



chain reaction

Issue #148
October 2024
RRP \$15

The National Magazine of Friends of the Earth Australia

www.foe.org.au

Anti-Militarism

Rocket Testing on Kokatha Country

Close Pine Gap: Protesting Genocide
In Central Australia

AUKUS dumping on democratic rights

Palestine, Aboriginal Resistance and
The Necessity of Trade Union Solidarity

Roxby Downs: The Story So Far

Our Military Exports to Israel



Sign up as an
'Active Friend' of FoE!

active friends program

The Active Friends program is one of the best ways to support the work of Friends of the Earth. It involves a regular monthly donation, which will support:

- climate action
- campaigns against coal and coal seam gas mining
- promoting sustainable renewable energy
- our work safeguarding water for rivers, wetlands and forests
- our campaign for a nuclear-free future
- our vital social justice work ... and much more!

We are a
people-powered
organisation!

To remain a powerful voice for social and environmental justice, we need a stable financial base. The support we receive from Active Friends donations means we are self-sustaining, independent, and never accept money from political parties.

How you can join

1. For credit card payments, fill out this form and return it to Friends of the Earth, PO Box 222, Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065
2. Join online at www.foe.org.au/donate
3. Phone: (03) 9419 8700
4. Email: membership@foe.org.au

Active Friends Monthly Donation

I'd like to make a monthly donation via credit card of ☐ \$20 ☐ \$35 ☐ \$50 ☐ Other \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Credit Card number: ____ / ____ / ____ / ____

Expiry: ____ / ____ CCV: ____

Signature: _____

Would you like your donation to go to a specific local FoE group or campaign?

If so, please specify _____

Friends Forever- Leave a Bequest

Making a bequest to Friends of the Earth in your will is a powerful way to ensure that the struggle for social and environmental justice continues into the future. Bequests make a great difference to our campaigns as they allow us to increase our effectiveness, spend less time on labour-intensive fund-raising, and allows for long-term campaign planning.

If you are considering leaving a bequest to Friends of the Earth, then please contact our Membership and Fundraising Coordinator in our campaigns office in Melbourne who can answer any questions that you may have (ph (03) 9419 8700), or visit www.foe.org.au/bequest for more information.

Subscribe to Chain Reaction

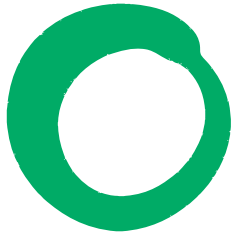
National Magazine of Friends
of the Earth Australia

**Three issues (one year) A\$33,
saving you \$12 (\$15/issue)**

You can subscribe online at
www.foe.org.au/chain_reaction

Or post a cheque or money order
(made out to Chain Reaction)
to Chain Reaction, PO Box 222,
Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065

To pay by credit card,
please post your card details,
or email chainreaction@foe.org.au
or phone (03) 9419 8700.



Friends of the Earth Australia

EDITOR'S NOTE

The collective movement against the military-industrial complex in Naarm has gained incredible momentum over the last year. The atrocities broadcast live on our screens as Israel commits a horrific genocide in Gaza have ignited a resistance unlike anything seen in this city for decades.

This magazine collates the work of people involved in movements for justice, peace, and an end to military oppression. It is a small contribution to the growing anti-militarist discourse, showcasing both the voices of seasoned peace activists, and those newly enlivened by the injustices of the last year. This collection is a tribute to resistance fighters all over the world who are relentlessly pushing back against the war machine, and to all those who will not stay silent.

CONTENTS

Join Friends of the Earth	inside front cover
Friends of the Earth Australia Contacts	inside back cover
FoE News	4
Editors Note	3

ANTI-MILITARISM

Tribute to Uncle Kev - <i>Bilbo Taylor</i>	8
Rocket Testing on Kokatha Country - <i>Aunty Sue Coleman-Haseldine and West Mallee Protection Group</i>	9
Close Pine Gap: Protesting Genocide In Central Australia - <i>Lou Omer & Jorgen Doyle</i>	12
Palestine, Aboriginal Resistance and The Necessity of Trade Union Solidarity - <i>Declan Furber-Gillick</i>	18
Peace Walk Against AUKUS - <i>Uncle Winniata</i>	20
AUKUS dumping on democratic rights - <i>Jim Green and Sanne de Swart</i>	24
'No! No! No!' - <i>Ian Teeple</i>	25
Roxby Downs: The Story So Far... - <i>The Roxby Vigil</i>	26
Like Bullets for Chocolate - <i>Rod Ceballos</i>	27
Our Military Exports to Israel - <i>Sofia Sabbagh</i>	28
The Left Eats Itself - <i>Nathalie Farah</i>	30
Why is militarism so shit? - <i>Zelda Grimshaw</i>	31
Rising Anti-Militarism in Australia and the Asia-Pacific: Solidarity with Palestine - <i>Jiselle Hanna</i>	34
March With Pride - <i>Laniyuk</i>	36
Weapons and Schools - <i>Elise West</i>	38
WALLMAPU – Mapuche Resistance - <i>Marisol Salinas</i>	40
When will Australian environmental activists understand that peace is a precursor for environmental justice? - <i>Phil Evans</i>	42
How to reduce militarism and prevent war - <i>Jenny Grounds</i>	44

EDITION #148 – OCTOBER 2024

Publisher - Friends of the Earth, Australia
Chain Reaction ABN 81600610421
FoE Australia ABN 18110769501

www.foe.org.au

www.foe.org.au/chain-reaction

Chain Reaction contact details
PO Box 222, Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065.
email: chainreaction@foe.org.au
phone: (03) 9419 8700

Chain Reaction Collective
Emily Wood Trounce, Nat Farah, Tess Sellar,
Sanne de Swart, Moran Wiesel

Layout & Design
Tessa Sellar

Printing
Black Rainbow Printing
Printed on recycled paper

Subscriptions
Three issues (One year) A\$33, saving you \$12 (\$15/issue) See subscription ad in this issue of Chain Reaction (or see website and contact details above).
Chain Reaction is published three times a year

ISSN (Print): 0312-1372

ISSN (Digital): 2208-584X

Copyright:

Written material in Chain Reaction is free of copyright unless otherwise indicated or where material has been reprinted from another source. Please acknowledge Chain Reaction when reprinting.

The opinions expressed in Chain Reaction are not necessarily those of the publishers or any Friends of the Earth group.

Front cover

Iona Julian-Walters, IG: @eastern_common_froglet
website: <https://ionajulian-walters.squarespace.com/>

FoE AUSTRALIA NEWS



Too Dirty!

Along the fuel chain uranium mining, enrichment and NPP normal operation create vast amounts of radioactive and toxic waste.



Too Dangerous!

Nuclear disasters like Chernobyl and Fukushima endanger whole countries and regions. Nuclear Power also increases the risk of nuclear weapons proliferation.



Too Expensive!

Hundreds of billions would have to be spent for the construction of new plants and for managing nuclear waste.



Too Slow!

Nuclear power is a slow response to a pressing problem. It takes decades for new power plants to be built, whereas renewables are ready to be used and reduce CO2 emissions immediately.

FOE MELBOURNE TREATY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF TREATY PROCESS (SUMMARY)

22 August 2024

Friends of the Earth Melbourne is proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the lands where we do our work. We acknowledge that all these lands are the Cultural Landscapes of the unceded sovereign lands of Traditional Custodians. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and remember that sovereignty was never ceded.

We recognise the historic opportunity presented by the Treaty process, which will be informed by the testimonies delivered through the Yoorrook Commission. With profound respect for the sovereignty, culture, and rights of First Peoples; we will walk with the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria on the journey to Treaty.

FoE Melbourne will continue to advocate for First Peoples organisations to be seen as decision makers over issues that impact them, not just stakeholders.

To help build support for the shared journey to Treaty, we will:

- Continue to seek and listen to First Nations guidance in how we plan and operate our campaigns
- Work to support and amplify First Nations voices in our campaigns and among our community of members and supporters
- Seek to include First Nations perspectives in all our campaign work
- Actively and publicly support the Treaty process

By making this pledge, we affirm our commitment to the self-determination of First Peoples in Victoria as they assert their rights, tell their truths, and chart a path towards, and healing through, Treaty-making.

Together, we will create a future where First Peoples' voices are heard, rights are respected, and justice is realised for generations to come.

Read the whole article: https://www.melbournefoe.org.au/foe_treaty_statement

To find out more about the Treaty process and how to support it, [check this Treaty Explainer](#).

DUTTON'S NUCLEAR NIGHTMARE A BLATANT ATTEMPT TO KEEP BURNING COAL AND GAS

19 June 2024

Friends of the Earth Australia (FoEA) has slammed opposition leader Peter Dutton's release of the Coalition nuclear policy, describing it as a nuclear nightmare and a cynical ploy to keep burning coal and gas.

The Nuclear debate is little more than a political tool in the Coalition's strategy to delay renewables and maintain the profits of fossil fuel companies and to divide the community.

The nuclear energy industry has long been rejected in Australia because it presents significant risks to frontline workers, communities and the environment.

"The Coalition is dumping its radioactive energy failures on to communities who deserve a safe and renewable future" said Dr. Jim Green, FoE's national nuclear campaigner and lead author of a new report '[Power games: Why nuclear is not right for Australia](#)'.

The nuclear chain needed to make nuclear power happen disproportionately affects First Nations Peoples on this continent and beyond.

Friends of the Earth is firmly committed to supporting communities that would be impacted by Dutton's nuclear nightmare.

For more information visit the [Don't Nuke The Climate website](#)

To read the whole article https://www.foe.org.au/dutton_s_nuclear_nightmare



HESTA MEMBER SUBMITS LEGAL REQUEST FOR INFORMATION AFTER FUND'S INEFFECTIVE EFFORTS TO PUSH FOR CHANGE AT WOODSIDE

30 July 2024

Long-term HESTA member, multidisciplinary artist and musician Tash Parker has submitted a legal request for information to her fund, seeking answers about HESTA's ineffective efforts to drive meaningful change at Woodside.

Tash is frustrated with her fund's failure to align its actions with its climate commitments and raise pressure on climate wreckers like Woodside:

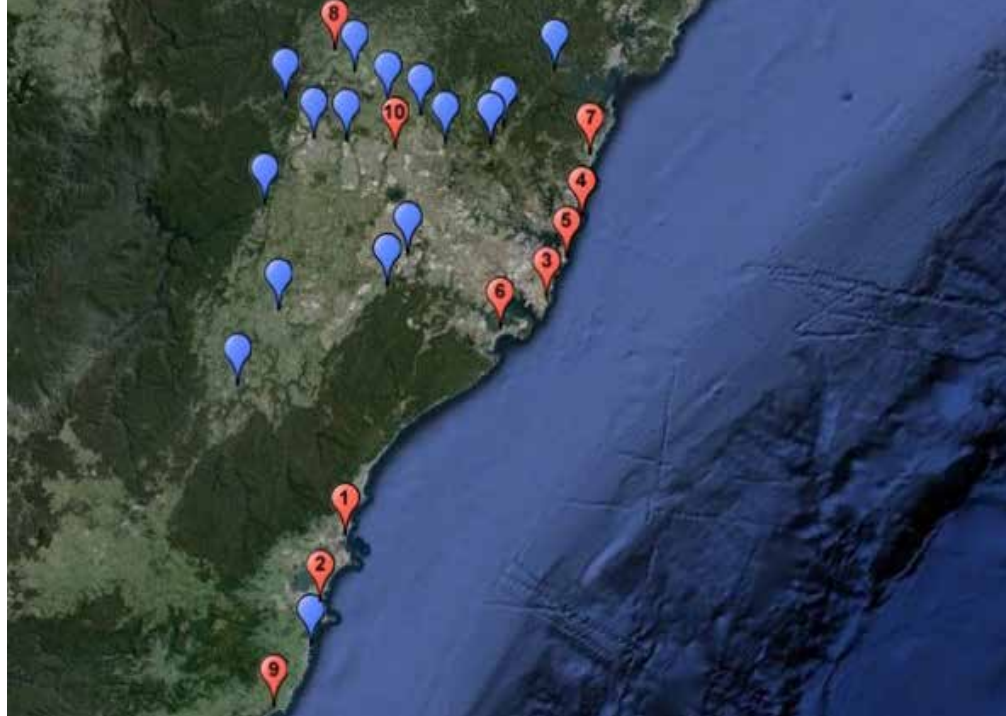
"I used to feel paralysed and overwhelmed by how big the problem is and how little impact I could make as an individual. Now I know there are tangible things I can take action on. Doing nothing is no longer an option for me.

It is HESTA's responsibility to properly account for the risks associated with investing in industries that are known to be contributing to the acceleration of climate change, such as oil and gas. By investing in these sectors, HESTA is negatively impacting the communities it is claiming to be supporting.

HESTA must act immediately to ensure that companies like Woodside stop building new gas projects that are threatening a habitable planet for us all or get my retirement savings out of them."

Read the full article here

<https://www.marketforces.org.au/hesta-member-submits-legal-request-for-information/>



BREAKING: COMMBANK FORMALLY WALKS AWAY FROM CLIMATE WRECKING CLIENTS

14 August 2024

Australia's largest bank, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, has made the decision to no longer provide finance to oil and gas producing companies that don't have a Paris-aligned transition plan. This is a significant win for our climate and starkly contrasted by ANZ, NAB and Westpac which, according to Refinitiv, are days away from finalising a US \$500 million loan to Santos.

CommBank in 2023 dropped \$700 million in lending exposure to oil and gas extraction clients in the past year, nearly halving upstream oil and gas lending in the past two years.

Prior to this Bottom of F, in the five years following the Paris Agreement (2016-2020), CommBank [loaned](#) the most to fossil fuels of the big four Australian banks with \$3.1 billion of that funding going directly to new and expanded coal, oil and gas projects.

CommBank has gone from being the worst climate offender to being the first of Australia's major banks to announce its break up with climate wrecking clients.

This is something we're yet to see from ANZ, NAB, and Westpac, which continue to not only drag their feet but do exactly the opposite to CommBank.

Read the full article. <https://www.marketforces.org.au/commbank-2024-climate-report/>

SYDNEY WATER BIOSOLIDS, EFFLUENT AND PFAS CHEMICALS

27 June 2024

There is recent concern about a lack of testing for PFAS chemicals in drinking water throughout Australia and the resulting health implications. PFAS continue to contaminate waste water from treatment plants including hundreds of thousands of tonnes of biosolids produced across Australia.

Since 2018, Sydney Water (have undertaken) almost no testing for drinking water and none for recycled water.

Biosolids around Australia are frequently contaminated with PFAS. PFAS is bioaccumulative.

Under current [biosolid](#) scenarios ~500,000 tonnes of biosolids are being applied to agricultural land in Australia each year; mainly large farms grow canola, wheat, oats, barley and pastures.

There are no treatments available to remediate/remove PFASs from biosolids, so to continue to legally contaminate the land with PFAS will have long-term /permanent contamination /damage to the environment through pollution of soil, groundwater and ambient air. PFAS is also noted in ocean spray.

For more information contact Anthony Amis anthony.amis@foe.org.au

Read the full article https://www.foe.org.au/sydney_water_and_pfas_chemicals

FoE ASIA PACIFIC

FOE KOREA CAMPAIGN AGAINST DUMPING FUKUSHIMA NUCLEAR WASTEWATER INTO THE OCEAN

Aug 22, 2024

Despite opposition from the international community, the Japanese government and Tokyo Electric Power Company are pushing ahead with the dumping of Fukushima's nuclear wastewater into the Pacific Ocean.

The Korea Federation for Environmental Movements' (KFEM) Ocean Committee has been continuing its activities to prevent the ocean dumping of Fukushima's nuclear wastewater through continuous domestic and international campaigns.

KFEM's Ocean Committee held a sea campaign using three rubber boats

on August 18 2024 in the waters of Eulsukdo Island in Busan, the closest island to Japan.

10 members of KFEM's Ocean Committee held a sea campaign in the sea off Busan, holding picket signs in Korean and English that read "Protect the sea," "Stop Fukushima Ocean Dumping," and "Pacific Is not Fukushima Dumping Site," as well as radioactive marks and radioactive drums.

Read the full article <https://foeasiapacific.org/2024/08/22/foe-korea-campaign-against-dumping-fukushima-nuclear-wastewater-into-the-ocean/>

MORE EVIDENCE EXXON CAN'T BE TRUSTED

24 September 2024

A third recent leak in Bass Strait (21,000 litres of diesel) occurred from a gas platform owned by ExxonMobil and Woodside (Esso).

Management Authority, NOPSEMA, stated that the company failed to rectify known defects which resulted in the spill.

Meanwhile, the Federal Environment Minister is assessing an application by the same company to dump thousands of tonnes of contaminated but recyclable steel into Bass Strait by towing them to the Corner Inlet Ramsar site.

<https://www.foe.org.au/more-evidence-exxon-can-t-be-trusted>





FoE INTERNATIONAL

BONN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

04 Jun, 2024

Friends of the Earth International, hosted a delegation of experts and activists at the 60th session of the Subsidiary Bodies pre-session meetings (Bonn Climate Change Conference) in Bonn, Germany.

The group highlighted the urgent need to make progress on delivery by rich countries of new public climate finance for developing countries. They also warned of the dangers of unproven

technofixes and dodgy carbon market schemes, as negotiations under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement restart after stalling at COP28 last year, and the Oceans Dialogue continues.

As Bonn opens its doors to the 60th sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies of the UNFCCC, Brazil was experiencing extreme magnitude floods which devastated communities, cities, and crops. The inaction of global

governments to address the climate crisis with urgent and adequate action is leading to hundreds of thousands of people losing their lives and livelihoods. This is what loss and damage looks like.

Read the full article <https://www.foei.org/friends-of-the-earth-international-at-bonn>

FoE UK

WILL THE NEW LABOUR GOVERNMENT DELIVER FOR CLIMATE AND NATURE?

5 July 2024

The UK has a new government after 14 years of Conservative power. This is an opportunity to set the course for a more climate and nature-friendly future.

The Conservatives have left a dire environmental legacy. FoE UK even [took the previous government to court twice](#) over its dangerous climate plans (and won both times).

The new Labour Government made some important commitments in its manifesto:

- Meeting the UK's internationally agreed target to reduce carbon emissions by over two-thirds by 2030.

- Giving local authorities more powers to deliver a fairer green transition through better public transport and local nature protection.
- Stop granting new oil and gas licences.
- Seriously amp up renewables by 2030, creating jobs and cutting bills.

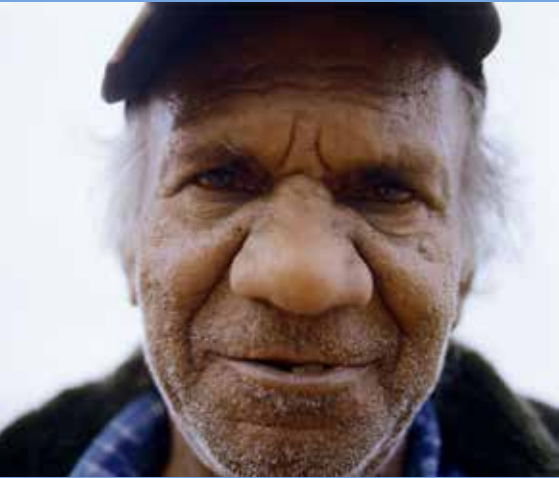
The UK needs to hold Labour accountable to those commitments.

- Withdraw support for the controversial coal mine in Cumbria
- Lift the de facto ban on onshore wind power
- Reverse new licences for North Sea oil

- Put an end to raw sewage poured into our rivers and seas
- Long-term goals for a climate and nature-friendly future
- Produce an ambitious new climate plan
- Invest in insulation to slash bills and harmful emissions
- Introduce the right to a healthy environment
- End environmental destruction and injustices caused by major companies

Read the full article here <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/system-change/will-new-labour-government-deliver-climate-and-nature>

UNCLE KEVIN BUZZACOTT



Uncle Kev lived life to the fullest, always ready with precise timing, lightning accuracy and a cheeky smile to take on governments, companies, queens and kings.

They never got his measure and he was always ten steps ahead of us all.

He always built the fire in us all, the country and the people. He was human also, filled with insecurities as we all are, but that's what made him even more amazing. He led with courage, humility, wisdom and love, and the world is a little brighter for having him shine amongst us all.

Uncle Kev was a friend and mentor to many, an Elder of the highest degree, a warrior, a partner, father, grandfather, brother, son and a man.

His life made a real difference and we are richer and better because of him.

He is loved by thousands all over the world and was feared by those who sought power over country and people.

He will be deeply missed and remembered fondly and often.

The old Lake has called him home – Rest in Power Uncle Kev

Words by Bilbo Taylor, Australian Nuclear Free Alliance.



Photo credit: Jesse Boylan

Rocket Testing on Kokatha Country

Aunty Sue Coleman-Haseldine and West Mallee Protection Group.

'The winds brought the poison to us and many others.'

When Suzanne Coleman-Haseldine, or Aunty Sue, as this Senior Kokatha elder is well known, was 2 years old, she was subjected to the fallout from the British Atomic testing. Two major nuclear weapons tests and hundreds of so-called 'minor trials' were undertaken at Maralinga just over 300km from Koonibba mission where she was born. Many more were conducted a little further to the north at Emu Fields. These tests were carried out with support from the Australian Government from 1952 to 1963.

In May 2024, Aunty Sue again came under the firing line for more weapons testing when company Southern Launch tested a 11.5m long German rocket, HyImpulse SR75-1, at their Koonibba rocket testing range.

Military displacement and destruction has overshadowed her life lived at the edges of the colonial society, marginalised as a child by poverty and brutal government policies such as child removals, and continued now by ongoing assimilationist processes such as Native Title. Under a false guise of addressing land rights, Native Title has taken away communities' rights to say no to unwanted developments, such as these recent rocket tests. In a setting where Aboriginal communities have had all their resources stolen and are left without full access to education, employment and western technology, this legislation forces those that want to benefit from corporate activity to have to collude with it. This continues to drive wedges between community members, damage that is widely documented and rarely healed.

"For Aunty Sue, native title did not provide the means to address the history of colonial dispossession by affording her recognition. Instead it drew her into conversation with the colonial archive in ways that misrecognised her, threatening initially her sense of identity. Further native title seemed only to provide for compensation for mining of her country. But she is adamant her ancestors handed a responsibility to 'fight for the land'. She seeks to halt mining, to 'leave the land as it is' or 'munda yumadoo iliga.'"¹

Aunty Sue's family are experiencing first-hand the health impacts of the toxic military industry. Aunty Sue had her thyroid removed because of cancer at a young age and continues to witness the intergenerational damage of her exposure to radiation affecting the next generations of her family. Aunty Sue came to more deeply understand the relationship between radiation and genetic damage and disease such as cancer, thyroid and heart problems and birth defects when she joined the Australian Nuclear Free Alliance.



She has since connected with nuclear survivors around the world and travelled to the United Nations with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons to build support for the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that became international law in January 2021.

Aunty Sue and her family have always practiced their culture and responsibility in caring for country, shared knowledge and advocated for its protection. Major rockhole recovery trips organised twice a year visit sacred sites to maintain and clean the rock holes and let the mining companies who are exploring out there know that there are people around who care enough to fight for this country. The Kokatha people have been caring for this land for many thousands of years and on the last trip four generations of Aunty Sue's family were able to come together to clean the rockholes.

All the generations buzz around Aunty Sue learning culture and plying her with salient questions. "Nana what will we do if they bomb this place - where will we go?" to which she answers "We're not going anywhere, we'll stay here and fight".

This beautiful region out north of Ceduna is one of the last stretches of an intact Mallee ecosystem of its kind. Encompassing Yellabinna Rocks, Paint Lake, Inla, Minya Inla and many other outstanding sites, the region contains some of the most important sacred sites on the continent for women and children.

Now Kokatha country faces a new threat. Southern Launch, an Australian company with links to the Australian Defence Force, and Thales, the French multi-billion dollar weapons company, have embarked on a missile testing project. They will be using the unique arid Mallee ecosystems outback of Ceduna, far west SA, to test rockets. Their rocket range threatens sacred sites, and the incredible biodiversity of the desert.

“They want to just drop their stuff out on country. They say it’s uninhabited but you know we’re always going out there and the animals are all there, and the birds. There’s endangered animals out there. That actually includes me. We’re going to keep going out and disrupting whatever they’re trying to do so that it’s making it really hard for them to even get a test rocket off.

But if they can get away with anything, the destruction that falls will be massive because there’s fire and those horrible things land back on earth. There’s all our sacred sites including the mother of the earth that are targets

because there’s a French company called Thales. They want to do hypersonic missile testing and guided missiles too.

And what better places to target than our sacred sites, our rocks. There’s rocks out there that just any kind of blast is going to knock them off. It’s sort of like the Devil’s Marble, maybe a bit higher. But all of that we have to try our hardest to protect against Southern Launch, Thales, ADF. They’re right involved even though they’re trying to make out their goody goodies. And all the stuff they’re going to make with drones, drone missiles and stuff, they’re only going to send them over and kill some innocent people somewhere else.... I mean after us that is because I don’t care what they say or do I’m going to be on country with or without their so called permission. So, I don’t know, it’s just a big fight.”

The expansion of the military industrial complex and colonialism go hand in hand, and although the company names and weaponry change, the impacts are the same: destruction of land used for food and medicine; devastation to the health of the people; and disturbance of sacred sites and the storylines they belong to. Aunty Sue talks about how the old people would walk away once a storyline was broken but nowadays she says they stay and try to repair what is broken, for the future generations, plants and animals. And stay and fight she has, alongside family and a group of supporters that have joined with her through the nuclear free movement and the biannual Rockhole Recovery trips.



“Well you know if you can’t come on to country, you can always go to your politicians. There’s other ways to get to people like that, people in so-called power. But they’ve got to remember that that power out of the country is mine, not theirs. I’m not going to allow them on there. I’ll make it really hard for them. We’re doing a doco. It’s the right to say no because we haven’t had that since colonisation. They gave us what’s called Native Title, which is the most evil thing anybody could have put on to us, apart from the change in the early days. The only right you’ve got under native title is the right to negotiate with miners and corporations for a small slice of whatever they get out of the ground. So that’s no rights at all. We do not have the right to say no, leave country alone, leave animals alone. We’ve got no rights whatsoever there. So the only way that I could see forward was to start holding protests.

I’ve done it in the past, out on country, and we can do it again.

Easy.

But, you know, with everybody’s help.”

1. Eve Vincent, 2017 “Against Native Title: Conflict and creativity in outback Australia.”



TO LEARN MORE AND GET INVOLVED:

West Mallee Protection

Follow West Mallee Protection on FB:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/706071835003453/>

Donate to support the Rockhole Recovery trips: <https://chuffed.org/project/106310-protect-googatha-mula-country>

Native Title Rockets

Independent film maker Rochelle Humphrey is making a documentary with Aunty Sue about the Rocket Testing Range called Native Title Rockets.

<https://www.nativetitlerockets.com/>

No Rockets over Rockholes

34 page comic book about a trip to Aunty Sue’s Country - Kokatha Country - and the largest rocket and missile testing range in the Southern Hemisphere.

<https://www.sofiabsabbagh.com/product-page/no-rockets-over-rockholes>

‘Against native Title’ by Eve Vincent:

<https://shop.aiatsis.gov.au/products/against-native-title>

CLOSE PINE GAP: PROTESTING GENOCIDE IN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

Lou Omer & Jorgen Doyle



Photo by Kristian Laemmle-Ruff

As we write these words, it is 254 days since Israel commenced its high-velocity genocide of Palestinians in Gaza. The International Court of Justice has issued three separate orders on provisional measures in the *South Africa vs. Israel* genocide case – ignored by Israel without sanction from Australia. The genocide has also sparked one of the largest mass mobilisations in Australian political history, with citizens marching, blockading, picketing, and occupying in solidarity with Palestinians and their struggle for liberation, land back and a just peace.

In picketing and occupying arms manufacturers¹, activists across this continent have highlighted the Australian government's role in Israel's genocide in Gaza via the continued export of weapons components made in Australia to Israel. The parliamentary advocacy of politicians such as David Shoebridge and Lidia Thorpe have amplified the work of those taking direct action. Concurrently, activists in Central Australia² have sought to highlight another aspect of the government's failure to uphold its obligations as a signatory to the UN Genocide Convention: the provision of intelligence gathered at the Pine Gap Joint Defence Facility in Central Australia to Israel's Signals Intelligence National Unit, and on to the Israeli military.

As the bombardment of Gaza grinds on towards its eighth month, it is becoming ever clearer that the genocide in Palestine is co-authored, if not led, by the US. A new bill before the US congress³ seeks to extend US military benefits to some ~ 20,000 US citizens currently participating in the genocide as troops in the Israeli military. This is our partner in Pine Gap.

WHAT IS PINE GAP?

Occupying Central Arrernte Country eighteen kilometres from Mparntwe/Alice Springs, the Pine Gap Joint Defence Facility is a surveillance operation run by Australian and US government agencies.

In 1966 an agreement was signed between the Australian Defence Force and the CIA to build surveillance satellites to intercept information about missiles and communications from Soviet and other governments. The Pine Gap joint defence facility was built shortly thereafter on an 1780 ha excision of land belonging to the Central Arrernte people⁴. No permission was sought from traditional custodians, nor was permission granted, for the alienation of this land and construction of a military base on it. As Bob Boughton and Deborah Durnan put it in their timely article on anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist organising in Central Australia, “the failure of the Australian and US governments to acknowledge Arrernte rights of ownership or even access to the land that the base perimeter enclosed represents a classic case of ‘internal imperialism’”⁵.

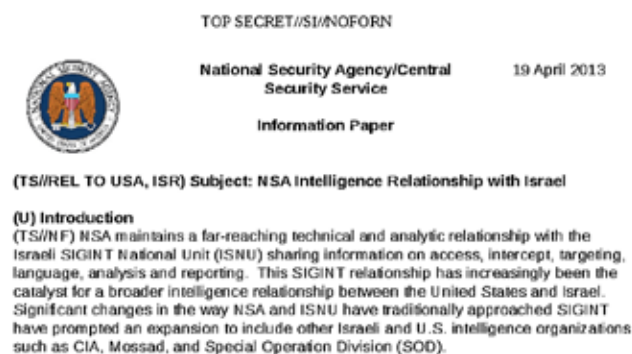
Operations at the so-called joint defence facility began in 1970. In the 1990s, the focus of Pine Gap's efforts changed from Cold War era monitoring of Soviet missile activity to the US military's strategies of intervention and counter-terrorism, with an outsized focus on West Asia, aka the Middle East.

800 people – from a town of 28,000 thousand – work at ‘the base’. According to Felicity Ruby, half work for US (National Security Agency (NSA), Central Intelligence

Agency (CIA), National Reconnaissance Office) and Australian government agencies (Australian Signals Directorate, Australian Federal Police). The other half are private contractors working for Raytheon, Boeing, Northrop Grumman and General Dynamics, as well as tech firms such as IBM and Hewlett-Packard⁶. The US military contractor Amentum, currently before a US court on charges of human trafficking in Kuwait⁷, is in charge of logistics for the base, and employs 400 people.

Professor Richard Tanter is the former president of the Australian Board of the International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons and the foremost expert on Pine Gap's activities. "Most notoriously," says Tanter, "Pine Gap receives and passes on to military command... the content and location of cell-phone and satellite-phone intercepts from the battlefields of Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria and of persons of interest in counter-terrorism operations in Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen and other countries with which the US—and Australia—are not legally at war."⁸

The base, he writes, "both literally and institutionally hard-wire[s Australia] into the US global surveillance system and military operations, with consequent legal and moral responsibilities".



Electronic Frontier Foundation¹³

ON PINE GAP'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE GAZA GENOCIDE

There is a fallacy oft-repeated by those invested in keeping the public in the dark about Pine Gap's operations that nothing much is, or can be, known about the base's operations. In truth, Tanter says, "we know more about Pine Gap than we do about any other American intelligence base on the basis, not of rumour... but of very clear documentation"⁹. This is largely as a result of the work of a dedicated team of activist-scholars at the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability¹⁰.

A long series of intelligence-sharing agreements exist between Israel and the U.S.A. Richard Tanter documents eight such agreements spanning from 1968 to 2013¹¹. The US National Security Agency's 2013 Information Paper on intelligence-sharing with Israel makes it clear that the NSA shares extensive information with the Israeli Signals Intelligence Unit (ISNU). Israel, the document states "enjoys the benefits of expanded geographic access to world class NSA... expertise"¹². This includes intercepted information and potential targets derived from NSA operations at Pine Gap.

Three of the four US advanced Orion geosynchronous signals intelligence satellites under Pine Gap control monitor territory including Palestine. These satellites monitor data¹⁴ being communicated to other satellites in the region, and cell phone and internet data being transmitted through telecommunications towers. "It's very likely," surmises Tanter, "on the basis of what we know about [Israel's agreements with the National Security Agency], that Israel is pressing for its concerns to be added to those US signals intelligence tasking schedules resulting in tasking demands on Pine Gap through the NSA"¹⁵.

The historical record indicates that Pine Gap has previously passed on militarily advantageous information to Israel. During the 1973 Yom Kippur war between Israel and a coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and Syria, signals intelligence derived from Pine Gap-controlled satellites was passed on to the Israeli military, despite the Australian government's official position on the war being one of neutrality. This intelligence, write Jeffrey T Richelsen and Desmond Ball, "was of great assistance to the successful Israeli break through the Egyptian lines in the Sinai"¹⁶ as Egyptian and Syrian armies fought to recover territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 war.



Mililma May, Uprising of the People

In November of 2023, David Rosenberg, who worked in Pine Gap for 18 years, told Declassified Australia that “[t]he Pine Gap facility is monitoring the Gaza Strip and the surrounding areas with all its resources and gathering intelligence assessed to be useful to Israel.”¹⁷ Yet more distressingly, on the 15th of November 2023, the Wall Street Journal published an article claiming that US signals intelligence (likely derived from Pine Gap) was behind an assessment that militants were using Gaza City’s al Shifa hospital, assisting in providing the pretext for the first of Israel’s infamous sieges of the hospital¹⁸. This intelligence proved to be faulty, and the criminal siege it provided a pretext for led to the murder of patients, and the assassination and kidnapping of healthcare workers¹⁹. The World Health Organisation, visiting the hospital on November 18, documented a mass grave containing the bodies of at least 80 Palestinians²⁰.

In short, data gathered at Pine Gap is being used to assist the Israeli military in its brutal genocide of the Palestinian people.

IMPERIAL FORTIFICATIONS ON STOLEN LAND

In a webinar organised by members of the Mparntwe for Falastin solidarity group on Pine Gap’s role in the genocide in Gaza²¹, and on militarised and racialised surveillance within the Northern Territory, Alywarre professor Kathryn Gilbey spoke of Pine Gap as a site that produces data to support colonialist narratives (i.e. Hamas hides in hospitals) that serve to legitimate the violence required to uphold an imperialist white world order. The same narratives, Gilbey pointed out, are regularly revamped here in the Northern Territory to renew the settler colonial dominion that enables the Pine Gap Joint Defence Facility’s occupation of Central Arrernte Country, adding that “sites of... cultural and linguistic strength are always the ones that are targeted with the most relentlessly negative narrative”²².

With a new wave of militarisation sweeping the Northern Territory and the policies underpinning the Northern Territory intervention having lapsed in July 2023, politicians and the media are once again manufacturing a racialised crime hysteria that will see even more Indigenous

people displaced and incarcerated in the Northern Territory. The NT Labor government has recently committed to building two new prisons in the Northern Territory²³, and passed new laws empowering the police commissioner to unilaterally declare curfews over areas of the NT “in cases of public disorder”²⁴. The curfews require the temporary suspension of the racial discrimination act and clearly target young Aboriginal people, however the powers granted to the police commissioner are so broad they could also feasibly be used to curb protest and dissent in the Northern Territory.

Like Israel, Australia is not only a settler colony, but a sub-imperial power²⁵ committed to enshrining US geopolitical dominance globally as key to settler security at “home”. Over the next decade, the Australian government will spend \$30 billion on “hardening and upgrading” northern military bases, “partly to meet US requirements and partly paid for by the United States”²⁶. These upgraded bases require the expansion of housing for military personnel in Darwin. The struggle to save Binybara/Lee Point, a site of cultural heritage to the Danngalaba Kulumbirigin Gulumoerrgin people, from bulldozers contracted by Defence Housing Australia, is ongoing²⁷.

Binybara/ Lee Point defenders have well and truly won the battle for hearts and minds to save this area, mobilising hundreds of members of the Gulumoerrgin/ Darwin community, many risking arrest for the first time. Yet on April 30, clearing works began, with bulldozers protected by an estimated 100 police and private security personnel clearing 16 of a total planned 96 hectares of savannah, and 19 Binybara defenders arrested. The clearing has now been paused as Defence Housing Australia investigates allegations that some of the land was cleared without the necessary approvals. Larrakia-Tiwi woman and Uprising of the People²⁸ founder Mililma May drew the following parallels between the militarised occupation and degradation of Indigenous Country in Gulumoerrgin/ Darwin and in Palestine:

“Danngalaba Kulumbirigin Gulumoerrgin people have been fighting against Defence occupation of Gulumoerrgin for 50 years. From Emery Point to Lee Point, our sacred sites are under occupation of Australian and American Defence Forces. We refuse to let our Gulumoerrgin be complicit in genocide and ecocide both here on our lands, and across the seas to Palestine”²⁹.

Since President Obama’s 2011 ‘pivot to Asia’ in US foreign policy, a force of 2,500 US marines have been stationed



Protesters March Towards the Gates of Pine Gap, October 1987. Arrernte Traditional Owners, Harold Furber (in check shirt) and Helen Liddle (centre). AABCC organiser, Brian Doolan (in hat) on the right.

in Darwin on six month ‘rotations’. Darwin was chosen as a site for a permanent, Australian based, US Marine component to the largest empire of bases the world has ever known, surmise Tess Lea and Stuart Rollo, not only due to its proximity to “the Indonesian archipelago, Timor Leste, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, and the South China Sea,” but also because Darwin “has a hinterland uncluttered by the kinds of civilian infrastructure that might attract controversy if yielded to a foreign power in more settled regions”³⁰. A foreign-policy manifestation of both countries’ histories of institutionalised Sinophobia³¹, the US military presence in Northern Australia also precipitates a forceful reassertion of terra nullius on this continent. This reassertion of terra nullius allows the Australian defence force to perform various empty gestures of recognition of Indigenous attachment to land:

A key part of the package of offerings Australia has gifted the US military is training access to Bradshaw Field Training Area, some 800,000 hectares of defence-owned property on a former cattle station in the notorious Victoria River Downs district, historic home to some of the worst frontier massacres and enslavements. Here, at one of the largest weapons training grounds in the world, the Australian Defense Force is able to enact cultural respect precisely because disrespect is a tacit foil. The respectful approach articulates to a violently dispossessing alternate³².

In Northern Australia, the US and Australian militaries are working to entrench the kind of unjust “peace” that so-called liberal Zionists crave on Palestinian soil.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIAL FORTIFICATIONS ON STOLEN LAND CONTINUES

Fortunately, there is a long and ongoing history of resistance to these imperial fortifications on stolen land. Writing in Arena Magazine, Felicity Ruby offers a brief

history of resistance to Pine Gap³³. A Women's Peace Camp was held in 1983 with "800 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women protesting in the searing desert heat"; in 1987, 213 people were arrested in a "Close the Gap" action; 2002 saw a mass action where 400 people showed up for a "Desert Peace Protest" and in 2005 "Christians Against All Terrorism took a small but significant Citizens Weapons Inspections action at Pine Gap".

Last year, in October³⁴ and November³⁵, local activists blockaded the only road leading to Pine Gap, on both occasions successfully stopping hundreds of employees from accessing the Pine Gap facility for the duration of their shifts. This was intended to halt – even momentarily – the facility's role in the ongoing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. Protestors were also acting in solidarity with the global movement against the brutality perpetrated by the Israeli military and its allies. "We stand alongside both Arrernte and Palestinian people in the fight for liberation, justice, dignity, and land back," said one blockader and comrade, Carmen, before a recent court appearance in Alice Springs relating to the blockades³⁶.

Felicity Hayes, a Central Arrernte woman and Traditional Owner for Kuyunba, where Pine Gap is located, draws

strong links between the colonial violence and land theft in Australia and in Gaza. Her family have been opposing the surveillance facility's occupation of her Country, and its operations abroad, for years. Speaking in support of blockaders, she said, "Who gave America the right to put their military base on our sacred land and use our Country to kill innocent women, men, children and old people overseas? We are so sorry this is happening, this shouldn't be happening, we support the people of Palestine."³⁷

There is a widespread desire to highlight Pine Gap's involvement in Israel's genocide in Gaza, and to take action to stop this involvement. Listeners' responses to the aforementioned webinar on Pine Gap, were, in the words of host Amy McGuire, "really action orientated – how they're gonna use this information from Professor Tanter, from Peter [Cronau], from Nasser [Mashni], from Barb [Flick] and Kathryn [Gilbey] in the continual fight to actually... stop this genocide and to make known Australia's complicity in genocide... How can we protest Pine Gap effectively?"³⁸

Barb Flick, a Gomeri, Yawallyi, and Bigambul woman who participated in the 1983 Women's Peace Camp had this to say in closing out the webinar: "I think it's time for direct action again. The reason that we got a lot of people together in the eighties was to raise awareness and information in the



Protestors blockade the access road to the Pine Gap joint Defence Facility in November, 2023 due to evidence of the facility's involvement in the genocide in Gaza.

community. And that would be a great vehicle to raise, by people's actions, their concern for people in Gaza and their push for Indigenous rights in this country"³⁹.

In line with this call to organise, local activists hope to continue sharing information with the public and creating opportunities to resist militarism on Arrernte Country. An anti-colonial movement opposing the genocidal violence of settler colonialism and imperialism in Palestine and West Asia must apply its analysis just as rigorously to the ongoing

violence of colonialism here in so-called Australia, and to its organising methodology on this continent. The basis of such a methodology is strong, robust relationships between non-Indigenous anti-colonial activists, and First Nations people fighting colonialism's dispossessions and deprivations of dignity, liberty and justice.

The work of opposing imperial fortifications on stolen land continues.

Follow [mparntwe_for_falastin](#) on instagram for updates.

1. MC, Ali. 2024. Australia challenged on 'moral failure' of weapons trade with Israel. *Al Jazeera* online.
2. Gregoire, Paul. 2023. "Activists Blockade Pine Gap Facility Due to Evidence of Complicity in the Gaza Genocide," *Sydney Criminal Lawyers*.
3. Ray, James. 2024. "New bill seeks to extend U.S. military benefits to Americans serving in the Israeli army," *Mondoweiss*.
4. Boughton, Robert & Durnan, Deborah. 2024. "Anti-Imperialism and International Solidarity in Central Australia 1980–2000," *Labour History*, 126(1), p. 187–208.
5. Ibid.
6. Ruby, Felicity. 2017. "Minding the Gap," *Arena Magazine* No 149.
7. McQue, Katie. 2022. "Abuses on U.S. bases in Persian Gulf ensnare legions of migrant workers," *Washington Post*.
8. Tanter, Richard. 2016. "Our Poisoned Heart," *Arena Magazine* No 144.
9. Ruby, Felicity. 2024. "Pine Gap and Gaza." *YouTube webinar*.
10. Richard Tanter. 2016. "The Pine Gap project", *Pine Gap*.
11. Tanter, Richard. 2024. "Pine Gap, Gaza and Genocide - Is Australia Culpable?"
12. Electronic Frontier Foundation. 2014, "Intercept - NSA Intelligence Relationship with Israel."
13. Ibid.
14. Tanter, Richard. 2024. "Pine Gap, Gaza and Genocide - Is Australia Culpable?"
15. Ruby, Felicity. 2024, "Pine Gap and Gaza," *YouTube*.
16. Richelsen, Jeffrey T & Ball, Desmond. 1985. "The Ties That Bind – Intelligence Cooperation between the UK - USA Countries". p. 304.
17. Cronau, Peter. 2023. "TARGETING PALESTINE: Australia's secret support for the Israeli assault on Gaza, through Pine Gap." *Declassified Australia*.
18. Youssef, Nancy A & Strobel, Warren P. 2023. "U.S. Relied on Intercepts in Assessing Hamas's Operations at Gaza Hospital," *Wall Street Journal*.
19. Wan, Taufiq. 2023, "Relatives fear Israel torturing Gaza doctor to fabricate Al Shifa hospital claims," *The New Arab*.
20. World Health Organisation media centre. 2023. "WHO leads very high-risk joint humanitarian mission to Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza".
21. Ruby, Felicity. 2024. "Pine Gap and Gaza," *YouTube*.
22. Ibid.
23. Brennan, Declan. 2024. "Justice groups criticise funding for new prisons in the NT," *National Indigenous Times*.
24. Dick, Samantha. 2024. "NT government introduces new curfew legislation after Alice Springs youth crime 'circuit-breaker'." *Australian Broadcast Corporation*.
25. Fernandes, Clinton. 2022. "Subimperial Power - Australia in the International Arena." *Melbourne University Press*.
26. Gosling, Luke. 2024. "National Defence Strategy: big spending on northern bases." *Australian Strategic Policy Institute*.
27. May, Mililma. 2024. "Lee Point's destruction for defence housing is an ecocide massacre." *Crikey*.
28. See <https://uprisingofthepeople.org/>
29. May, Mililma. 2024. "MILITARISM IS AN UNHOLY RACKET: Day of action against militarisation and extractivism in so-called 'Northern Australia'." *Mparntwe for Falastin media release*.
30. Lea, T., Rollo, S. 2016. "A Servant is Not Greater Than His Master: American Primacy in Australian Security." *Hearts and Minds: US Cultural Management in 21st Century Foreign Relations*, pp. 17–42
31. Roll, S. 2018. "The 'Asia threat' in the US–Australia relationship: then and now," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Volume 0, p 1–28.
32. Lea, T., Rollo, S. 2016. "A Servant is Not Greater Than His Master: American Primacy in Australian Security." *Hearts and Minds: US Cultural Management in 21st Century Foreign Relations*, pp. 17–42.
33. Ruby, Felicity. 2017. "Minding the Gap," *Arena Magazine* No 149.
34. Gardiner, Stephanie. 2023. "Pro-Palestine activists block entry to Pine Gap base," *The Canberra Times*.
35. Gregoire, Paul. 2023. "Activists Blockade Pine Gap Facility Due to Evidence of Complicity in the Gaza Genocide," *Sydney Criminal Lawyers*.
36. Carmen. 2024. "Pine Gap US Military Base Involved in Genocide Crimes in Gaza - NT Residents Face Court for Blockade," *Mparntwe for Falastin media release*.
37. Hayes, Felicity. 2024. "Pine Gap US Military Base Involved in Genocide Crimes in Gaza - NT Residents Face Court for Blockade," *Mparntwe for Falastin media release*.
38. Ruby, Felicity. 2024. "Pine Gap and Gaza," *YouTube*.
39. Ibid.

Palestine, Aboriginal Resistance and The Necessity of Trade Union Solidarity

Declan Furber Gillick

SPEECH OUTSIDE GED KERNEY'S OFFICE AT COMMUNITY RALLY ORGANISED BY DAREBIN FOR PALESTINE

18TH JANUARY 2024

Comrades; in the recent words of the scholar Ilan Pappé: *we are living through the beginning of the end of zionism*. Zionism might not be overthrown today or tomorrow or next week or next year or next decade, but it will be overthrown, and it will fall.

And it will fall for this reason: the contradiction between the Zionist occupation and the resistance of the Palestinians cannot be sustained because Palestinians have the masses of the world's people on their side.

The occupation cannot be sustained economically. It cannot be sustained politically. It cannot be sustained morally. It cannot be sustained intellectually. And if you are following the Palestinian resistance on the ground, comrades, then you will know that the occupation cannot be sustained militarily.

Zionism is institutionalised racism and racism is oppression and wherever there is oppression, there is resistance, and wherever there is prolonged, violent oppression there is prolonged, ever-developing, ever changing, ever-growing increasingly violent resistance. When there is no more resistance, it means the will of the oppressed has been crushed. Has the will of the Palestinian people been crushed?

No it has not.

Where there remains in a people the will to live, to fight, to liberate themselves, to throw off the yoke of settler-colonialism, where there is a will to *shake off, to shrug off* the oppressor – which is what *intifada* means – then there is struggle.

And do the Palestinian people still struggle?

Yes they do.

And how do you know that? You know that because *you* are struggling with them.

So I offer a small correction to the words of Ilan Pappé: we, comrades, are not simply *living* through the beginning of the end of zionism; we are *fighting* for it. We are

struggling towards it day by day. And we will win, for as was famously said by a black militant revolutionary whom liberals insist on whitewashing: *“the arc of history is long but it bends towards justice”*.

Now comrades, I am an Aboriginal man; a Central Arrernte man from mparntwe. And I wish to make something very clear that has been deliberately made unclear.

There are certain of our so-called ‘Aboriginal leaders’ that the bourgeois press and the bourgeois institutions call upon to opine when they require a conservative Aboriginal voice for their malignant propaganda.

I am thinking in particular of people like Marcia Langton and Warren Mundine and Nova Peris.

In recent months Aboriginal people such as these have made the astonishing claim that we Aboriginal people don't see the connection between our own struggle and the struggle of Palestinian people.

Indeed, these Aboriginal people make the astonishing and baseless claim that there *is* no connection to be found between the struggle of Aboriginal people and the struggle of Palestinian people.

Indeed, comrades, I've even heard it put by certain Aboriginal ‘leaders’ and their associates that the *real* historical connection is to be found between the struggle of Aboriginal people for self determination and ‘the struggle for self-determination’ of the ethno-supremacist zionist state of Israel.

Comrades! Certainly, this is obfuscation, mystification and bourgeois intellectual backwardness of the highest order! But luckily we don't go in for that kind of thing. For we are revolutionaries. And when the wicked bourgeois reactionary mind deploys mystification, we deploy *dialectics*.

The Palestinian people are an occupied people who have endured over 75 years of European white-supremacist settler colonial rule. Aboriginal people have endured 235 years of occupation and political rule at the hands of a people who were originally white settlers of European origin.



Declan speaking at the Deakin University student encampment. Photo credit to Emma Hartley

Zionists claim that based on a particular interpretation of ancient religious scripture, the land of Palestine was given to them 'by god'. White European imperialists claimed that under the 'doctrine of discovery' this continent was given to them, through the sovereignty of the king, 'by god'.

The racist ideological conceit upon which Zionist Israel relied was that Palestine was a land without a people for a people without a land.

The racist legal fiction upon which the British relied in their violent acquisition of this continent was *terra nullius*: an empty land, devoid of people.

Today, Gaza is a starving bloodbath. Early in European settlement, this continent too was a starving bloodbath.

Israel has concentration camps and occupied territories.

The Brits had reservations and missions.

Zionists have bombs, tanks, sniper rifles and white phosphorus.

The Brits had poison flower bayonets and pistols.

Palestinians are still in Palestine.

Aboriginal people are still right here.

That's why we say: one struggle, one fight. That's why we say: from the river to the sea, always was, always will be. That is why our revolutionary indigenous comrades in Turtle Island say: Palestinian resistance is the tip of the spear of our collective liberation.

This life-and-death global anti-colonial struggle against a crumbling empire is being led by the most developed, courageous and theoretically cogent elements of the proletarianised masses of global Indigenous and occupied peoples.

And I thank and I applaud the union movement and the workers movement for its solidarity over these last 104 days of hell. But the fact is, we need more. We need to see the workers movement and the union movement down tools. We need to see union leadership mandate stop-work action. We need to see workers refuse to touch ships or load trucks bound for Israel. Israel must be treated as the pariah that it has chosen to become. We need to see rank-and-file workers drag their leadership kicking and screaming into a position of unwavering, uncompromising militancy in support of the Palestinian people.

And this means a betrayal of the Labor party.

It means a betrayal of the ACTU. Because as things stand today, comrades, the ACTU and the Labor party are *not* the friends of the Palestinian struggle for liberation; are *not* the friends of the Aboriginal struggle; are *not* the friends of the proletarian masses of the world.

Led by the Palestinian struggle, we are fighting against fascist genocide. We are fighting to get the bloodsoaked imperialist boot off the throats of tens of thousands of maimed, disfigured, burnt, broken Palestinian children, mothers, grandparents and workers, and for those people to have what is rightfully theirs: their land, their future, their national self-determination.

And if you are not the friend of those fighting to end a genocide, then you are the enemy. And it's high time to pick a side.

There is only one solution: intifada, revolution.

Declan Furber Gillick is a writer, a Central Arrernte political organiser and an Aboriginal Marxist. He is active in Unionists for Palestine as a member of his union, the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance.

Peace Walk Against AUKUS 2024

Uncle Winiata

On the 17th of March at the Australian Nuclear Free Conference in Wollongong, the rain was torrential so it was decided to have an early send off for the Peace Walkers at this venue and leave tomorrow. After speeches and music from various community members the Peace Walkers were introduced to the community. I sat with Auntie Barbara Nicolson who gave her blessings and gave full support of the Peace Walk commencing on her land. We gave a brief talk about the purpose of the Walk and our support for the locals opposing the building of the nuclear powered submarines at Port Kembla.

After an interview with WIN journalists the following day, we walked off to face the challenges ahead and it was a perfect sunny day to walk along the beach with the Aboriginal flag, and a new flag with a gold Peace symbol and NO AUKUS writing on sheer, blue, light material.

The very fit were way out in front, some were dawdling but looked relaxed—some went swimming and enjoyed the

coolness of the ocean as it churned, swiftly reaching the shore only to rush back out to sea like a lace cloth.

Sun beating down and the front walkers were getting annoyed with the slow walkers and anger was brewing. We walked on sipping water as flies started to buzz around the eye sockets and lips. I ignored the tension as everyone had to find their own pace. After all it's a Peace Walk not a competition. We enjoyed our lunch beside an inlet with boats of different kinds and sea gulls.

There were many moments on our first couple of days—that forest would open out to us revealing creeks, lagoons, river systems and wonderful diversity of fauna and flora—wonderful bush tucker and medicines.

Two people left today. I was hoping they would return but they didn't, it's not for everyone—long distance walking—challenging, but I enjoy the changes of scenery when walking in a forest especially beside the sea! I feel so thankful to witness this Dreamtime Land





with others striving for a better nuclear free future. One step at a time we travelled up mountain tracks, some were almost perpendicular only to face another mountain with ocean views and wind swept grasses exposing middens and temperatures drop, but we move forward together, some sing songs, I worry about where we're going to camp. We are invited to stay at a farm property with this huge majestic tree, and a warm fire and food. We were lulled to sleep by the faint sound of the ocean.

Ceremonies before leaving an area happened each morning to give thanks, acknowledge the Traditional Custodians. Fire would be lit, gum leaves put aside to be used later—then into the morning we would trek but when there's a downpour it really is a soaking, and leeches are more active then, but it is a rainforest we walk in. As we descended the mountains water gushed through the undergrowth and the track became streams, but our pace quickened to keep warm and seek our lunch shelter.

I would like to thank all the walkers for trusting us as organisers and planners, how it was made easier by the crew that persisted and endured difficulties and kept our camp moving forward in positive momentum and plenty of laughs.

Our time in Nowra was wonderful as we had a concert fundraiser with light refreshments at George's studio and Karina recited her poem on capitalism and George sang beautiful songs only George can—a wonderful gathering with a few locals. Carlo left this morning to fly home to Italy and will be missed by many. We visited two politicians' offices in Nowra and gave them a letter to voice our opposition to the AUKUS dilemma.



There were lore and law problems at Caves beach near Wreck Bay community. The night we set up camp and prepared dinner we were welcomed by a local family warmly. Their totem is the whale and they were pleased to finally meet all the walkers as they made their way back to our new camp. The incident that followed the next day with Rangers I can't talk about as it's under review by the National Parks ACT, however the walk continued even though one Ranger implied that we should end the walk.

Food preparation was always a hive of activities—thanks to Carlo, Chip, Breddo we were well sustained and this walk no one had major health problems like gastro or major accidents that can slow down the whole walk, but we overcame a lot of difficult situations, and we can only do an epic walk like this if people are healthy, drink plenty of water, have time for self care and maintain a great sense of humour.

At Batemans Bay we met the spokesperson for the Greens, Alison Worthington, and shared an hour or two listening to various speakers like Shahnaz who has been in solidarity with this walk since planning began. I did notice after a couple of days, different people expressed their arts and crafts by drawing, weaving with local grasses and sharing stories around the fire or while walking.

My friend Willow from Naarm and Yuto from Japan went to Nagasaki and Hiroshima in solidarity and respect to the walkers and in meditation to the victims of the nuclear bombs that desecrated those two communities. It must never happen again. There have been many highlights during the walk and an absolute honour to walk in Peace with incredible positive activists. We arrived in Canberra on the 20th of April—greeted by Shane Rattenbury the Attorney General, and a ceremony at the Aboriginal Embassy.

We dedicate this walk to Uncle Kevin Buzzacott.





AUKUS dumping on democratic rights

Sanne de Swart and Jim Green

The Australian Naval Nuclear Power Safety Bill 2023, currently before parliament, proposes to create a separate military nuclear regulator to oversee anything to do with AUKUS nuclear-powered submarines. This would give the Minister of Defense and the Department of Defense the power to override federal and state laws and to bypass public consultation to name any sites that could be involved in the construction and operation of nuclear submarines or the disposal of submarine nuclear waste.

The Bill proposes a Defence-controlled regulator, which is deeply deficient. Australia already has a nuclear regulator: The Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency. Any independent or arms-length oversight would be lost if the Defence Department was to regulate AUKUS.

A key concern of the Bill is its potential to enable Australia to accept nuclear waste from visiting US and UK nuclear submarines, from second-hand US submarines that Australia will acquire from the 2030s, and from Australian nuclear submarines which will be built by the 2040s under current plans.

In fact the provision for Australia to accept foreign nuclear waste is open-ended so the Bill would allow Australia to become the world's high-level nuclear waste dump as was proposed by the international consortium Pangea in the 1990s and more recently by the 2015/16 South Australian Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission.

Defence Minister Richard Marles says Australia has no intention to accept overseas nuclear waste other than that arising from the operation of visiting, second-hand or new submarines. However the Bill is open-ended with its provisions for Australia taking ownership of foreign waste and the government seems reluctant to amend it.

A Senate inquiry has been established to study the Bill. Proposals to close off the nuclear waste loophole – and to deal with other problems such as self-regulation by the Defence Department and minister – have been debated. However it is expected that the Labor government will try to get the Bill through parliament in mid-2024, and Coalition MPs are expected to support the Bill with or without amendments..

The Senate inquiry has been a farce. At a hearing in Perth, the only NGO input allowed was one 30-minute session. Other hearings of the inquiry have not heard from NGOs or other critics of AUKUS.

The Bill names the first two proposed 'designated nuclear zones' as the Osborne Designated Zone at Port Adelaide in SA and the Stirling Designated Zone off Fremantle in WA. The Bill also envisages giving the Defence Minister powers

to designate any part of Australia as a designated nuclear zone without parliamentary or public scrutiny. No hearings of the Senate inquiry have been held in Adelaide despite plans to build and station nuclear submarines in SA.

Many important questions have been left unanswered. How will communities be consulted on accident response plans? What is the existing radiation emergency capability in current and proposed nuclear submarine port sites? How will local health and medical services be consulted? How will communities be properly informed about the serious risks of naval nuclear reactors? How will safety issues be monitored and communicated? How will the public interest in safety issues be protected? When will accident scenarios for nuclear subs at base be modelled and made public? How can the public verify the quality of emergency management plans and systems? How can authorities demonstrate their capacity to respond to radiation emergencies, and other accident scenarios?

The Labor government – and the Coalition – have shown no interest in addressing those serious questions. They just want to fast-track the acquisition of nuclear submarines.

Since the late-1990s, Labor and Coalition governments have repeatedly sought to impose radioactive waste dumps despite the opposition of Aboriginal people. The relevant legislation, the National Radioactive Waste Management Act, has no meaningful consultation or consent provisions. Nevertheless, Aboriginal communities have repeatedly defeated racist governments, most recently with the Barngarla Traditional Owners' defeat of a proposed national nuclear waste dump near Kimba in SA.

The proposals for radioactive waste management in the Australian Naval Nuclear Power Safety Bill 2023 are even more racist than those in the National Radioactive Waste Management Act, e.g. the Designated Zones provisions, the non-independent military regulator, etc.

The Bill should be amended so as to be compliant with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Of particular relevance is Article 29 of the Declaration which states that no storage or disposal of hazardous materials shall take place in the lands or territories of indigenous peoples without their free, prior, and informed consent.

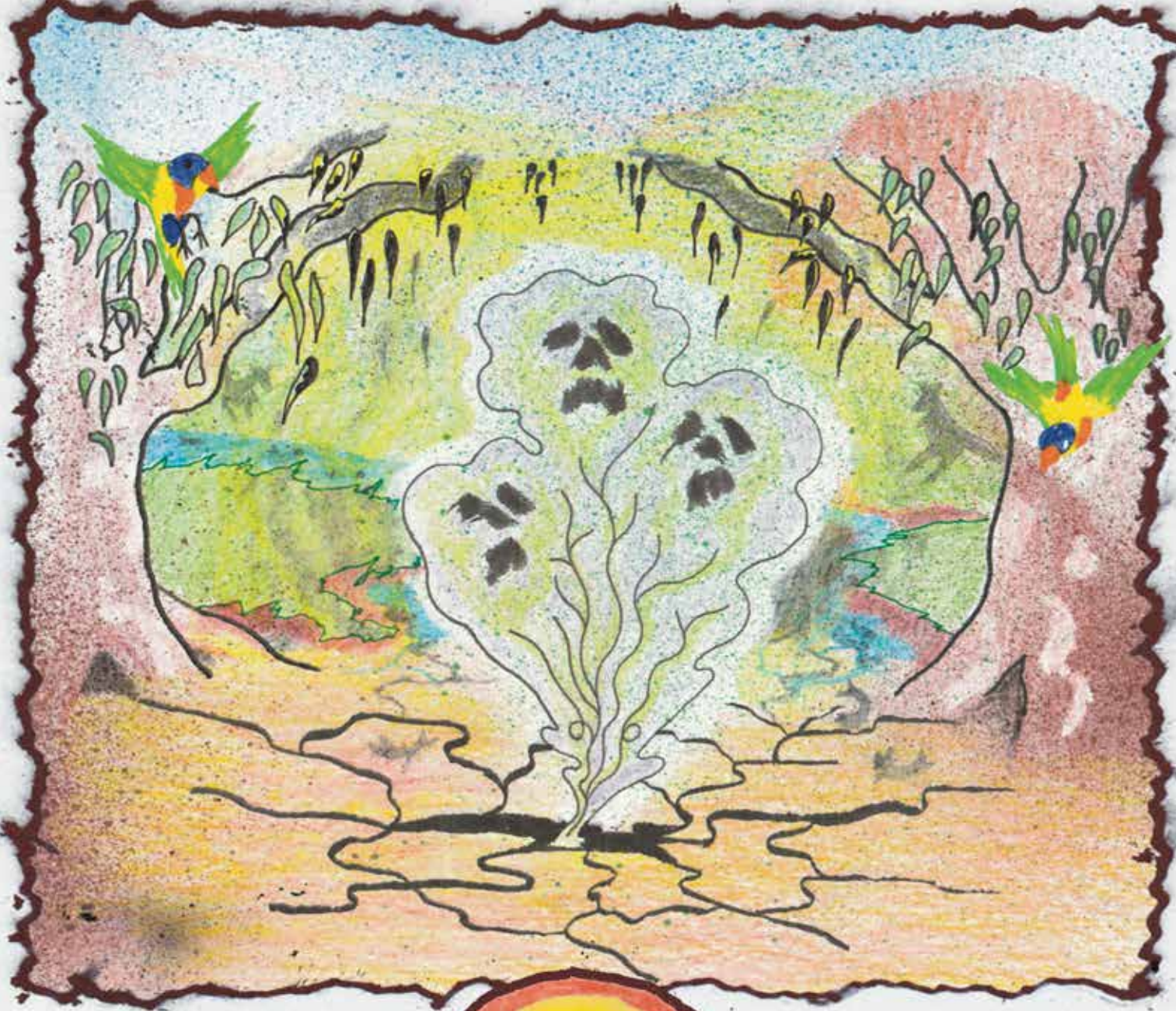
MORE INFORMATION:

<https://nuclear.foe.org.au/nuclear-subs/>

www.3cr.org.au/radioactive/episode/building-awareness-against-aukus

[Australian Naval Nuclear Power Safety Bill 2023](#)

NO! NO! NO!
URANIUM WEAPONS WASTE



KEEP IT
OFF
OF OUR
LAND



FOREVER
AND
EVER

Roxby Downs: The Story So Far...

The Roxby Vigil.

The Roxby Downs Uranium, Copper and Gold Mine in SA was enabled in the early 1980's when a state Labor minister infamously crossed the floor to vote with the Liberal cohorts of the time, to allow the Roxby Uranium Mine to go ahead.

This was at a time when the Anti-Nuclear, Nuclear Disarmament and No Wars Movement was strong and vibrant and a No Nuclear stand was expressed across the wider Australian Public. The British atomic tests had been exposed and the post-WW2 American atomic testing in the Pacific were largely condemned. The establishment of a uranium mine at Roxby Downs was widely resisted.

Roxby Downs Station (the site of the proposed mine) is a somewhat unique desert landscape of Sandhills, Swales and Claypans, largely vegetated by Mulga, Callitris, Wattles and the occasional Quandong, interspersed with all the incidental bushes, herbs and shrubs of the semi-arid kinds. The 1983 red sands of the dunes were fresh and crisp with deep emu and kangaroo tracks leaping and bounding through the landscape.

The Old People sit and wait for their mob. They are in Andamooka, 30km to the Eastern extremity of this same Sandhill. They have been told by their Elders to stay there and not to move... the country needs protection.

Al and Annie of the Roxby Vigil
visit Alberrie Creek, 2024. Photo
by Reed O'Loughlin



Tjilpi and Kungka Wampa at home in
Andamooka with Roxby Vigil Mob, 1985.
Photo by Rohan Cuming.



The Whenan Shaft has been installed on Roxby Downs Station. Tjilpi says they have fractured a Sacred Site. They have moved in: Western Mining Corp, BP and the SA Government. They are in partnership and the Roxby Downs Indenture is enacted. This Act gives total control to the Joint Venturers and overrides other state Acts of Parliament.

People gather, outraged and energetic to bring it down. The thrust of the people gathered in the desert lands together with the Kokatha Traditional Owners burst through the gates of the mining lease and bounce the trucks blocking the path. Tjilpi says "go to Ironstone Road." And there we hold intense action for a short time, and there we hold Vigil for a long time. The baby is born, Tjilpi comes to hold the site. A swarm of Star Force come to remove us all. We are gone from the Land.

We struggle to hold on, on the periphery, knowing the uranium oxide is now coming out and being shipped around the world to be turned into yellowcake. The days and years go by, and Roxby supplies the world nuclear fuel cycle across reactor sites, the spent fuel rods providing the plutonium for nuclear weapons. Fukushima is leaking into the Pacific. Chernobyl is everywhere, but Roxby is here.

Tjilpi has died broken-hearted for his country. The baby is now almost 40. We gaze across the night sky from a 90km distance on the Oodnadatta track and can see the glow of Roxby's mine. That's how much power is being generated, from the SA power grid, to keep the mine working 24/7. Roxby buy the pastoral leases that fully surround the mine site. We cannot go close or enter—total control of the entire vicinity is held now by BHP and the Commonwealth Government via the Woomera Protected Area.

We call out for freedom in this Land, this country so misused, radioactively contaminated and dying.

To be continued...

Like Bullets for Chocolate

Rod Ceballos

If life was ever kind in Latin America, it was a long time ago.

Since the 15th century, its 33 countries have had a history of colonisation, revolutions, and perpetual poverty. Recent history has seen right-wing and left-wing dictators come and go, cold-war superpowers warring via proxies, and economic forces reaping far more than they sow. While conquistadors were kicked out two centuries before, for Latin America's Indigenous people colonisation endures. Once, swords cut them down for gold and cocoa. Today, bullets pierce them for all else.

With 656 million inhabitants spread over 13% of Earth's land surface area, Latin America is a small part of the global population (8.37%) Yet, the continent holds 30% of the planet's primary forest, 25% of valuable metals, and 20% of global oil reserves. In this context, and including food and seafood exports, Latin America is a rich land. However, the wealth generated doesn't reach most citizens, and for over 2,000 environmental activists since 2012, the global thirst for these resources has meant their death.

Like every country, Latin American nations have differing levels of wealth, access to education, healthcare, and public safety. The poverty once exploited by European lords is today managed by politicians with suspect legislation and well-armed military forces, with wealth and services concentrated in the major cities. The system is encouraged by various lobby groups with vague affiliations, and abused by cartels operating beyond the law. Meanwhile, be it Chile or Venezuela, private and state-owned media shape public opinion, protecting the interest of shareholders and political factions.

Ultimately, all players aim for the same prize: wealth via the exploitation of the continent's natural resources. In this pursuit, native-title rights of Indigenous communities are often ignored (if any were ever recognised to begin with), while environmental defenders and land-rights activists are portrayed as terrorists. Armed for war when facing everyday people defending their rights, for many, police and defense personnel today represent fear, intimidation and blatant neglect.

Whether we speak of the 54 activists killed in Mexico in 2021, or the 60 social and environmental defenders killed in

Colombia in 2022, the police and defense forces tasked with protecting civilians have not made significant arrests. Too often, they attribute the crimes to drug cartels without clear motives, and close over 90% of cases with a stamp of impunity.

In the age of information, the institutions meant to safeguard justice have lost much credibility. From the north of Mexico to southern Chile, the effects of corruption, crime and violence can be felt by those most marginalised. Meanwhile greed burns a trail across the Amazon, from Ecuador to Brazil, displacing entire Indigenous communities of their ancestral lands, and killing a disproportionate number of indigenous activists every year.

Death, to be fair, is nothing new to Latin America. But beyond the bloody work of its many dictators, the killings have never been this callous, this colluded, nor as militarised in nature. The armament and logistic capacity of the perpetrators today is far beyond that of local hoodlums, resembling instead private militias, or security firms discreetly contracted by multinational corporations.

This is not a war however. It's not a battle against an armed enemy, nor a revolution against a tyrant. The blood being spilled isn't the price of democracy, for that's already been paid tenfold. This is simply big business making a literal killing.

All over Latin America, and in other parts of the world, people are killed for trying to protect their homes, their water and their soil. They are mothers and fathers, teachers and students, and everyday citizens who simply understand that unregulated mining and deforestation mean the death of their communities.

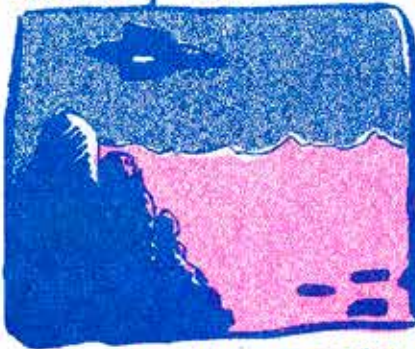
The danger faced by environmental and land activists is dire, receiving no protection from the law, little support from the public, and much intimidation. Yet this is even more so for female activists, as they don't only face potential violence and death, but also the threat of sexual violence to themselves and loved ones. And yet, how much do you risk when others want your all?

If life was ever kind in Latin America, it was long ago perhaps. But today there are people who believe it must be just, and they are risking everything to prove it.





over 100,000 Palestinian People have been killed/ injured/ made missing since October 7 due to F-35 jets.



over 70 AUSTRALIAN COMPANIES ARE involved in making the parts.



RAISE ENGINEERING



including one near my house - HTA Campbellfield - where we PROTEST every FRIDAY MORNING.

these companies represent death and we DON'T WANT them here.

OR FUNDING OUR SCHOOLS OR OUR ARTS.

renegadeactivists.org

tail pieces made @ 'Marand' Moorabbin

COST reduction for F-35 Jets @ HTA CAMPBELLFIELD

casting supplier made @ 'AW Bell' Dandenong sth.

REPAIRS + PARTS for every F-35 engine @ ASDAM, Moorabbin

AUSTRALIA has one of the most secretive, unaccountable export systems globally

F-35 Australian made parts

The bay door handles made @ Rosebank engineering Bayswater

'MADE' risk analysis made @ AIM technology North Fitzroy.

cable harness made @ Cablex CLAYTON sth.

OUR GOVT. HAS SIGNED A \$37.4 MILLION CONTRACT WITH LOCKHEED MARTIN, the F-35 Jet supplier.



DAVID SHOEBRIDGE

IF WE LET OUR GOVT. GET AWAY WITH LYING ABOUT OUR WEAPONS INDUSTRY, WE ARE PAVING THE WAY FOR EXTRACTIVE, COLONIAL PROJECTS TO BE MORE VIOLENT + FAUST THAN EVER.

THE LEFT EATS ITSELF

Nathalie Farah

*A cycle repeating itself
A snake eating its own tail
A tragedy, a comedy*

*Deep into organising the 67th action this week
Ding-Ding, my phone sings
It never stops buzzing*

*I'm in demand
I'm useful, I'm exhausted*

*I want to believe that we're making a difference
But they just signed a new \$100 million dollar weapons contract
People are waking up
But the city is asleep*

*Disagreements, fear, trauma and insecurities simmer on a fire of
community organising and rallies, sparked by an ongoing genocide
that keeps us awake at night*

And asleep during the day

Power struggles and suspicions

Red flags and competitions

While their blood mixes with flour

Another aid massacre

While they're lining their pockets

Another raid, another burnt out comrade

My friend once told me "the left eats itself"

The snake eats itself

Regurgitating one burnt out activist after another

A revolution shredded apart by its own splintering claws

Muffled by its own chants

Burnt by its own boomeranging Molotovs



Why is militarism so shit?

Zelda Grimshaw

Militarism is shit. Organised state violence, whether committed by police or armies, enforces repressive regimes the world over. Iran, Israel, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, New Caledonia; the Congo, Sudan, Tigray—militarism cannot countenance democracy, peace, indigeneity or freedom. Militarism impoverishes millions in order to murder millions more. Militarism is the progenitor of toxic masculinity, producing social license for men to rape, torture and kill. Colonial exploitation and extraction can only happen because of armies. Capitalism itself would not be possible without militarism.

Police and military brutality are the primary, most immediate crimes arising from militarism. Further crimes against the person and the planet include poverty, racism, misogyny, homophobia, inequality, climate destruction, land theft, biodiversity loss, dispossession, starvation, displacement, repression and violence, violence, violence. Militarism will harm you differently based on who and where you are, but there is no doubt that **militarism harms all of us.**

MILITARISM + EXTRACTIVISM = COLONIALISM

Weapons enforce extraction and drive dispossession.

From the first colonial invasions through to the present, extractivist agendas and military interventions have operated hand in glove. France, the Netherlands, England, Portugal and Spain built massive naval fleets in order to dispossess native peoples on every continent. Soldiers of various nations were deployed to enslave, dispossess and massacre First Nations peoples, so that colonial elites could steal land and resources. Colonial militarism and extractivism continued through the independence struggles and into the ‘post-colonial’ era, changing their name but not their game. Colonial powers have established local elites to ensure that the flow of resources and dominion over land continue to benefit Empire.

In West Papua, the Philippines, the Congo and the Amazon, weapons in the hands of public and private security agencies continue to enforce resource extraction. Militarism provides corporations with the coercive force they need in order to log rainforests, dig coal, frack farmland and burn the earth for palm oil. Armed soldiers and police ensure that private corporations can ‘invest’ and extract against the will and without the consent of sovereign peoples. The largest gold mine in the world and the second largest tracts of rainforest is

in West Papua, where Indigenous people continue to resist the destruction of sacred land against the onslaught of Indonesian soldiers. The rainforest nations of Congo and the Amazon suffer the resource curse of cobalt, nickel and gold, and the people there are beset with genocidal and ecocidal violence. In the Global South, people who resist extractive projects are frequently murdered or arrested by security forces. The climate and environmental damage of ripping down the last remaining jungles is unthinkable. The human impacts are just as devastating. **Sovereign people lose access to the material and cultural means of survival and become outcast, alienated, dispossessed and impoverished.**

MILITARISM IS A NECROTIC ULCER ON THE PUBLIC BODY.

Weapons sales directly cause immense human suffering. Occupying armies and police forces kill, rape and mutilate human beings and every other species in every part of the world. The arms industry, aka ‘harms dealers’, profit from the misery of others in the most immediate way possible. **Weapons companies are literally making a killing.**

Adding insult to injury, we pay for all this suffering, thrice: once as taxpayers who bankroll government subsidies to ‘boost’ weapons manufacturing, a second time when our governments buy those weapons from the corporations, and a third time as victims of war and repression. Most weapons end up in the hands of state security institutions: armies, navies, police forces, ‘intelligence’ agencies and as such are paid for with public money. So-called ‘defence industries’ are heavily subsidised on this continent, to the tune of \$30 billion a year in commonwealth ‘grants’. Once the weapons are made, governments use tax dollars to buy them. In this way, harms dealers siphon hundreds of billions of dollars a year from the public purse into the bank accounts of private weapons corporations.

When the people challenge ‘defence’ budgets, governments come back with ‘national security’. Militarism tells a story of dominance and control over populations and territories, and relies on a population’s fear of unknown, unsettled futures. Meanwhile, militarism makes us profoundly unsafe. Weapons are the single worst cause of instability and insecurity on the planet. **Militarism authors climate breakdown, ecosystem degradation, forcible extraction, land alienation, famine and war, and we pay for it.**



MILITARISM STARVES US

Weapons cause starvation and famine, both as a 'side effect' of war and as a deliberate strategy. Armies intentionally destroy crops and supply systems, starving cities. Genocidal regimes in occupied Palestine and in South Sudan blockade roads and ports so that food cannot reach the people. Occupying armies make it unsafe to farm, alienating farmers from arable land. Forests and waterways become unsafe, so that wild food is no longer available. Long after hostilities have ceased, contaminated soil and water impact food production. The famine in Biafra that took a million lives in the late sixties resulted from a military/naval blockade. The famines under Stalin and Mao occurred because a centralised military state threw human wellbeing under the bus of 'progress'. The famine in Ireland in the nineteenth century devastated a people while British troops extracted grain and other resources to feed England. It's true that crop failures and environmental disasters can cause food insecurity, and many communities in the majority world suffer long term undernutrition. People do not organically starve to death, however. **Wherever you see mass starvation, there you will find militarist discourse and weapons of war.**

MILITARISM DISPLACES MILLIONS

People do not run away from their homes, leaving their living communities and their ancestors behind them, unless running is the only option for survival. **Refugees are absolutely seeking a better life: one where they are**

not being bombed, fired on, tortured and executed. 114 million people! were registered with the UN High Commission for Refugees as of September 2023. This figure does not include the 2 million people displaced by the 23/24 genocide in Gaza. People displaced by war rarely get to return home, but spend years, even decades, in refugee camps where violence can remain a threat. Then, after suffering through war, persecution, torture, famine, rape and terror, a handful of refugees may reach a 'safe' country like 'Australia' only to find themselves vilified and locked up. Racist and ahistorical narratives accuse asylum seekers of causing violence, whereas refugees are, without exception, fleeing violence. State-sanctioned organised violence, whether perpetrated by uniformed soldiers and police or by proxy militias who unofficially enforce government policies, is almost never identified as the cause of long-term human displacement. It is the only cause.

WEAPONS CAUSE CLIMATE CHAOS

Climate bombs: accelerating climate breakdown and toxic emissions are directly caused by militarism. Blowing stuff up is a carbon intensive activity; the US military is the highest carbon emitter in the world. Weapons have a massive carbon footprint, both in the manufacturing phase and in their deployment. Militarism is burning our planet, both with actual 'firepower' and with greenhouse gases.

Weapons displace Indigenous custodians of land, turning forests, rivers, mountains and plains into 'resources' or commodities. The dispossession of First Peoples is the advance guard of the military attack on our planet.

Weapons devastate wildlife and ecosystems: tanks, missiles, jets, bombs, grenades and chemical agents rip out forests, destroy ecosystems, pollute waterways and maim wildlife. The toxic waste warfare leaves behind can contaminate soil and water for decades.

The arms industry makes products designed to destroy and to be destroyed.

Weapons are manufactured to lay waste and to be waste.

WAR = PEAK TOXIC MASCULINITY

‘Take the toys from the boys’ was a refrain of the Second Wave Feminist movement from Greenham Common through to Pine Gap. Women and children are the most heavily impacted by war and its toxic aftermath. Feminists on this continent have pro-actively resisted conscription, militarization and the arms trade since women successfully opposed the draft in World War One. Today, West Papuan, Gazan, Congolese (and millions more) women uphold this centuries-old resistance to the toxic masculinity of war.

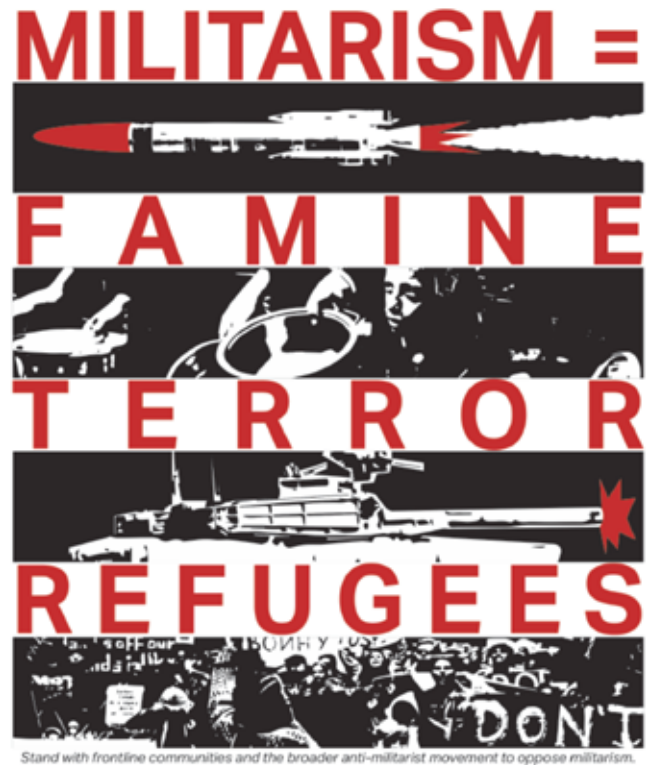
The ideological underpinnings of militarism are identical to that of patriarchy: the premise that all men are violent, that this violence is ‘natural’, that it should be celebrated, and that being more successfully violent is a valid life goal. Strictly hierarchical, demanding blind obedience to rank, enforcing submission through coercive force, brutalising and dehumanising new recruits, using humiliation as a teaching tool, punishing deviance or defiance mercilessly, killing those who threaten the established supremacy of the power holder—this could all describe men who murder their wives and girlfriends. It also describes the way militarism functions.

Feminist discourse rejects this strait-jacketed version of masculinity, asserting instead that all humans have the capacity for care and altruism. Gender freedom envisages all being able to access a full range of positive human characteristics: creation, nurturance, play, assertiveness, strength, gentleness. **The sooner we can separate manhood and masculinity from violence and war the healthier and safer we will be.**

REPRESSION OF RESISTANCE

Whether we live in a ‘safe’ country or in a war zone, **the weapons our governments buy will ultimately point at us.** Police forces around the world are increasingly militarised, meaning that they use military grade weapons, uniforms, vehicles and surveillance technology. Weapons are used to suppress civil society movements with disturbing regularity, from tear gas and water cannons through to machine guns and sniper rifles. The police in Chile aim rubber bullets at people’s eyes, blinding many.

At least 25 West Papuan civilians were killed by the army and police in 2023, on suspicion of being ‘separatists’. The Amazon is a particularly dangerous place to be an environmental activist, as is the Philippines, while Australia



and the US are dangerous places to be Black. There is no safety where there are heavily armed soldiers and police. **Whoever and wherever we are, those weapons are meant for us.**

DEMILITARISE, DECOLONISE, REGENERATE

Recognising the multiple ways in which militarism is shit also reveals how deeply our struggles are all connected. **We cannot win climate justice while the corporations are holding guns to our heads.** Political independence for West Papua will mean little if the same level of militarised displacement and dispossession continues. Land rights in the Amazon are in place, yet armed mining crews can still shoot their way to the resources they seek. Police forces and courts on this continent prioritise property over life, and cops are ready to kill a Black teenager holding nail scissors if their supremacy is challenged.

The violence of racism is armed. The violence of patriarchy is institutional. The violence of capital is systemic.

These systems of oppression are all connected. But so are we. We don't know yet when or how it will happen, but we know where we are going, and there are no armies or police forces there.

So whoever, wherever we are, let's continue to demilitarise, decolonise and regenerate our peoples and our planet.

1. United Nations, 2023, "Over 114 million displaced by war, violence worldwide" *Migrants and Refugees*. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1142827>

Rising Anti-Militarism in Australia and the Asia-Pacific: Solidarity with Palestine

Jiselle Hanna

Since October 7, 2023, the anti-militarism movement in so-called Australia has grown significantly, uniting communities and established organisations against the increasing militarisation of our societies and governments. As activists, we've seen this momentum build across the Asia-Pacific region, with actions and solidarity efforts supporting Palestine amid the recent escalation of conflict. Here, I'll share our perspective on the dynamics of anti-militarism, the military-industrial complex, and our regional solidarity movements advocating for Palestinian rights.

The military-industrial complex refers to the powerful alliance between a nation's military, its government, and the defence industry. This relationship prioritises defence spending and military engagements over social welfare, diverting resources that could be used for public services. In the Asia-Pacific region, countries like Australia have significantly increased their defence budgets, driven by strategic interests and alliances, particularly with the United States.

In Australia, the anti-militarism movement has gained traction bringing together a diverse coalition of groups including trade unionists, peace activists, environmentalists, First Nations rights advocates, and social justice organisations because of the urgency of ending the war in Gaza. We draw parallels between First Nations struggles in Australia and the Palestinian struggle for self-determination, highlighting the shared experiences of dispossession, colonisation, and resistance. But we also draw connections with other First Nations struggles abroad including that of the Kanaks against the colonial empire, France; the struggle of the Cordilleran peoples of the Philippines; the West Papuans against Indonesia and the Orang Asli of Malaysia.

The recent escalation of violence in Palestine has galvanised us and anti-militarism movements across the Asia-Pacific region, leading to a surge in activism and solidarity actions.

Across the Asia-Pacific region, activists have targeted Israeli weapons manufacturing factories through protests and political actions to highlight their role in the conflict and fight for peace. In South Korea, protesters have regularly gathered outside Elbit Systems' offices in Seoul. Elbit Systems is an Israeli defence electronics company that supplies surveillance and combat drones used in Gaza. Activists in South Korea have called for a boycott of Elbit products and demanded the South Korean government cease all military cooperation with the company. These protests have garnered significant media attention and have pressured local politicians to take a stand on the issue.

In India, protests have been organised at the headquarters of Adani Enterprises, a major player in the defence sector with ties to Israeli weapons manufacturers. Activists have focused on the company's collaboration with Elbit Systems, which includes the production of drones and other military technology. Demonstrations outside Adani offices in cities like Mumbai and Ahmedabad have drawn large crowds, with participants calling for an end to the militarisation of Indian policy and solidarity with Palestine. These actions are part of a broader campaign to disrupt the military supply chain and raise awareness of the human cost of these technologies.

And here in Australia, we've also targeted factories involved in weapons components manufacturing. In Adelaide, activists gathered outside the headquarters of BAE Systems, demanding an end to the company's arms sales to Israel. And in Victoria, we've targeted AW Bell and Elbit Systems – both complicit in Israeli genocide of Palestinians.

One of the most significant actions has been undertaken by the Water Transport Workers Federation of India (WTWF). Representing workers at 11 major Indian ports, the WTWF has declared its refusal to load or unload weaponised cargo destined for Israel. This decision was announced on February 14, 2024, as a direct response to the ongoing war in Gaza and

the catastrophic suffering of Palestinians. The union's general secretary, T. Narendra Rao, emphasised that the union stands against the killing of innocent people, particularly women and children, and views this boycott as an act of solidarity with the Palestinians.

Port workers have joined us in actions to block the shipment of arms and military equipment. In Fremantle, Western Australia, dockworkers refused to unload a shipment of military supplies destined for Israel. These work stoppages demonstrate the intersection between labour movements and our anti-militarism activism.

Trade unions in the region have also taken a stand against militarisation and expressed solidarity with Palestine. The Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) issued a statement condemning the violence in Gaza and calling for an immediate cessation of arms shipments

to Israel. The MUA's national leadership has pledged to support any member actions aimed at disrupting the military supply chain. Similarly, the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (NZCTU) has endorsed the BDS movement and called for a review of New Zealand's defence relations with Israel.

Overall, the recent surge in anti-militarism activism in the Asia-Pacific region underscores a growing recognition of the need to challenge the military-industrial complex and support those impacted by its actions. By standing in solidarity with Palestine, activists and organisations in the region are contributing to a global movement for peace and justice, and fighting for a world free from the violence and devastation of war.

Jiselle Hanna is the Secretary of Australia Asia Worker Links, an organisation that aims to build international solidarity between workers in Australia and the Asia Pacific region.



MARCH WITH PRIDE

Laniyuk

To be Queer

Is to be in step with your ever-shifting spirit

Even when your spirit

Is out of step with your surroundings

Today, I am who I am

To be Queer does sometimes mean

To sit in awkward silences with family

Or to block punches as you walk down the street

To not be able to read about people like you in books

To have your morality talked about on tv

To be told who you are is a phase

And that no one else in your family's gay

(Although we suspect otherwise, eyebrows raised)

To be Queer

Is to be in sync with the rhythm of life

Pounding the ground on arrival

I am here

I am Queer

I am flying through the air

Like a brick to the face of the colonial state

The first Pride March was in rage

Led by black and brown Trans women

It grew to a global movement

That couldn't be contained

The first Pride March

Was a protest

As colonial laws tried to force us into corners

Tried to force us to dark places in our minds

They said conform to these binaries

We said it's not within our nature

To be straight lines

But over the years

We've been sold conformity

For corporate promotion

And capitalist greed

The pink dollar in exchange for a token show on tv

If we shave away enough of our edges

We could fit more snugly into heteronormativity

*Pride March has become powered by banks and
capitalist values*

*Cops are invited to march alongside the same people
that they persecute*

Being a cop is not an identity

It's an armed and violent branch of the ongoing colony

An institution designed to maintain systems of control

And to protect private property

The police don't give a fuck about your safety

If the laws changed tomorrow

They would enforce without hesitancy

The police is not an identity

The same people who created laws to confine us to closets

Now play inception and confine us from the inside



What does it mean now to march with Pride?

To march in straight lines

Eyes fixed on a projected concept of freedom

That does not stop to pause at the intersections

Who else in this world sits at the intersection of gay

And who isn't marching today

Not out of lack of pride or out of shame

*But because we're still raging at the many injustices
performed by the state*

And white cis gay culture seems to think that that's ok

Then goes on to appropriate the language, culture and dress

Of black and brown finesse

Regurgitates to make money

Without working to make amends

*There's a reason that black and brown had to be added to the
flag*

Cause we're still fighting for the same visibility

As back in 1970

And it seems to me

Pride March chose assimilation

Over solidarity

Not everything that glitters is gold

So today we chose safety over visibility

And not from outside, but within our own community

Rainbows and loud music just isn't enough

And we've come to realise

You were never really marching for us

Weapons and Schools

Elise West
Teachers For Peace

Around Australia, university students have demanded their institutions cut ties with weapons companies profiting from genocide in Palestine. But the interference of the global weapons industry in Australian education runs much deeper: primary school children as young as five years old are being targeted by the world's biggest war profiteers with education materials, competitions, exhibitions, mentorships, camps, tours, and more.

By partnering with Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) programs like the National Youth Science Forum, FIRST Australia, and Beacon, weapons companies like Lockheed Martin, BAE Systems, and RTX seek to build positive brand association amongst Australian primary and secondary students, attract the 'best and brightest' young people to careers the weapons industry, and normalise the business of war.

Weapons companies' participation in primary and secondary education is akin to the marketing tactics of junk food brands. It's well established that children are susceptible to advertising,¹ and that interaction with brands at an early age affects behaviour across the lifespan.² When an unhealthy junk food brand sponsors a healthy sporting event for kids, a positive association is made with the brand—regardless of the harm that junk food causes to those very same kids.

Likewise, when RTX—the second biggest weapons company in the world, producer of nuclear weapons, missiles, precision-guided munitions, laser weapons, surveillance drones, and something called the 'pain ray'—sponsors a robotics competition for teenagers, the company seeks to firmly attach participants to the idea that RTX is, in fact, a "diverse team of explorers united in our goal to... solve the world's most complex problems."³ It's a far better pitch to kids interested in a STEM career than, say, 'company supplying missiles used to attack Yemeni and Palestinian civilians, and deployed by US border forces to surveil and repel people seeking asylum.' Indeed, when marketing to schoolchildren, companies' associations with weapons are obscured in favour of socially acceptable applications of technology, like robots, AI, aerospace, and the like.

A secure 'pipeline' of young people with a talent for STEM, and a positive association with their brand, is essential for the success of the weapons industry. The industry thrives on innovation—the relentless development of novel ways to coerce, wound, and kill—and companies compete for an innovative workforce not only with each other, but with other industries that require tech skills. In the context of Australian students' dwindling engagement with and performance in STEM,⁴ and a subsequently smaller talent

Teachers say NO to defence in the curriculum



pool, there's a strong incentive for weapons companies to market themselves to children early and often in order to gain advantage. The federal government, and some state governments, encourage this interference, including by directly funding school-industry partnership programs designed to funnel kids into the local weapons industry. For its part, the federal government contends that ensuring a workforce for the weapons industry is necessary for the development of sovereign capability and to ensure our national security.⁵

More broadly, the interference of the weapons industry in education plays a vital role in the naturalisation and depoliticisation of war and violence, and in making the business of war appear not just normal, but *beneficial* to society.

Over the past two years, Teachers for Peace, together with the Medical Association for Prevention of War, has successfully advocated for policy changes to limit the interference of weapons manufacturers in education.

In Victoria, "companies involved in the sale or promotion of weapons" have been added to the list of "inappropriate organisations" in the policy guiding the selection of Teaching and Learning Materials.⁶ The NSW Department of Education has changed its sponsorship policy to recognise that weapons manufacturers are not appropriate partners for schools,⁷ and Queensland has added companies "involved in the manufacturing or selling of weapons... [or] associated with the use of weapons" to its list of "unacceptable sponsor organisations".⁸ These changes put weapons companies on a footing with harmful and stigmatised industries like tobacco, alcohol, gambling, and junk food.



Disappointingly, most education departments have not properly communicated, implemented, or monitored these policy changes, and have even continued to promote and associate with weapons companies themselves. For example, the NSW STEM Industry School Partnerships program co-branded an event sponsored by Lockheed Martin. In correspondence with us, the NSW Education Department said that the sponsorship policy only applied to schools' "collaboration" with organisations, not "external programs and initiatives." There's better news in the ACT: in July we learned that the ACT education department turned down a partnership with Northrop Grumman, citing lobbying and potential controversy.

Teachers and their unions and sub-branches, along with students and their families, have increasingly taken matters into their own hands. The federal executives of the AEU⁹ and NSWTF¹⁰ have, over the past year, adopted powerful resolutions against the interference of the weapons industry and the increasing militarisation of education, and reiterating their longstanding commitment to education for and about peace.

In Victoria this year, Teachers and School Staff for Palestine launched a boycott of programs associated with weapons companies, with six regions—covering thousands of teachers—passing supportive motions at the time of

writing. In May in NSW, the Canterbury-Bankstown Teachers Association adopted a motion calling on its members to "refuse to refer students to any program that is sponsored by weapons manufacturing corporations, and to refuse to promote them." No Weapons for Genocide is organising in the Hunter Region to lobby the University of Newcastle's Science and Engineering Challenge. Teachers for Peace is coordinating an ongoing boycott of the National Youth Science Forum—an otherwise singularly excellent program that chooses Lockheed Martin, the world's biggest weapons company, as its major partner—and continues to engage with education departments and STEM programs. We'll keep pushing to get companies that profit from war and human misery in Palestine, Yemen, West Papua, Myanmar and beyond out of the classroom—and you're invited to join us.

Elise West is the Director of Teachers for Peace, a national organisation of teachers, students and activists working for peace and disarmament. Elise also works with the Medical Association for Prevention of War. She previously worked in documentary film, current affairs, and community media.

GO TO [TEACHERSFORPEACE.COM.AU](https://teachersforpeace.com.au)

1. Smith R et al, 2019, "Food marketing influences children's attitudes, preferences and consumption: a systematic critical review." *Nutrients*.
2. VicHealth, 2020, "Under the radar: Harmful industries' digital marketing to Australian children."
3. RTX website, accessed 14 May 2024
4. Australian Government. "National STEM education resources toolkit." Canberra: Department of Education.
5. See for example: Jason Clare MP, 2023, "New investment in skills paves the way for AUKUS workforce" joint media release.
6. Victorian Government, 2023, "Teaching and Learning Resources – Selecting Appropriate Materials." Melbourne: Department of Education policy.
7. NSW Government, 2009, "Commercial Arrangements, Sponsorship and Donations." Sydney: Department of Education policy.
8. Queensland Government, 2023, "Sponsorship procedure." Brisbane: Department of Education policy.
9. Australian Education Union, 2023, "On Peace: Fed Exec 31st Aug decision."
10. New South Wales Teachers Federation, 2023, "AUKUS makes Peace Contacts a priority."



WALLMAPU

– Mapuche Resistance

Marisol Salinas

The Mapuche People have resisted for decades the impacts of the forestry model imposed in Chile by the Chilean State and a group of companies. The forestry companies, their Eucalyptus and Pine monocultures and the Chilean State are responsible for the invasion of lands, displacement and eviction of communities, destruction of our native forests, environmental pollution, militarization of Mapuche communities and the poverty in which they live. It is terrible for a Mapuche not to be able to live on their land and see how forestry destroys it. Our people no longer have a place to live, and for this reason the communities have decided to organize; to recover our lands and develop their lives according to our culture and worldview.

The extractive and monoculture model that was established in our land during the Pinochet dictatorship

has become common. The large-scale forestry model in our territory has been devastating for our people and our mother earth. Those responsible for the ecocide of our land and people are the deforesters of the Angelini group, the Arauco forestry company, who were acquiring large territorial spaces in very questionable ways (cronyism and a lot of corruption). Relatives of the dictator Pinochet such as Julio Ponce, Pinochet's son-in-law, ensured that a large number of hectares of Mapuche land were delivered to the National Forestry Corporation (CONAF), where he worked. At the same time, in the pages of the newspaper El Mercurio, public auctions of enormous Mapuche lands were called, almost all of them suitable for forestry use. CONAF and the banks at that time agreed to these auctions and bought the Mapuche land at bargain prices. At the same time, state-built pulp mills were completely privatized.

CONAF, labor subsidies and the famous decree law 701 that subsidized plantations, made these forests free, totally paid for by the state. They received the lands, the plants and the workers from the State. In short, they received the current forests for free covering the south of the country. So many hectares of Mapuche lands have ended up in the hands of the Matte and Angelini group, currently the Arauco forestry company, which has more than two million hectares in its name.

To remove and displace our people from our lands, they burned the houses of our ancestors, the caretakers of the forests. The police threatened them, until one day the police arrived to remove our people from our lands and houses, telling them that the land was no longer Mapuche territory, but was now owned by the forestry companies. Our people and the majority of our communities are defending our mother earth and are willing to continue denouncing the Chilean state, and these companies, even if this means jail for our leaders and spokespersons. We Mapuche continue to organize through the Trawun, our assemblies. The Trawun decides what actions are going to be taken. It was in a Trawun that it was agreed to carry out the process of territorial control, which consists of returning to our lands. This is a process of recovery of our stolen lands. We know that the forestry companies have the full support of the Chilean state, so there will be persecution, prison and even death for our people.

Territorial control implies staying in the territory, living life and exercising sovereignty in this space. That is what our people are doing. There are many consequences for having entered a property and staying, and the criminalization of our leaders and communities is frightening, especially because our leaders have criminal lawsuits for usurpation and terrorism. It is incredible the number of forms of harassment that the Mapuche People are currently suffering: militarization of our lands, persecutions and shooting at night, surveillance with drones and helicopters, imprisonment of our leaders and spokespersons, etc., etc., etc.

Our leaders have tried thousands of times to talk with the representatives of the Chilean state, but they do not have time to meet, though they do have plenty of time to mistreat us and imprison our people with lies and fabrications.

Our people are living under militarized conditions. As well as experiencing constant violation of our rights, we also face mistreatment by all the media that represent the government and the forestry companies, where defending our mother earth, our culture and way of life are considered acts of terrorism, vandalism, and violence.

These are some of the Mapuche murdered since 2001:

1. Agustina Huenape Pavian (2001)
2. Mauricio Huenape Pavian (2001)
3. Jorge Antonio Suarez Marihuan (2001)
4. Edmundo Alex Lemunao Saavedra (2002)
5. Julio Alberto Huentecura Llancaleo (2004)
6. Zenén Alfonso Diaz Nécúl (2005)
7. Jose Gerardo Huenante Huenante (2005)

8. Lonko Juan Lorenzo Collihuin Catril (2006)
9. Matias Valentin Catrileo Quezada (2008)
10. Johnny Cariqueo Yañez (2008)
11. Jaime Facundo Mendoza Collío (2009)
12. Rodrigo Melinao Lican (2013)
13. José Mauricio Quintriqueo Huaquimil (2014)
14. Victor Manuel Mendoza Collío (2014)
15. Macarena Valdes Munoz (2016)
15. Camilo Catrillanca (2018)

We currently have 71 Mapuche political prisoners. I will mention only two cases so that you understand what the Chilean state is doing to our people, the injustices that our leaders must face, and the high price that those who do not bow their heads to the white state of Chile must face.

HÉCTOR LLAITUL

On Wednesday, Aug. 24, 2022, Héctor Llaitul, Mapuche leader of Coordinadora Arauco Malleco (CAM) was detained and has since been remanded in custody at the Biobío Penitentiary Complex. Several charges against Llaitul were filed under the state security law (anti-terrorist Law), introduced during the Pinochet dictatorship to silence opponents. Llaitul on May 7th, 2024, was found guilty of attacking authorities, usurpation, and other crimes. The prosecution has requested Llaitul be jailed for 25 years. The defendant claimed the trial was fuelled by a “political persecution” stemming from the clash between two cultures.

MACHI CELESTINO CÓRDOVA

On Jan. 4, 2013, Machi Celestino Córdova was detained and has since been remanded in custody at the Prison Compliance Centre of Temuco, Chile. Córdova is one of our spiritual leaders, the highest religious authority of the Mapuche people. He was sentenced to 18 years in prison. His lawyer claims that there is no evidence that he was involved in the accused attack, saying the case is “politically motivated” and an attempt to stop the Mapuche from reclaiming their lands.

The Chilean state violates our rights as indigenous peoples. It does not respect convention 169 of the ILO (International Labor Organization) and it does not respect the Quilin Treaty, which gives us our sovereignty. The Chilean state mistreats us and generates and applies laws and mechanisms of assimilation and extermination. The Chilean state continues to commit genocide with our Mapuche Nation People, and other indigenous peoples who also live in what is now called Chile.

Forestry destroys biodiversity, pollutes our rivers, erodes our land and displaces our people to the cities. Forestry is one more cancer that is killing our mother earth, please help us save it.

Marichiweu,

AMULEPE TAIÑ WEICHAN

Marisol

When will Australian environmental activists understand that peace is a precursor for environmental justice?

By Phil Evans

The inaction from the mainstream environmental movement on the issue of militarism is worrying. Internationally, sophisticated work to account for carbon emissions from the military – or their carbon footprint – is underway, and recently we saw a push for military emissions to be included in internationally reported figures. But in Australia, the call was merely a whimper. So what is behind the silence in the environmental movement on militarism? Is it ignorance? Or a colonial mindset that places humans as masters of their domain over seeing ourselves as connected and part of the biosphere?

This country, founded via a colonial war and genocide of its first inhabitants, has an obsession with its militaristic past.

Though the fervour of ANZAC Day devotion seems to be dying out with those who lived first hand through the horror of the world wars, the placing of our militaristic adventures at the centre of our national identity is a part of Australia's colonial mindset. Lest we forget our role in the invasion of the Ottoman Empire, including Palestine, and the subsequent colonisation of the land by the displaced Jews of Europe and elsewhere with British Empire backing.

The grassroots climate justice movement getting behind a call for the end of Israel's genocide is long coming. The big NGOs failing to get behind such an initiative begs the question whether there is a continued widening gap between grassroots politics and corporate structured approach to environmental activism.

Or perhaps there is a lack of literacy in the mainstream movement to talk about militarism issues in terms of environmental frame, despite such notions being implanted within their origin DNA. The glaring example of



Greenpeace comes to mind. And if this is true, the question is: how can the peace movement better collaborate with a broad church of climate change activists?

In Australia, some of the first Greenpeace badged actions were protests against whaling, but also the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and the horrific tests being conducted in the Pacific by the French on Mururoa Atoll.

"Friends of the Earth Melbourne's first order of business in 1974 was to organise a "Greenpeace Action" in the form of supporting an Australian vessel to sail to Mururoa in mid-1974. This was before Greenpeace existed as an organised entity in Australia."

Friends of the Earth Australia website - History

Flash forward, and Australia, and others internationally, still fail to report its military emissions as part of international agreements despite militaries around the world being some of the largest contributors of greenhouse gases to their national quotas. And whilst European NGOs scream for the inclusion, there is barely a whimper from Australia on the issue of the carbon footprint.

And whilst groups like Friends of the Earth highlight the environmental and First Nations injustice on nuclear waste as part of AUKUS and the nuclear submarine deal, the lack of outrage around the nuclearisation of our military from mainstream eNGOs is disappointing. However, this is the same movement that backs former military leaders creating a 'securitisation' of climate change as an issue, through groups like Australian Security Leaders Climate Group, rather than see it as an opportunity to push peace as a necessary precursor for climate justice. If there was ever a time to beat our swords into the ploughshares of civilian led climate disaster relief agencies, it is now.

"If we don't end war, war will end us."

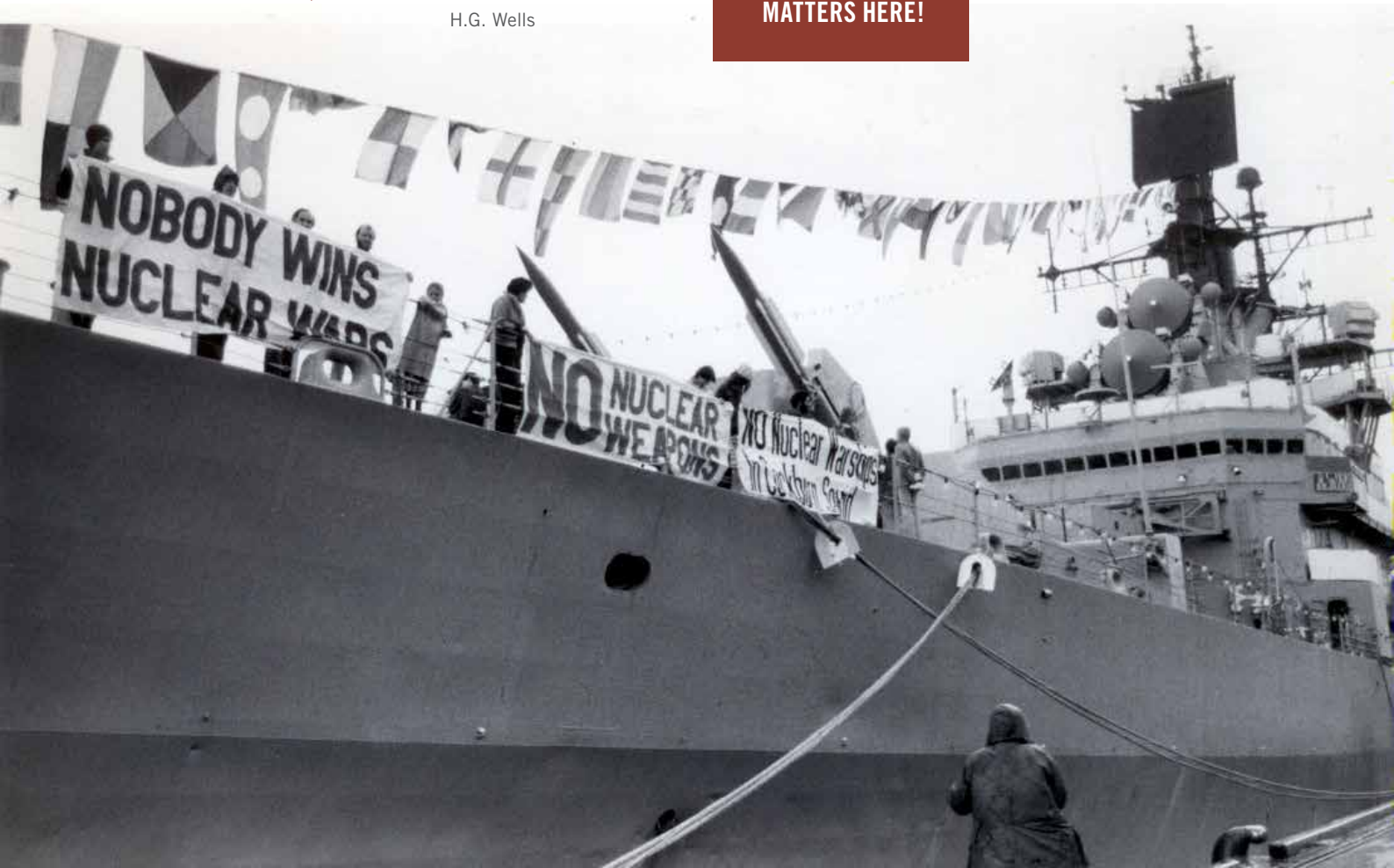
H.G. Wells



**LISTEN TO THIS
EPISODE OF EARTH
MATTERS HERE!**

*Phil Evans is a life member of
Friends of the Earth Melbourne.*

*He is also the host of Earth
Matters - the national community
radio environmental and social
justice show.*



How to reduce militarism and prevent war

Jenny Grounds

Medical Association for the Prevention of War

War is by definition a violent and lethal means of coercion. It is one end of a spectrum of ways to deal with conflict and difference. At the other end is cooperation, diplomacy, negotiation and persuasion, with competition somewhere in the middle. The reasons for war—from the Neolithic and Mesolithic periods through to modern times—remain enduring: territory, economics, fear of other people, or fear of threats.

What war destroys in an instant will take years, even generations to be repaired. Whether we are talking about homes and infrastructure or the impact on mental health and social cohesion of violence, the cost of war to health is incalculably high.

But war is escalating now at a time when we the custodians of the earth need to be absolutely focused on solving the real threats to the future of humanity.

Militarism and arms races lead to war, and both are on the rise. The US and Israel are two countries which have pursued a militaristic agenda for most of the 70 years since the second world war. U.S. President Eisenhower warned against this in 1961 when he spoke of the threat to democracy of the military-industrial complex, which he defined as “a formidable union of defence contractors and the armed forces”. Unfortunately, for the millions who have suffered through wars since then, his words were not powerful enough to prevent what is now an enormous military-industrial-academic machine, driven by the profits of war-making.

Australia has had a wavering love affair with militarism. But undoubtedly our country has become, over several decades, increasingly militaristic, at great cost to human and environmental health.

Firstly the imperial invaders of Australia carried out war with First Nations people whose lands they had occupied. In the Frontier wars, they massacred thousands and displaced and disempowered many more. We live with the ongoing impact of this today. The imperial wars to which Australians were sent in Africa, Europe and the Middle East became symbols of nationhood for Australia. While the men and women returning from WW1 said “Never Again” and the Australian War Memorial was built to honour their wishes, ANZAC has been sentimentalised and war has been glorified by focusing on the “honour” and machinery of war, rather than the futility and horror.

Recent events in Afghanistan provide an object lesson in the futility of war. An enormously costly invasion and war has failed to achieve sustainable changes for the Afghan people. Health professionals and the general community will be dealing with the direct and intergenerational trauma on veterans of both Iraq and Afghanistan for decades to come, just as we have done and continue to do for survivors of the Vietnam war. What would the situation be now if 20 years of effort and a trillion US dollars had been spent on diplomacy and aid instead of invasion, occupation and killing?

We are collectively facing unprecedented challenges: the rapidly changing climate, with sea level rises and damage to agriculture and water supplies, will escalate the huge migrations of people already displaced from their homes on the planet, and add to the challenges of global instability, hunger, poverty and conflict. It is crucial that our attention is focused on facing these challenges together, rather than escalating global tensions in the face of ever more uncertainty.

So, how is it that we can reduce this increasing militarism and prevent war?

BOOST DIPLOMACY

Australian politicians have boasted about Australia punching above its weight in the field of diplomacy, and perhaps this used to be true. While one of DFATs policy objectives is to “strengthen Australia’s influence in shaping the international political and security architecture in ways which advance our national interests and underpin prosperity and security in our region”, in practice this receives much less funding and attention than defence policy which is taking us in a completely different direction.

Funding for diplomacy has plummeted over the past quarter century, as military budgets skyrocket.¹ The 2019 Lowy Institute Poll reports that 81% of people want more money spent on health services and 74% want more for education, but only 31% want more for defence. There is minimal financial support for research in the area of peace-making and diplomacy. For all the praise that our current Foreign Minister Penny Wong has received for her efforts to mend relations with China and people in the Pacific, it can only be so useful when clearly Australia is taking a military approach to China, and using aid in the Pacific mainly to balance what is seen as too much influence.



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, set out a plan for peace and prosperity for people and the planet. ² Despite the costs being a small percentage of the costs of war, only 15% are on track, being severely hampered by lack of funding and support from wealthy countries.

END PROFITEERING FROM WARS

A nation such as Australia that aims to be a top weapons exporter³ has little incentive to promote peace. Australian weapons sales to the Saudi led coalition ⁴ which was bombing Yemen were a particularly egregious example of profit trumping health.

Australia has links to Elbit, Israel's top weapons producer, with Elbit Systems of Australia employing and appointing ex Australian Defence personnel to the board.

Elbit are a big supplier to the Israeli Defence Force and make illegal weapons like white phosphorous and cluster munitions. The BDS, (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) movement has succeeded in alerting Australian Institutions to these ethical problems. In 2017 The Royal Flying Doctor Service rejected Elbit's tender for flight training equipment, and in 2022 RMIT appeared to respond to pressure to end or not fully start a relationship with Elbit. But in February this year, yes 2024, Elbit was awarded a fresh contract with the Australian Defence Force. Just three years ago Elbit technology was stripped from Australian Army equipment over possible data security concerns.⁵ Australia is a state party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions which prohibits the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of these lethal, illegal and unethical weapons. The US and Israel are not signatories to the convention.

Clearly the Australian Government needs to feel a lot more heat from those of us who condemn their lack of an ethical framework in funding our defence force.

OPPOSE ARMS FAIRS.

Arms Fairs have been cancelled due to protest pressure in Adelaide, Seville and Liverpool to name a few. We need to keep the pressure on Land Forces and the Avalon Arms Fairs to show that Australians don't want profiteering from death.

ENCOURAGE DIVESTMENT

Quit Nukes, a joint campaign of MAPW and ICAN has been working to encourage superannuation companies to divest from nuclear weapons companies, and have achieved some significant results. A 2019 Ipsos poll found 69% of Australians don't want their money invested in nuclear weapons companies. These are the savings of ordinary Australians and Quit Nukes has been able to show that funds which are divested from weapons companies are no less profitable than those that are not.

CONDEMN THE WEAPONS INDUSTRY METHODS OF SELF-PROMOTION AND INFLUENCE PEDDLING

The weapons industry helps fund and populate some of the very institutions whose advice is heeded by the government on foreign and defence policy. In particular the Australian Strategic Policy Institute is funded by Lockheed Martin, BAE Systems, Northrop Grumman, Thales Group and Raytheon Technologies. STEM education is increasingly being funded by weapons companies in universities and schools. Lobbying access to government through party political support is an area that needs far more regulation and transparency. Some of the smaller parties and crossbenchers in our current parliament are taking strong action to clean up this interference in democracy.

CALL FOR CONSISTENCY ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ON MILITARY AGGRESSION

While China's human rights record deserves strong condemnation, Australia's has much room for improvement. Australia's treatment of refugees is condemned by many nations around the world. The US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, which Australia joined, was one of the most destructive and destabilising acts in recent times.

INCREASE OVERSEAS AID

Aid is an effective way to build good international relations, and help prevent violent conflict in recipient countries, which is so often driven by poverty, but it has declined steeply in the last seven years. Our foreign aid budget of \$4.96 billion is now less than one tenth of our defence budget of \$55.7 billion.⁶ Australia has dropped a long way down the international aid donors list.

AUSTRALIA'S INVOLVEMENT IN WAR SHOULD BE PROPERLY CONSIDERED

The process for a Prime Minister to take Australians into war is remarkably easy. Such a monumental decision should be subject to exhaustive scrutiny and debate in our parliament. In a 2021 poll fewer than 15% of Australians support the practice of a prime minister alone deciding when we go to war. Australians for War Power Reform provide all the necessary arguments for change.⁷

URGE THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TO JOIN THE TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

The Treaty was developed through a process initiated and guided by ICAN, an organisation started by MAPW and others in 2017 and for which it won the Nobel Peace Prize. It came into force in January 2022 and has now been signed by 93 countries and ratified by 70.

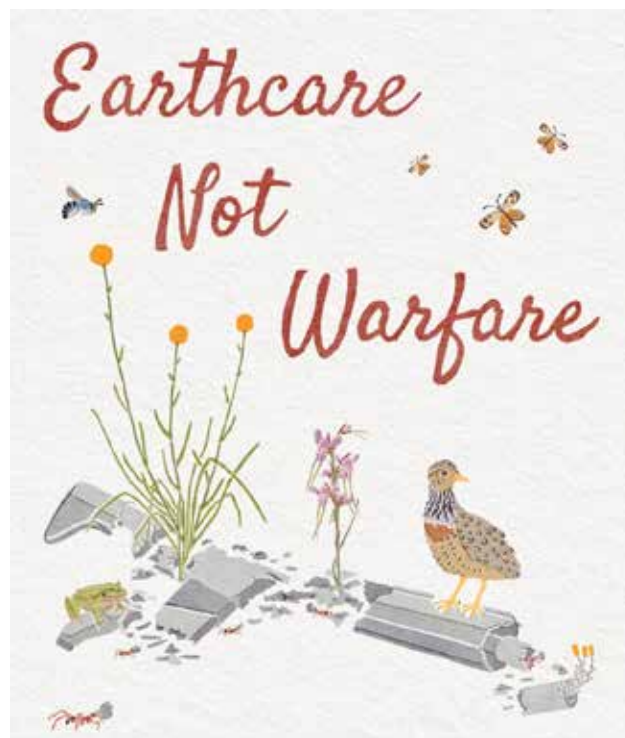
Health organisations' policies and advocacy for Australia to join the nuclear weapons ban treaty (TPNW) are growing and powerful⁸.

The TPNW is the only measure leading us towards a world free of these most inhumane of all weapons. The Labor Party pledged to sign and ratify the treaty before it came into office but has not yet done so.

It's time for Australia to abandon the myth of "nuclear deterrence" and join the Treaty. You can take action.⁹

DEMAND URGENT ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

At least ninety percent of climate scientists believe we are going to end up at more than 2 degrees of warming whatever we do now. We face a diabolical future including widespread displacement of people and increasing conflict over resources without a huge international effort. Australia



should be at the forefront rather than actively sabotaging world efforts to avoid catastrophic climate change.

In 2021, The Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia) marked 40 years of advocacy for peace. Voices for peace such as ours have made huge progress towards getting rid of nuclear weapons, and we've kept up the pressure for non-violent approaches to resolving conflicts.

It is more urgent today than ever that we mobilise to prevent the harms of war, to support a peace orientated international order and the elimination of nuclear weapons, and to defend the climate and the planet to preserve humanity. If you are a health professional, please join us today! We also welcome non health professional associate members.

Dr Jenny Grounds, Treasurer, Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia)

Dr Jenny Grounds is a regional GP living and working in the Macedon Ranges in an off the grid home for over 30 years.

She is current treasurer and past president of Medical Association for Prevention of War Australia (MAPW) and was involved in the start-up of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. (ICAN) Her particular interest is the intersection between climate and peace activism.

1. Australian Government: Department of Defence, 'Chapter Five', 2020 *Defence Strategic Update*.

2. United Nations, '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.'

3. Hutchens, G. 2018, 'Australia unveils plan to become one of world's top 10 arms exporters', *The Guardian*.

4. Hurst, D. 2021, 'Australia will not ban arms sales to countries involved in Yemeni civil war', *The Guardian*.

5. Greene, A. 2024, 'Controversial Israeli weapons company awarded \$917 million Australian army contract,' *ABC News*.

6. Tillett, A. 2024, 'Defence's big budget boost four years away, as soldier shortage hits 5000,' *Australian Financial Review*.

7. See warpowersreform.org.au/

8. See www.mapw.org.au/campaigns/nuclear-weapons-ban-treaty-health-organisations-appeal/

9. Sign up to ICAN via <https://icanw.org.au/sign-up/>

Friends of the Earth Australia Contacts

NATIONAL LIASON OFFICERS

nlo@foe.org.au

INTERNATIONAL LIASON OFFICERS

ilo@foe.org.au

MEMBERSHIP

foe@foe.org.au

FINANCE

finance@foe.org.au

WWW.FOE.ORG.AU

MEMBER GROUPS

FoE Adelaide

Bridgetown Greenbushes -
Friends of the Forest

FoE SW WA

FoE Far North Queensland

FoE Melbourne

FoE Brisbane

GM Free Australia Alliance

The Hub Foundation Castlemaine

Healthy Futures

Market Forces

Sustainable Energy Now

Goongerah Environment
Centre (GECO)

Earthworker

Australian Student
Environment Network (ASEN)

WOTCH

School Strike 4 Climate

CURRENT NATIONAL PROJECTS & CAMPAIGNS

Tipping Point

South Asian Climate Solidarity (SAPNA)

National Nukes

Defense of Earth

Chain Reaction

Economic Justice Australia

Yes 2 Renewables



Subscribe to Chain Reaction

The national magazine of Friends of the Earth, Australia

Three issues (1 year) \$33

Save \$12 (\$15/issue)

- You can subscribe online at:
shop.foe.org.au/chain-reaction
- Post cheque or money order to:
Chain Reaction, P.O. Box 222,
Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065.
(Make cheques out to Chain Reaction.)
- To pay by credit card, post your card details,
or email details to **chainreaction@foe.org.au**,
or phone **(03) 9419 8700**.



NOBODY IS FREE, UNTIL EVERYBODY IS FREE



#disruptlandforces

Melbourne Convention Centre
Naarm, 11-13 September.

- Join the mobilisation against militarism to protect our planet, people and build a safer future for all.

