched an unprovoked attack on an already battered country that represented no threat to us, and we targeted sites that had already been inspected and found clean. Is that not like Iraq and the fabled WMD? It was déjà vu all over again, and the media fell for it all over again.

The filtering out of any alternative viewpoint went on in the aftermath of bombing as well, with the argy bargy around examination of the Douma site by weapons inspectors.

Who would have guessed that it was Russia, not Britain, France or the US which had asked the OPCW to mount a mission to Douma as soon as media claims started to surface? Certainly not anyone who gets their news from the BBC. The BBC were clearly not going to let such an inconvenient fact get in the way of the narrative that the Russians and Syrians were engineering delay in order to remove evidence. Nor was the BBC going to question why the air strikes had to take place just as the inspectors were arriving in Syria to start their mission.

Compare and contrast this filtering out of awkward facts and awkward people with alternative views where Syria is concerned with what happens when Israel appears to be the transgressor. Not a BBC bulletin was complete during the recent Gaza atrocities without the Israeli Ambassador being given every chance to attempt to rebut the charges against Israel.

Nothing wrong with that, except that Syria, Russia and Iran get nothing like the same even-handed treatment. Their positions, if reported at all, get mentioned with a sneer.

ETC., ETC.

I could go on. I could talk about selective focus – how the media ignore the devastation of cities that we bombed, Raqqa and Mosul, to portray Assad as, alone, ‘heedless of civilian casualties’.

I could talk about the smearing of alternative voices. I could talk about the hounding of participants in a harmless Christian delegation which had the temerity to visit Syria at the same time as Douma.

I could talk about how a Radio 4 Today program presenter, Justin Webb, upbraided a member of the House of Lords, Baroness Cox, who led the delegation, for sitting down to tea with a ‘mass murderer’, the Grand Mufti of Syria, held responsible for signing the death warrants of thousands of Assad opponents. Except that the Mufti didn’t. Anyone with the slightest knowledge of secular Syria would know that this factoid, which found its way into a deeply flawed Amnesty International report, was untrue, that the Mufti is in no way involved with the administration of military justice. He is no more likely

to be writing death warrants than I am to be writing editorials for the *Daily Telegraph*.

I could go on. I could talk about how disappointing it was to hear the media gushing about the Manchester Arena bombing anniversary this week as though it were a natural calamity.

You waited in vain for anybody to ask why it happened, whether it might not have had something to do with the fact that we were bombing in Syria and Iraq.

Fair enough, the government could say that we were right to bomb ISIS. Maybe we were. But then if you agree with that statement you would also have to say that Manchester Arena was a price worth paying. Was it? Nobody in the media, acting as part of the apparatus of state, was interested in asking.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, let me just stress that this stuff matters. It matters because if we do not call out the mainstream media now it is highly likely that the Douma scenario will be repeated, only next time it will be much worse.

If you were a Jihadi, having seen how easy it is to jerk the West’s leash, how the media will immediately relay your fake videos if you are careful to include winsome children and screen out the Jihadi fighters, would you not be preparing the next outrage?

And because of the media portrayal of Douma, Western governments have painted themselves into a corner. Next time they will have to bomb more heavily, much more heavily. Do you think that next time Russia, Iran and Syria will continue to act like punch bags? Thought not.

Our only hope of avoiding a catastrophic outcome next time is to grab back the narrative from the mainstream media, or at least introduce into the discourse just enough doubt to give the politicians pause before they plunge us into the inferno. For me, that’s what today is mainly about. 🕯

Our church is a public and usable asset with portable seating and excellent conference, meeting and function facilities. We welcome its use by those who support our motto ‘Seek the Truth and Serve Humanity’. Interested individuals or groups can contact the church office – we would be delighted to speak to you. A donation is payable.

WE ACKNOWLEDGE

Traditional owners of the Kulin Nation, past Warriors, Elders past and present



REFLECTION:

What nuclear weapons mean to us

**We are year eleven students from Santa Maria College.
We have been told that our whole life is ahead of us.
We have been told that so many possibilities are open to us.
We have been told we can do our part in changing the world for the better.**

But right now things don't always feel so positive or possible. So many parts of our world are at war. The futures of so many people are threatened. So many lives are in danger. The Earth itself is wounded. So we wonder, how has it come to this?

We have watched as countries arm themselves with weapons of mass destruction. We have seen how certain leaders posture on the world stage, emboldened somehow by their arsenal of nuclear weapons. And we notice that these nuclear weapons are like modern day fortresses.

We know that when we build these high fortress walls, we don't just build false protection for ourselves, we stop ourselves from seeing over these walls.

We prevent ourselves from seeing other ways of living, of finding more lasting ways of being safe. The threat of mutual destruction is never going to end well. The whole idea of nuclear deterrence seems to us a particular kind of madness.

And though it is not our country personally that is building nuclear weapons, we know that Australia is complicit. We know that we are aiding those that are through our silence and perhaps through our uranium ... and certainly through our refusal as a country to participate in international processes for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

These are the things we know, the things we observe, and we are forced to consider what it takes to make change, because we don't want another Hiroshima, another Nagasaki, another Maralinga or Emu Plains. What then must we in the human community do to ensure these catastrophes are never repeated?

Pope Francis in his Letter to the World titled 'Laudato Si' suggests that we commit to the 'simple daily gestures that break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness'.

We are not entirely sure or entirely clear about how the members of ICAN have in just 10 short years brought to reality a binding International Treaty on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. But we are sure that this treaty constitutes a profound 'break with the logic of violence'.

We are sure that this treaty embodies a real hope for another way of doing business, of settling disputes, of approaching conflict and of negotiating respectful, dignified peace. We are sure that a powerful voice of reason and justice has entered the international arena. We are privileged to be here. We express our thanks to the members of ICAN for creating a path we are inspired to follow.

Thank you. 🙏

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Despite the 403,000 'new jobs' that Turnbull and his employment minister, Michaelia Cash, claim to have created over 2017, over that same period the unemployment rate fell by only 0.1% from 5.6% to 5.5%. On the face of it, that seems an odd phenomenon.

The 403,000 jobs Turnbull claims to have created during the course of 2017 are approximately 50% of the number of unemployed. On that basis, any ordinary person would be forgiven for expecting that such a huge number of 'new jobs' would put a very significant dent in the unemployment numbers.

No doubt that same ordinary person would be equally surprised to find that it hadn't. It stands to reason that if all the jobs Turnbull claims to have created had gone to an unemployed Australian, then the unemployment rate, and the public costs of Newstart, and of the homelessness that results from unemployment, would have been at least halved.

SO WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING HERE?

As indicated in an article by Tim Colebatch in *Inside Story* on 20 April 2018, the reason the jobs growth touted by Turnbull had no impact on the jobless figures for the corresponding period is because nearly 73% of the so-called 'new jobs' Turnbull claims to have created went to new migrants.

As Colebatch's linked article indicates, hidden within a recently released joint report of the Treasury and Department of Home Affairs Offices entitled 'Shaping the Nation (2018)', which the title itself implies the deliberate adoption of a strategic policy of social engineering akin to that suggested by the Club of Rome and by neo-liberal globalists, that would alarm many conspiracy theorists and nationalists, and which report seems to have been conveniently 'missed' by the great Australian professional media, is this:

Recent migrants accounted for two-thirds (64.5%) of the approximately 850,000 net jobs created in the past five years. For full-time employment, the impact is even more pronounced, with recent migrants accounting for 72.4 per cent of new jobs created.

Hence, not much more than one-quarter of all the jobs Turnbull claims to have created have gone to Australian citizens, in particular, to the unemployed.

The remaining nearly three-quarters of jobs created have gone to migrants on a working visa of some sort.

The fact that the jobs created have largely been taken by migrants partly explains why the official unemployment rate dropped by only 0.1% during the same period that Turnbull and Cash claim the increased job numbers occurred.

This discrepancy occurs because the migrants taking the jobs would not have been receiving Newstart before they took up their new job in Australia and, hence, would not have been included in the unemployment figures before or after they started working.

Put simply, they would not have been registered as unemployed before they got their new Australian job because they would not have been in Australia when the jobless figures were tallied. Consequently, when they arrive in Australia and start their new job, their employment is not deducted against the jobless figure.

Amongst other things, these facts indicate that Turnbull and his LNP government cannot legitimately use jobs growth numbers to justify their continuing persecution of the unemployed. Indeed, the facts probably support the opposite. That is, that the LNP's ongoing persecution of the unemployed is unreasonable because it is government policy, in permitting so many work visa migrants into Australia, that has caused, and is still causing, the plight of the unemployed in Australia.

In other words, the government is to blame for unemployment, NOT the individual unemployed person who is, in reality, a victim of the LNP's anti-Australian, pro-immigrant '(re)shaping the nation' policy.

But there is another factor relevant to why the official long-term unemployment rate was barely impacted upon by the 'new jobs' Turnbull and Cash claim to have created and which factor is not so evident from the Shaping the Nation report and that Tim Colebatch does not mention.

Reviewing the Australian Bureau of Statistics ('ABS') Labour statistics pages, upon which Turnbull and Cash rely to make their jobs growth claims, then we learn that the ABS does not measure 'full-time jobs' at all but measures only 'working hours'.

The ABS defines a 'job', for the purpose of job creation statistics, to include any increased hour of work for those already employed. Hence, when a worker undertakes additional hours in the form of overtime, for instance, or when a casual or part-time employee works a few extra hours, then each of the additional hours worked is included as a new and separately created 'job' in the ABS statistics.

Hence, six additional hours of work by the same person undertaking the tasks they usually do in their usual job is counted as six brand new jobs. This is the case even if the same person is working for the same employer, in the same workplace and is undertaking the same tasks they do in their ordinary or usual work hours. The only difference is that the same person is working a few additional hours more than they did at the time the ABS

measured working hours in the previous year.

The ABS relies upon international standards to measure 'hours of work' as separate jobs in the way it does. 'Resolution I' of the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians concerns the measurement of working time. It states the following:

Working time can be measured for short measurement units, such as minutes or hours, or for long units such as half-days, days, weeks or months. The measurement unit of "hours" is used for ease of reference.

The ABS has chosen the 'ease of reference approach' by using an hour as the unit of measurement for the creation of a 'job'. To that effect, the ABS reports that those interviewed in their job creation survey for 2017 responded that they were working on average 0.6% more hours than those interviewed for the corresponding survey at the same time in 2016.

The ABS then extrapolates the percentage of additional hours worked by those in its limited survey sample to the Australian workforce as a whole and it then calculates the total 'new jobs' created from the figure arrived at after the process of extrapolation to the entire workforce.

Hence, the ABS assumes that, like those employees in their limited survey, every worker in Australia has also worked 0.6% more hours than they did in the previous year and, in this instance, it arrives at the conclusion that 403,000 additional working hours, and, hence, 403,000 'new jobs', have been created across the entire economy during that period.

In sum, what Turnbull's 403,000 'new jobs' really means is that 403,000 more hours have been worked than the last time a measurement was taken by the ABS. However, because each additional single hour worked is regarded as a 'new job', Turnbull and Cash are able to claim that the 403,000 additional hours worked is also 403,000 'new jobs'.

What has been created then by Turnbull is actually 403,000 additional hours of work, not 403,000 new full-time jobs as Turnbull would like us all to believe. In fact, if the additional 403,000 working hours is divided by the average weekly full-time hours of 37.5 hours, then it calculates that for the period for which he and Cash boast of creating 403,000 'new jobs', they have actually only created the equivalent of approximately 10,747 full-time jobs.

Applying the percentages disclosed in Shaping the Nation, then we can see that, of those 10,747 equivalent full-time jobs, about 73%, or 8,060 equivalent full-time jobs, were worked by migrants on visa and the bulk of the rest of the equivalent full-time jobs by existing employees spread across the nation. All the additional 0.6% hours worked by existing employees across the nation provide the other working hours, which, when tallied together and then divided by 37.5 hours, make up the remaining equivalent full-time jobs not worked by migrants on a visa.

Significantly, neither of these groups – migrants or existing employees – were included in the previous jobless figures because they were either employed or not in Australia at all when the jobless figures were measured in 2016 or 2017. Because they were not previously included in the jobless figures, the additional working hours undertaken by migrants or by existing employees had no effective impact on the unemployment rate during the corresponding period and, consequently, that rate fell by only 0.1%.

This also means that few unemployed people benefited from migrants getting an Australian job, or from existing workers undertaking additional work, during the period that the measurements were taken.

These figures also indicate that the cost of unemployment is not ameliorated when migrants on visa take an Australian job. If the 403,000 'jobs' Turnbull claims to have been created had gone to an unemployed Australian, then approximately half the annual amount spent on Newstart, or about \$5 billion per annum, would have been saved to be freed up for spending in other areas or for debt reduction.

Seems that Turnbull is committed to the use of rubbery figures and statistics to create a false picture of reality. By doing so he can conveniently use these rubbery statistics for the generation of his fake news on job creation, to justify his ongoing victimisation of the unemployed, for his ongoing deception of the Australian people about his government's economic credentials and as a dubious reason for his implementation of discredited trickle-down neo-liberal economic policies and for his advocacy for the maintenance of a failing capitalist market system – a system that can provide neither sufficient jobs nor adequate housing for the citizens of the nation in which it operates. 🙏

A UNITARIAN DOXOLOGY

Our philosophy consists of those actions, purposes and experiences that are humanly significant.

Nothing human is alien to a unitarian. It includes labour, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship – all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living.

We seek the fulfilment of life in the here and now – this is the explanation of our social passion.

We do not deny the possibility of realities as yet undiscovered, but rather we insist that the way to determine the existence and value of any and all realities is by means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relevance to human needs.

Our religious emotions are therefore expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and in a cooperative effort to promote social wellbeing.

from our readers



DEAR EDITOR

Please find enclosed a cheque for \$50 for membership and donation. Love *The Beacon* – so does my sister in Adelaide.

Kind regards

H Land, Vic

DEAR EDITOR

Thanks for a great publication! Subscription for another year enclosed.

P Pagotto, Vic

DEAR EDITOR

Great work, all you editors!

J Bagnall, NZ

DEAR EVERYONE

This will probably be my last donation.

I have been donating since 1970 and my husband did for at least 20 years before that. I continued after his death.

I have always had travelling problems. Am not permitted to leave home unaccompanied – my vision is very poor. Am in my late nineties.

Yours sincerely

N Griffiths, Vic (I'm a 5th generation Gippslander)

TO BEACON EDITORIAL BOARD

The church does Australia a great service in its work supporting the refugees victimised by the Federal Government's harsh refugee policies. Other organisations and individuals have also made worthwhile contributions. The trouble is that the government basically ignores criticism (even though it is quite obvious that it is in the wrong) and continues on its course.

Basically, I am only a bystander to the events that have transpired but I think that I know a way to force the government to act – especially as more and more people are becoming disturbed by what is happening.

The following procedure is one I would recommend:

1. People from various fields assisting refugees could get together and prepare a list of questions for the government to answer. The questions should also be forwarded to the **ALP** and **The Greens** to answer. The Greens would be certain to respond, putting pressure on the others to respond.
2. The initiative should be publicised widely. Worthwhile newspapers such as *The Age* would publish the questions.
3. The move could be presented internationally as a move testing how democratic the Australian Government really is.
4. If the questionnaire contains many signatures (especially people of high repute) this should prevent this government from following its favourite response: ignore the criticism and personally attack the critics.
5. Besides the basic publicity in the media mentioned earlier, widespread distribution to the public generally should help greatly.

I would say that initially there should be a low-key approach to preparing the questionnaire but after it has been formulated the publicity could then start.

My overall opinion of this federal government is that it wants to take Australia steadily along the road to totalitarianism. It seems to want to make decrees and then expect the people to uncritically accept them.

If the government is defeated in regard to refugees, a precedent could be created: people could realise that the same approach should be used in other policy areas.

Please find a cheque for \$20 enclosed as a subscription to *The Beacon*.

Yours faithfully

R Bryce, Vic

PS: In the approach just advocated I would say that the government has such a bad record that preparing questions would present no problem: getting a range of people together could be.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Thanks for your brilliant newsletter! Here is a gift purchase for my friend who has had a stroke and soon returns home to his 'new' life.

He will really enjoy *The Beacon* subscription as I've passed on copies of mine to him to read.

Thanks for the mention of Behrouz Boochani in your recent newsletter. I have been a visitor to Broadmeadows Detention Centre for 3.5 years and am fully aware of the horrors of this system of debilitating mandatory detention. Could you please mention that Behrouz has released a book *No friend but the mountains: writing from Manus Prison* and encourage people to purchase it/get their library to purchase it?

Thanks again for all you do. And could you please send 3 back issues as a trial read to Patrick O'Donohue.

Regards

J Coupe Vic

HI EVERYONE (ESPECIALLY MARION)

Vikki just passed on your latest edition of *The Beacon*. What a breath of fresh air! Keep up the good work. I look forward to the next edition.

Best wishes

Ivan, UK

TO THE BEACON

Thank you for your wonderful magazine. It tells how things could be made better by awareness from all.

J Nagle, NSW

DEAR SIR/MADAM

I write to advise that I do not wish to renew my subscription to *The Beacon*. The reason is that, in its editorial material, it has gradually become nothing more than a political journal.

Yours faithfully

R Brummitt, SA

I leave my copies of *The Beacon* on the table at a society to which I belong. It has attracted a pensioner member to read *The Beacon* regularly. Thank you for your hard work.

J Haslem, Tasmania

DEAR BEACON

Thank you so much for every informative and educational issue, which I look forward to each month.

Kindest regards

M Ingram, Vic

DEAR DONNA

Cheque enclosed (with my apologies for lateness) is to cover my \$10 subscription and a bit extra towards your good works.

I am greatly indebted to my dear friends the Len Dalrymples who introduced me to the *Beacon*. I so look forward to receiving my copy each month and I thank everyone involved in giving us such a good publication.

I would also like to express my outrage at the treatment of Behrouz Boochani and his fellow refugees on Manus and those on Nauru. It is vicious and illegal, not to mention its inhumanity.

What a sad and unforgivable loss – not only to Australia but to all other countries as well.

WE NEED GOOD PEOPLE!

B Stevens, Vic

FROM THE EDITORS

In 2012 our church produced a booklet called *Shining a Light, Beacon 1939–2009*. The foreword was written by the then President of the Australian New Zealand Unitarian Universalist Association (ANZUUA) and Minister of West Australian Unitarian Fellowship, Reverend Peter Ferguson. Beacon Board felt it might be timely to reprint this foreword at a time when democracy and social justice are under threat.

'This remarkable little book tells of the life and times of the *Beacon*. It is a story about the courage and unswerving commitment to justice and peace that has been central to Melbourne Unitarians for many years. Unlike the hundreds of churches in Australia that are designated as 'war memorial churches', this church is dedicated to peace.

Without fear or favour, the *Beacon* has been a point of light on the great issues of our times, both here and overseas. Over the years, its editors and contributors have held aloft this vision of peace. At the same time, they have exposed the double standards, the subtle deceptions and sometimes the sheer absurdities of the ruling powers.

An example of this foolishness is the fact that the world's most populous country, the People's Republic of China had to wait until 1971 to gain a seat in the United Nations. Up until then, China's representative had been the offshore island of Taiwan. It was an act of common sense and courage that as long ago as 1955, the *Beacon* had called for China, to be admitted to membership of the world body.

During the dark days of the Cold War, the *Beacon* often sought to be a corrective against rampant propaganda directed at the Soviet Union and China. Its editors were stigmatised as unpatriotic and the editors had to live with the sad truth that it is never popular to be a dissenter and to oppose the policies and opinions of the powerful.

At home, the *Beacon* has been in the forefront of the struggles by the Aboriginal people for land rights, in their support of the trade unions in their battle for fair wages and work conditions and equal rights for women.

One of the contemporary issues is the worldwide trend towards globalisation and the monopoly capitalism of the mega rich and powerful who, in many instances, control the media, the money and the military.

The Beacon is perhaps the most unusual church magazine of its kind anywhere in the world. It has little to say about 'pie in the sky when you die'. Instead it focuses on the here and now, the real world.

This book is carefully written and thought provoking. It is a timely call for us all to become more aware of the insidious forces at work in the world whose origins lie in a pathological need for wealth and power at the expense of others.'

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In this issue:

Editorial: Shame on the Turnbull government!

Feature: Getting to Know Cuba (Part I)

Weapons of Mass Deception – The Media on Trial

Turnbull's Fake Jobs

Letters to the Editor

Beacon Editorial Board

Peter Abrehart

Marion Harper

Donna Sensi

Julie Stafford

The Editorial opinions expressed are those of the Editorial Board.

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Titles and affiliations are used for individual identification purposes only.

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