World War 1: How shall we remember them?

On Friday 7 November 2014 at the St Columba Centre, Vermont Street, Ponsonby the Dorothy Brown Memorial Lecture will be given by Dr Richard Falk, formerly UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in the Palestine Territories. Starting at 7:30pm. Dr Falk will be discussing how the present problems in the Middle East arise from the peace settlement after World War1. Admission is free.

The next day the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, New Zealand Christian Network, Aotearoa New Zealand Peace and Conflict Studies Centre Trust, Pax Christi, Auckland Labour History Group have arranged a Study Day also at St Columba Centre starting at 9:00am to 5pm. The programme includes:

- Professor Richard Jackson, National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies
- Associate Professor Anabel Cooper, Otago University
- Professor Peter Lineham, Massey University.
- Dr Andrew shepherd, formerly Centre for Theology and Public Issues , Otago University
- Associate Professor Peter Wills, Auckland University.

There will also be a panel Discussion "Who chose to resist? Panel with Nanaia Mahuta MP, on Princess Te Puea; historian, Megan Hutching (Auckland Labour History Group) on "New Zealand Women who Opposed the War"; Ryan Bodman on the Passive Resisters Union. Chairperson Keith Locke, former Green MP.

There is a small charge expected to be \$20 for the Study Day that includes lunch and morning and afternoon tea.

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Do Justice!!

"Do Justice, Love Kindness and Walk Humbly With Your God" Micah 6:8

A Newsletter on Social Justice Issues

Welcome to the October edition of Do Justice for 2014. This newsletter prepared by Auckland Diocesan Social Justice Group looks at various Social Justice Issues.

"Dirty Politics", Surveillance and Inequality

In 1945 George Orwell published Animal Farm and four years later Nineteen Eighty Four, two of the most significant books of the twentieth century. In some ways Orwell was a prophet before his time. Animal Farm written in the final years of World War 2 looks at equality and how some can be more equal than others and in some ways is a picture of the prevailing concept of equality in New Zealand today.

Nineteen Eighty Four takes the concepts behind Animal Farm a step further and looks at a world where surveillance of the population is total, that history is regularly rewritten in the government's invented language "Newspeak" under the control of a privileged Inner Party elite that persecutes all individualism and independent thinking as "thoughtcrimes". Surveillance is carried out via the television that is in every home. The book was written at a time when TV was for the elite, before the computer had even been thought about, and the internet only a futurologist's dream.

Now forty years on from the time Orwell wrote his speculations do not look as farfetched as they did in 1949.

The publication of Nicky Hager's book Dirty Politics together with the visit of the American Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Glenn Greenwald may well have been the defining events of the 2014 General Election campaign whatever you may think of them. The revelations of both Edward Snowdon, with whom Greenwald worked, and Nicky Hager do appear to have parallels with the Orwell books.

There are two issues that the book Dirty Politics mentions that contribute to the Inequality dialogue. The first issue is the impact of blogger attacks on individuals and the reasons for the attacks. Wendyl Nissan in the NZ Herald on 16th September 2014 writes about her experience of being attacked in the Whale Oil and Cactus Kate blog sites because of what she was writing about various food products and the additives used in them. The bloggers tried to discredit Wendyl Nissan. Nicky Hager's book reveals that the bloggers appear to be working on behalf of the Food & Grocery Council, which represents companies who produce soft drinks and processed foods, some of which she had written about. Jane Clifton in the Listener on 30 August commenting on Judith Collins involvement with Cameron Slater, the Wale Oil blogger. Clifton writes "Collin's personal treatment of Simon Power, and by extension the Whale Oil

crusade against him, was a big factor in his decision to retire from politics". Simon Power was Judith Collin's predecessor as Minister of Justice.

Fran O'Sullivan, a financial and business commentator for the NZ Herald wrote on 3 September "That's the question the Government must address after the disquieting claims in relation to the attempts by the trio allegedly working for Hanover Finance to discredit the SFO and FMA and prime potential witnesses in any resulting court cases.

Prime Minister John Key sacked Judith Collins from the Cabinet after allegations surfaced that she was in cahoots with blogger Cameron Slater in a smear campaign against former Serious Fraud Office boss Adam Feeley.

A cache of emails appears to reveal that three people - Carrick Graham, who was former Hanover Finance director Mark Hotchin's PR man, tax lawyer and blogger Cathy Odgers (aka Cactus Kate) and blogger Cameron (Whale Oil) Slater - were running campaigns apparently on behalf of Hotchin to try to discredit the SFO and the Financial Markets Authority as they investigated the failed finance company."

Is this the 21st century version of "thoughtcrimes"?

But what does this have to do with inequality? Much has been said and written about the need to lift the incomes of the very poor so they can live in dignity but little appears to have been said about the power that comes with great wealth. The experiences of both Wendyl Nissan and Adam Feeley, who were just trying to do their job, does show how much power the superrich, be they individuals or corporations, can wield. And we should not have to rely on investigative journalists and whistle blowers to uncover the blatant abuse of wealth and power. A number of politicians, and some in the media, have lamented the lack of debate about "policies" in this election campaign. Yes it is important that we hear and can understand, and question the policies, of those wishing to govern us for the next three years in freedom. But it is equally important that New Zealand does not become a part of the Airstrip twenty one a province of Oceania as described by Orwell where the right to question government has been removed.

The Archbishop of Canterbury talks about Fundamentalism, and relationships between Christianity and Islam. An extract from an interview by Marcelo Schneider of Archbishop Justin Welby during a visit to Brazil in early September 2014.¹

"Fundamentalism is more of a sociological issue than merely a religious one. It can exist in any religion. Fundamentalism, in the sense we use it today, is usually a response from a group of people who find it difficult to cope with change in the society around them. So they try to create a place in which there is no change, in which they are safe. On exclusion from the society, fundamentalists end up very quickly opposed to the mainstream of society. So fundamentalism is a general characteristic that we find throughout history.

Following my meeting with the Christian leaders from the Middle East in England, we describe the trauma faced by people in Iraq and Syria as worse as anything that has hit the Christian community in the region since the invasion of Genghis Khan in 1259.

So how should we respond to that? http://www.projectact.org/

We have seen a number of young Muslims in Europe, the United States and the United Kingdom who find a purpose in life by being involved in Jihad. This understanding of Jihad which implies violence is rejected by the vast majority of Muslims. The only way we can address this issue is not to simplify but to take into consideration all aspects. This issue must be addressed in a way that brings together all religious traditions that value a nonviolent approach to dealing with conflict.

The question that was raised with Pope Francis was how we should respond immediately to these issues. And he said he was not calling for bombing, nor am I, but we do need to look at all possible means of creating a safe haven for Christians in that region. That may involve soldiers and intelligence operations. The governments need to decide how that is done. But one of the things that changed my mind came after a meeting with leaders in the Middle East who said, "we don't want asylum. We want to be in the area in which we lived for 2000 years."

Finally, relations with Islam are complicated because there is this particular, very small minority, who are incredibly dangerous. But on the 3rd of September there was a meeting outside Westminster Abbey with Muslim, Jewish and Christian leaders in a vigil for peace in Iraq and Syria.

One danger is to simplify what is an incredibly complicated problem. The other danger is to think that we can deal with this quickly. It's going to take years of building relationships, of dealing with social and economic problems, but, above all, of enabling young people to tackle issues of materialism in society so that they realize a spiritual purpose in which they can serve God faithfully within the great tradition of an internal Jihad for peace and justice in our lives."

Archbishop Welby also talked about human trafficking and slavery after meeting with Pope Francis. He said in the interview:

"The Spirit of God is at work overcoming denominational differences to address the issue of human trafficking and slavery. The dialogue between Pope Francis and me on this particular subject has been positive. He is a man with humour and a depth of spiritual life which is challenging and wonderful. We spoke about an initiative between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion on human trafficking and human slavery. The project is supported by an Australian source deeply committed to end human trafficking and slavery.

This is for the first time since the Reformation that we have a major joint global project to challenge human trafficking and slavery, together with the NGOs, charities and churches that have been working on these issues for many years. This is a massive challenge.

The Anglican Communion has a global network for a campaign against domestic violence and gender-based violence, particularly in conflict situations.... I really want to say that a global church that seeks afresh the presence of Jesus Christ will find itself centred by the Spirit in a pilgrimage of justice and peace and will change the world."

In New Zealand Nvader and Tear Fund have launched Project Act - Against Human Trafficking. More information at http://www.projectact.org/

¹ http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/archbishop-of-canterbury-reflects-on-the-201cpilgrimage-of-justice-and-peace201d