



Medical Association for Prevention of War

Media Release

Bombing of Darwin Day: Do we need it?

20 FEBRUARY 2012, MELBOURNE: Australia does not need yet another annual day to commemorate warfare. There are now five national days of remembrance: Anzac Day, Remembrance Day, Battle for Australia Day, Merchant Navy Day, and the new Bombing of Darwin Day.

“Two potent days of remembrance, Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, have served us enormously well for many decades. The other three days have all been added since 2008 and serve to exemplify the creeping militarism overtaking our national imagination, at the expense of celebrating and commemorating other important events in national life,” said Dr Jenny Grounds, President of the Medical Association for Prevention of War (MAPW).

The same argument is made by leading Australian historian Professor Marilyn Lake in her paper *Militarising Australian History*, launched today as the first paper in the new War & Militarism series published by MAPW.

“It’s time to question the increasing myth-making and glorification of Australian military ‘history’,” said Professor Lake. “We need to demand evidence of the historical realities of war. We must also start celebrating the many other important contributions to the building of our nation.”

“Australia’s granting of full political rights to women was a world historic first, changing international political and social relations forever. This is surely an achievement worth commemorating. Why don’t we have statues nationwide honouring women such as Rose Scott, Vida Goldstein, Louisa Lawson, Edith Cowan, Dorothy Tangney and Edith Lyons?” Professor Lake said.

The MAPW War & Militarism series offers thought-provoking papers intended to spark public debate ahead of the 2015 Anzac centenary. A copy of Professor Marilyn Lake’s paper is available for free download at www.mapw.org.au

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