



MAPW E-NEWS

April 2018

MAPW President's report

Dear Supporter,

Australia's growing militarism has been on display again this month with an alarming announcement from the Australian War Memorial (AWM) in Canberra. In early April, with Anzac Day in the offing, plans were [reported](#) for a huge new underground expansion of the memorial to showcase more military hardware, and costing possibly half a billion dollars. However, even more disturbing was a proposal from AWM Director Dr Brendan Nelson to relay material direct from the Defence Department on current actions, including Australia's [boat turn-back activities](#). This means that Australia's refugee policy would be sanitised and glorified along with our war dead. The slide from commemoration to propaganda has become very slippery.

MAPW will be providing comment on this offensive development, through a submission to the current [parliamentary inquiry](#) into our national institutions. I encourage you to make a brief submission also if you have an opportunity; submissions are due by Tuesday 8 May.

We are very pleased to announce also the appointment of Michelle Fahy as project officer for MAPW's new "Australia: Stop Arms Promotion" project which is about to commence. The project will raise awareness of Australia's increasing role in the global arms trade and seek to counteract its normalisation, with a particular focus on the Avalon arms fair, weapons advertising and the Australian War Memorial. Watch for news of how you can help.

And there's more pressure from health professionals globally on getting rid of nuclear weapons: see below from the WMA, and please keep up your own efforts to spread awareness of the existence of the nuclear weapons ban treaty and the need for Australia to sign it. Communicating with parliamentarians on this is particularly important. If your MP and senators have not yet signed the parliamentarians' pledge, please urge them to do so. You can see the list of signatories and get the contact details for your federal representatives [here](#).

Finally, a farewell to Chrys Gardener, with sincere thanks for her solid and diligent service looking after MAPW's finances and book-keeping, and a welcome to Lani Hannah who is joining us in that role.

In peace,

Sue Wareham
President, MAPW Australia



Siblings Alix, 3 and Hugo Underwood, 5, with Hugo's Harmony Day painting.
Picture: Augusta-Margaret River Times, Therese Colman

Well done, MAPW in WA!

MAPW WA organised a very successful series of combined MAPW/ICAN events in early April, in Perth, Margaret River and Denmark, to raise awareness at the community level of things that people can do to promote peace, and especially to promote the nuclear weapons ban treaty. Such events are a great way to involve people actively and to get local media attention in a very positive way, as this [report](#) from Margaret River shows.

Please let us know if you would like to organise something in your community. If you're not in a capital city – all the better!

Australia Preaches Respect for International Law in Syria While Undermining the Law

MAPW Press Statement issued on 16 April 2018

Health professionals in Australia have strongly criticised the government for preaching respect for international law in Syria, while practising the opposite. Australia strongly endorses attacks on Syria by the US, the UK and France which violate international law, given they are neither conducted in self-defence nor authorised by the UN .

Claims by Foreign Minister Bishop that protection of civilians is our driving concern are not credible. In Senate Estimates last year the Defence Department noted that "Defence does not have access to information on the total number of casualties from the Iraq war". MAPW spokesperson Dr Margaret Beavis said "As civilian impacts in the Middle East are neither counted nor even estimated, it is deceptive to claim that their welfare is pre-eminent."

Far from addressing the grave crime of chemical weapons attacks, military action will render accountability for these crimes virtually impossible. As with other crimes, investigations - rather than allegations - are required to establish the facts, particularly as to who was responsible. The recent attacks by the US and allies [came just after](#) inspectors from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons landed in Syria. To pretend that punitive actions are conducted to

uphold international law is farcical, given they preempt the collection of evidence.

Foreign Minister Bishop [stated](#) on 14 April that Australia has long called for a political solution to this crisis. That being the case, her support for military action is totally inconsistent. “Military action simply reinforces the cycle of violence, with civilians being the primary victims. It also risks major escalation.” said Dr Beavis.

Meanwhile the government continues to show its contempt for international law regarding weapons of mass destruction, as it refuses to sign the new UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Minister Bishop has [stated](#) that “the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances is illegal and utterly reprehensible”, but she specifically supports much worse weapons of mass destruction – nuclear weapons.

Australia’s disregard for the welfare of civilians is manifest also in our ongoing - and attempt to increase – military sales to Saudi Arabia, whose bombing of Yemen is a key factor in the unprecedented humanitarian crisis there.

“Australia should support OPCW investigations, provide far greater humanitarian aid, and sign the UN nuclear weapons treaty. If chemical weapons that indiscriminately kill civilians are so immoral, how can Australia justify supporting nuclear weapons, which are worse and have been banned by the UN?” said Dr Beavis.

Published letters
the Age - letters page Monday 16 April 2018

There are weapons worse than chemical ones

After more than seven years of appalling and highly complex conflict, Syria is increasingly a proxy for a new Cold War. Outrage about use of weapons of mass destruction does not make counter attack legal, and increases the risk of escalation. Chemical weapons inspectors arrived on Saturday to investigate attacks in Douma.

Australia, along with the US, Britain and France, are highly sanctimonious about chemical weapons. Yet they refuse to commit to the new UN treaty banning the worst weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons. Never before has Australia refused to sign a weapons ban treaty. With nearly 15,000 nuclear weapons in existence it is only a matter of time before they are used, most likely by malfunction or human error. If a rules based order and protecting civilian lives is really such a priority, Australia must sign this treaty.

Dr Margaret Beavis, Medical Association for Prevention of War, Australia

Different standards of attack

So the lesson the US, Britain and France wish to teach Bashar al-Assad is that dropping bombs on the people of Syria is OK, but using chemical weapons against them is not. Is that right?

Dr Peter Wigg, Eltham



WMA Council passes resolution in support of the treaty to ban nuclear weapons

At the April meeting of the World Medical Association's Council, held in Riga, Latvia, the organisation adopted a resolution calling on all states to sign and ratify the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The WMA is a strong advocate for the abolition of nuclear weapons due to the devastating long-term health consequences they pose. [Click here](#) to read the resolution in full.

MAPW thanks the WMA for its continued advocacy to see nuclear weapons abolished.



Assoc Professor Tilman Ruff to address AMA Leadership Development Dinner

MAPW congratulates our former president Assoc Professor Tilman Ruff, founding chair of ICAN, who has been chosen as keynote speaker for this year's AMA Leadership Development Dinner.

The dinner is part of the AMA's national conference, and this year's event is in recognition of Prof Ruff's experiences as a physician and in working with governments, organisations and individuals as an outstanding leader and champion for nuclear disarmament. His observations about leadership and advocating for change will be of significant interest and value to current and future healthcare leaders.

The dinner will be held at the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra on Friday 25 May 2018. Bookings can be made via <https://natcon.ama.com.au/session/leadership-development-dinner>.

Dr Margaret Beavis talking to ABC 774 about ICAN

In this edition of Writs and Cures on ABC Melbourne with Lindy Burns, you can listen to Dr Margaret Beavis MAPW National Secretary, talk about ICAN's work and the campaign to ensure that Australia signs up to the international treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons. [Click here](#) to listen. The interview with Dr Beavis begins 16 minutes and 30 seconds in to the interview.



Round up of Media on ANZAC Day

As official events recognising ANZAC day continued the theme of *how* we fight our wars rather than *why* we fight them, there were a number of articles that gave a different perspective. They included:

- Sue Wareham. [Honouring the war dead means learning from the horror](#). Pearls and Irritations blog
- Richard Flanagan: ['Our politics is a dreadful black comedy'](#) – National Press Club speech in full

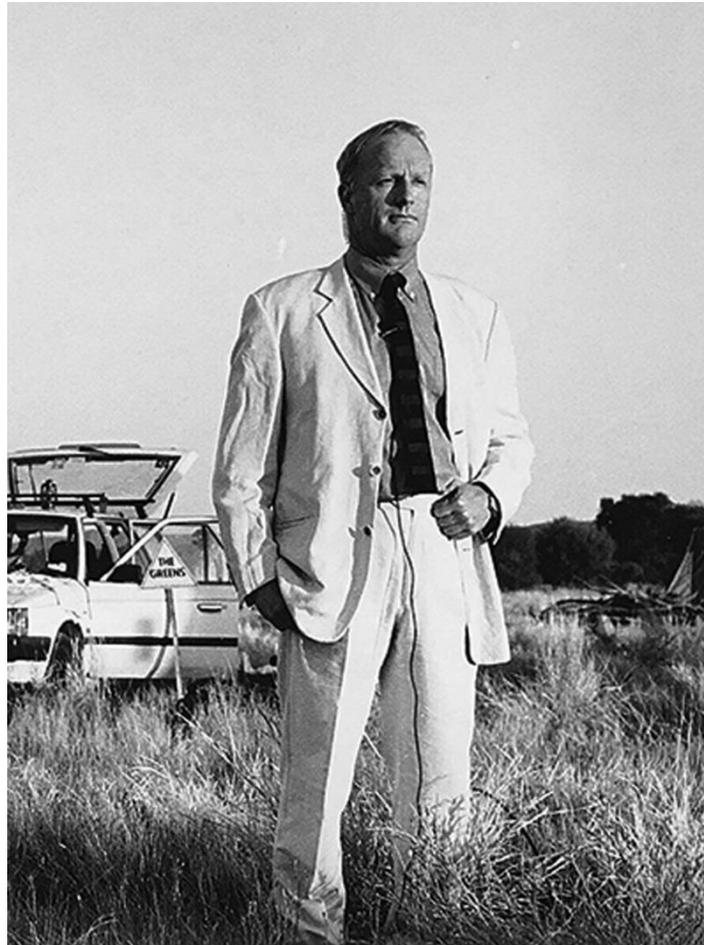


US Marines arriving in Darwin- photo Neda Vanovac/AAP

IPAN - shining a light on the presence of US troops in Australia

The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network, IPAN, is a network of organisations, community, faith and peace groups, trade unions and concerned individuals that have come together to promote and build a public dialogue advocating for Australia to adopt a truly independent foreign policy, one in which our government plays a positive role in solving international conflicts peacefully. As a member of IPAN, MAPW congratulates Nick Deane, a member of IPAN's National Committee, on his

recently published opinion article bringing public attention to the ongoing presence of US Marines in Australia. [Click here](#) to read Nick's article in the Guardian.



picture by Nuno Da Costa (2002)

Geelong College to Establish Scholarship in Honour of Dr Bill Williams

To honour the memory of former MAPW president Dr Bill Williams who died suddenly in September 2016, his former school, Geelong College, has established a scholarship in his name to enable Aboriginal students to attend the college. This has been set up with the full support of Bill's family, and the principal and leadership of the College.

The scholarship will be launched on Saturday, 26 May 2018 at 5pm in the Dining Hall, Geelong College, Talbat Street, Newtown, Vic 3220.

For information about the Bill Williams Scholarship and details on how you can contribute financially to the scholarship endowment, please [click here](#). If you would like to attend the launch, please [click here](#)

WHAT'S ON

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

What: AMA Leadership Development Dinner
When: Friday 25 May 2018 at 7.30pm
Where: National Portrait Gallery, King Edward Terrace, Parkes

The keynote speaker for this event is Assoc Professor Tilman Ruff, founding chair of ICAN.

For information on how to book, please [click here](#)

QUEENSLAND MAPW BRANCH

What: ICAN Nuclear Ban Roundtable Meeting
When: Thursday 3rd May 2017 at 11am to 12.30pm
Where: Room 418, Level 4 Public Health Building, Queensland University, Herston Rd, Herston Qld

The aim of the meeting is to receive an update from ICAN on campaign activities and to plan future activities in Queensland,

For more information [click here](#)

SOUTH AUSTRALIA MAPW BRANCH

What: The Nuclear Fuel Cycle - a presentation by Dr Rob Hall, MAPW (SA Branch) Co-coordinator and Public Health Physician
When: Friday 25 May 2018 at 7.15pm
Where: Public Schools Club Library , 207 East Terrace, Adelaide

The talk covers

- radiation and health
- low level nuclear waste
- nuclear power
- high level nuclear waste
- problems with nuclear waste

For more information [Click here](#)

VIC MAPW Branch

What: **A World Without Nukes?** Melbourne Free University event

When: Thursday 3 May 2018 at 6.30-8PM

Where: The Alderman (upstairs)
134 Lygon St East Brunswick

Speakers:

- DIMITY HAWKINS (Co-founder of ICAN and PhD candidate, Swinburne University)
- ASSOC PROF TILMAN RUFF (Co-founder of ICAN and Co-President, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War)
- DR MARGARET BEAVIS (Vice President of ICAN Australia, former President of the Medical Association for Prevention of War)

On 7 July 2017 the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) became a new international instrument in the United Nations by an overwhelming majority vote. Just weeks later, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear weapons (ICAN) was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for “its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons.”

For more information [click here](#)

What: **Vic Branch Dinner**

When: Tuesday 8 May 2018 at 6.30pm until 9.30pm

Where: The Courthouse Hotel, 86-90 Errol Street, North Melbourne

Speaker: Dr Binoy Kampmark, senior lecturer in legal and dispute studies in the Bachelor of Social Science course at RMIT. He will speak on -
The question of the bomb; peace and war on the Korean peninsula.

More info: The cost for this dinner is \$35.00 per head for most members and friends, and can be paid at the event. The dinner is not a fund-raiser, and \$35.00 is the actual cost. Students pay only \$10.00, and are subsidised \$25.00 each from MAPW Victorian branch funds.

RSVP: Dr Peter Wigg drpeterwigg@gmail.com bookings are essential

What: **War : Never Again - Fundraising Art Exhibition**

When: 19 to 24 May 2018 - Opening 19 May from 3pm to 6pm

Where: Steps Gallery, 62 Lygon Street, Carlton 3053
Featuring works by Michael Leunig, Arthur Boyd, Jeff Denton,

Billy Kelly, Ceci Cairns Ben Laycock, Lyn Hovey, John Nicholson, Lyn Nicholls, Antonia Chaffey, Fiona Murphy, John Wolseley and many more.

Phone Jenny Grounds for more details on 0407 287 684

[click here](#) for a copy of the flyer

NEVER **WAR** AGAIN



FUNDRAISING ART EXHIBITION STEPS GALLERY

62 LYGON STREET CARLTON

MAY 19 - 24 11AM - 4PM

OPENING WITH ROD QUANTOCK **SAT 19 MAY 3 - 6PM**

MICHAEL LEUNIG
ARTHUR BOYD
JEFF RAGLUS
TERRY DENTON
BILL KELLY
CECI CAIRNS
BEN LAYCOCK
LYN HOVEY
JOHN NICHOLSON
LYN NICHOLLS
ANTONIA CHAFFEY
FIONA MURPHY
JOHN WOLSELEY
& MANY MORE

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MAPW
Health Professionals
Promoting Peace

PHONE JENNY GROUNDS ON 0407287684 FOR MORE DETAILS

