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EDITORIAL

The health risks of legalising cannabis

One of the daftest pro-drugs proposals ever dreamt up has been the recent call by law-makers in the American state of Minnesota for their government to make financial restitution to dope-addicts allegedly harmed by drug prohibition.

This is intended as “a form of reparation”, aimed to benefit those who have “experienced a disproportionately large amount of cannabis enforcement”.

You can’t make this stuff up. It’s akin to the government offering financial restitution to drink-drivers who’ve been fined and barred from driving.

“This is a form of reparation”, pleads Minnesota Democrat state Senator Lindsey Port, who is sponsoring the marijuana bill before the state’s upper house. “Direct harm has been done to communities by prohibition and by the state, and it is our responsibility to undo that harm.”

Supporting Senator Port’s bill is the Minnesota is Ready for Cannabis Legalisation coalition, whose campaign manager, lawyer Ms Leili Fatehi, said recently: “We know that cannabis prohibition disproportionately impacted not just the individuals that are caught up in the criminal justice system themselves ... but the entirety of their communities.” (Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, August 2, 2023)

The “direct harm” done to individuals and communities, however, has not been because cannabis has been prohibited, but because it is so readily available around the world.

For far too long the powerful pro-drugs lobby, faithfully backed by a supporting chorus of clapping seals in the mainstream media and academia, has peddled the falsehood that cannabis is a harmless recreational drug.

In reality, the grave health risks associated with long-term cannabis use have long been known to the medical profession.

Scientific evidence for the mental and physical health risks, not only of cannabis but of other illicit drugs, has been copiously documented by Australian author and veteran anti-drugs campaigner, Mrs Elaine Walters OAM, in her important new book, *‘Street Drugs’: The New Addiction Industry*, which will be reviewed in the next issue of the *Endeavour Forum Newsletter* (book details are below on page 15).

Mrs Walters’ book includes a summary of the alarming evidence, presented by three Australian scientists to the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna in March this year, of the toxicity of today’s highly engineered cannabis.

Professors Gary Hulse, Stuart Reece and John Toumbourou showed from numerous international studies how legalising cannabis has been linked to poorer educational outcomes in the young, an increased incidence of mental health problems, and the greater likelihood of serious/violent crimes. Long-term cannabis use can also cause chromosomal damage, resulting in accelerated ageing, cancer, birth defects and higher infant mortality.

The legalisation and decriminalisation of cannabis in parts of the U.S. and Canada has also been linked to markedly increased incidences of cannabis poisoning, according to a recent study by four other Australian researchers, Sara Allaf, Jessy S. Lim, Nicholas A. Buckley and Rose Cairns.

Their meta-analysis, the combined results of 30 studies, appeared in the UK-based Society for the Study of Addiction’s scientific journal, *Addiction* (July 26, 2023).

They showed that cannabis use in children (usually inadvertent) can result in severe toxicity, including coma and neurological and cardiovascular disorders.

Senior author Dr Rose Cairns said in a media release accompanying publication of the report: “Increased availability and use of [cannabis-laced] edibles (gummies and chocolates, for example) appears to be an important driver of the increase in poisonings, particularly among children. Edible cannabis has a higher risk of poisoning because people tend to consume larger quantities, and the effects of cannabis take longer to show up when ingested than they do when smoked. This is concerning because edibles are especially attractive to children.”

English anti-drugs campaigner Peter Hitchens recently wrote: “Marijuana is the idol and emblem of a movement and a cult. It is not just a drug, and its enthusiasts, though nowadays they have a lot of money, are no mere lobby. Try to fight them, and you will see what I mean. I have been doing so for more than a decade and I have not even scratched their paintwork.” (*The American Conservative*, August 4, 2023)

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Labor, Greens strategy for more hospitals to provide abortions

by Kathy Clubb



Kathy Clubb

More and cheaper abortions, and more and cheaper contraception — these are the declared objectives of abortion advocates in Australia, according to a recently released report.

As could be expected, abortion ideologues want these services to be provided with taxpayer funding, and extended to migrants, indigenous

Australians, the disabled and the LGBTIQ+ community.

The report is the culmination of a Senate Community Affairs References Committee inquiry into “the universal access to reproductive healthcare” which began last September. The inquiry was instigated by the Greens, who, along with other pro-abortion entities, have been vocal about the Australian Labor Party not fulfilling its 2019 pre-election promise to make abortions free throughout the country. At that time, Labor promised to force public hospitals with commonwealth-state hospital funding agreements to provide abortions.

The inquiry was entitled, “Ending the Postcode Lottery”. This rather trite phrase refers to the relative ease with which women can access an abortion, based on their geographical location. References to the “postcode lottery” can be found peppered throughout pro-choice and mainstream media reports lamenting barriers to abortion access across Australia. The disparity of access between city and country women is always particularly highlighted.

Saving the lives of babies born alive

It is worth noting that, during roughly the same time period, the *Child Born Alive Protection Bill* was also the subject of an inquiry by the Community Affairs Legislation Committee, which, together with the References Committee, comprises the Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs. The aim of that bill, put forward by Queensland National Party Senator Matt Canavan, is to save the lives of babies born alive after a failed abortion. Originally introduced by former Queensland MP George Christensen in 2021, Senator Canavan’s iteration has surprisingly been gaining some positive coverage in the media.

The inquiry’s terms of reference, however, clearly show its emphasis on granting greater access to abortion in Australia, rather than providing real assistance to pregnant women. It rests on the claim that the National Women’s Health Strategy — a 10-year plan for which the federal government pledged \$4 million towards sexual and reproductive health — is not being implemented. Thus the Senate inquiry focussed on the supposed need for “universal access to sexual and reproductive health information, treatment and services that offer options to women to empower choice and control in decision-making about their bodies”.

This meant that the investigation covered: access to contraceptives; costs involved with procuring an abortion; training of GPs and nurses; delivery of abortion services in remote areas; and the now ubiquitous mention of abortion care for “transgender people, non-binary people, and people with variations of sex characteristics”.

Of the 36 recommendations given in the report, only five mentioned pregnancy support — in one of these, pregnancy was lumped in with abortion care! Two of the recommendations have some merit: 1) allowing those not covered by Medicare to access pregnancy services, and 2) obtaining waiting-time waivers from overseas healthcare providers for the same.

While both of these measures would unfortunately also be applied to abortion services, they have the potential to reduce the numbers of abortions being sought by students and recently-arrived immigrants. Another positive recommendation was for better collection of data — something that has long been requested by those on both sides of the debate, as accurate statistics on abortion in Australia are sorely lacking.

The report also has a strong focus on the provision of long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs): devices which not only prevent conception but also directly cause abortions and do great harm to the women using them. Far from calling for an investigation into the dangers of LARCs, the report recommended that the Therapeutic Goods Agency speed up the approval process for new contraceptive devices and add more contraceptives to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. It also recommended that Medicare make services surrounding LARCs more profitable for GPs, as well as making abortions more profitable for abortionists. Increasing the supply and decreasing the cost of contraceptive pills was also recommended.

Two of the recommendations related to *in vitro* fertilisation, or IVF: it requested an expansion of Medicare rebates for IVF to those who currently can’t access them — this possibly refers to the possibility of providing IVF to “trans” men, since “gender-diverse” members of the population were mentioned in several places. There was also a call for IVF to be made available for those wishing to take part in altruistic surrogacy.



Matt Canavan

Many of the report’s recommendations focus on education — in schools, the community and in targeted minority groups. This means basically teaching men and women to demand abortion and is all part of the “de-stigmatisation” process. There is also a focus on providing better training for prospective abortionists, with opportunities and incentives for sexual health workers allegedly being too few in Australia.

Another recommendation which has been heard with increasing frequency over the past few years is for the provision for midwives to administer the abortion pill. According to abortion providers, Gynecology Services Australia, there are already 1,000 out of Australia’s 36,000 midwives who are accredited to dispense the abortion pill. The report goes further and suggests that less training should be required for doctors and pharmacists to dispense the abortion pill — a very dangerous scenario. Abortion advocates hope to see an increase in the number of GPs providing the abortion pill from the very low 4 per cent currently willing to do so.

One extremely worrying recommendation made by the report is that every public hospital should be made to provide

abortions. In light of the forced takeover over of Calvary Hospital in Canberra, it is clear that this is already being taken seriously by pro-abortion forces: they want abortion available at any cost. Victoria came very close to having a similar action implemented in the state last year when the Sex Party (later renamed the Reason Party) MP, Fiona Patten, tried unsuccessfully to force Catholic hospitals to provide abortions.

In the face of continued calls for increased access to abortion, the pro-life community must take every opportunity to amplify its message. There is no shortage of videos about the reality of abortion, or stories about abortion regret, which can be shared. Pregnancy centres can always use our assistance and donations. We must also keep asking the hard questions, such as why so

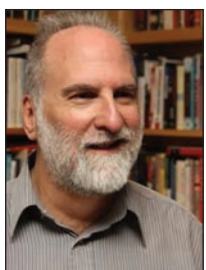
few doctors want to provide abortions — especially late-term ones. We must push back relentlessly against those who are complicit with the greatest human rights abuse of all time.

Kathy Clubb is a mother and grandmother and has home-educated her children for the best part of 30 years. She has undertaken official pro-life work for 10 years, first in Tasmania, and then in Victoria. In 2016, Kathy was part of an unsuccessful attempt to defeat Victoria's abortion exclusion-zones, which led to a constitutional challenge in the High Court of Australia in late 2018. Her articles have appeared at Family Life International, The Remnant Newspaper, LifeSiteNews, Fidelity magazine and other publications. ■

Has West declared war on childhood?

by Bill Muehlenberg

The Western world's love/hate relationship with children.



Bill Muehlenberg

It was Dietrich Bonhoeffer who is purported to have said: “The ultimate test of a moral society is the kind of world that it leaves to its children.” Whether this is correctly attributable to him, the quote itself is quite accurate. How we treat our kids determines what sort of society we are.

But in the West at least it seems we are quite schizophrenic when it comes to children. On the one hand we have millions of parents who of course will do their best for their children, and even strangers will go out of their way to help a child in need. But at the same time it seems that the West has declared war on children.

So many adults seem intent on stealing away our children's childhood and innocence. We are forcing all sorts of adults-only agendas on them, including the desire by so many to hyper-sexualise them at the youngest of ages. Just look at how the sexual revolutionaries (including the radical homosexual and trans activists) are directly and deliberately targeting our kids. I have documented this countless times on my website.

Again, this stands in marked contrast with how we attempt to look after and protect children at other times and places. This caught my attention in June as I read a newspaper headline. It involves the rescue of four children lost in the wild for a month. As one report says about this:

“Four Indigenous children who had been missing for more than a month in the Colombian Amazon rainforest were found alive and flown to the capital Bogota early Saturday. The children, who survived a small plane crash in the jungle, were transported by army medical plane to a military airport at around 3.30pm AEST Saturday.

“Lesly Jacobombaire Mucutuy, aged 13, Soleiny Jacobombaire Mucutuy, 9, Tien Ranoque Mucutuy, 4, and infant Cristin Ranoque Mucutuy were stranded in the jungle. They are the only survivors of a deadly plane crash that occurred on May 1.

“They were taken off the plane on stretchers, wrapped in thermal blankets, with ambulances waiting to bring them to hospital, AFP journalists said. General Pedro Sanchez, who led the search operation, credited Indigenous people

involved in the rescue effort with finding the children. ‘We found the children: miracle, miracle, miracle!’ was the message he told reporters on Friday.” (*Herald Sun*, Melbourne, June 10, 2023).

One is reminded of a similar sort of situation back in 2018 when 12 children and their coach were rescued from a flooded cave in Thailand. It made world headlines, and international rescue teams — including from Australia — were involved to free them after being trapped for 18 days. One of the rescuers even died in the process.

We can go to such great lengths to see to it that our children (and other children) are safe, alive and well. We will even offer our own lives for their sake. But, as I say, in so many other ways we really seem to despise our kids. We are working overtime to destroy their childhood and to force them into an adult world which they simply are not yet ready for.

Many experts have spoken on this matter over the years. Here I want to mention two of them who wrote passionately about the well-being of children back in the early 1980s. I first refer to the American child psychologist **David Elkind**. Back in 1981 he penned *The Hurried Child: Growing Up Too Fast Too Soon*.

In it he offered this somewhat more general remark:

“Valuing childhood does not mean seeing it as a happy, innocent period, but rather as an important period of life to which children are entitled. It is children's right to be children, to enjoy the pleasure, and to suffer the pains of a childhood that is not infringed by hurrying. In the end, a childhood is the most basic human right of children.”

He provided specifics on how we are harming our children. For example:

“Hurried children are forced to take on the physical, psychological, and social trappings of adulthood before they are prepared to deal with them. We dress our children in miniature adult costumes (often with designer labels), we expose them to gratuitous sex and violence, and we expect them to cope with an increasingly bewildering social environment — divorce, single parenthood, homosexuality. Through all of these pressures the child senses that it is important for him or her to cope without admitting the confusion and pain that accompany such

changes. Like adults, they are made to feel they must be survivors, and surviving means adjusting — even if the survivor is only four or six or eight years old.”

His volume is still well worth reading today. And, writing a year later, American academic **Neil Postman** wrote about these issues as well in his important 1982 volume, *The Disappearance of Childhood*. He discusses the various ways in which adults harm our children. In addition to obvious things like child abuse and actual sexual assault, there are other ways we psychologically and emotionally molest our children. For example, he discusses the rise in teen promiscuity and sexual activity, and then says:

“We may safely assume that media have played an important role in the drive to erase differences between child and adult sexuality. Television, in particular, not only keeps the entire population in a condition of high sexual excitement but stresses a kind of egalitarianism of sexual fulfilment; sex is transformed from a dark and profound adult mystery to a product that is available to everyone — let us say, like mouthwash or underarm deodorant. One of the consequences of this has been a rise in teen-age pregnancy....”

There are many more such quotes that could be featured here. And recall that these two books appeared over 40 years ago. The things the authors warned about back then have only got much, much worse. Today in the West it seems that in so many ways the war on our children is near complete.



Dr Erwin W. Lutzer

The militants have long told us — and quite openly — that they want access to our children. They are not hiding their aims and desires. And the examples of this are endless, including all the drag-queen story-times with our kids held

in schools and public libraries. Hmm, why do they never seem to hold these sessions in old folks’ homes? We know the answer to that one.

In his recent book, *No Reason to Hide: Standing for Christ in a Collapsing Culture* (2022), Canadian author **Dr Erwin W. Lutzer** reminds us of what we are up against, and how we must all get involved:

“After a lovely dinner with some friends in Colorado, whose deck overlooks a mountain range, the wife said to us, ‘I like to sit here in my rocking chair every morning, enjoying the mountains while rocking back and forth.’

Then she added, ‘And when I’m done, I look at my phone and it tells me I have walked three miles!’

“Many of us wish we could sit in a rocking chair and make progress on our journey toward a better future for our children and grandchildren. But life in today’s world doesn’t work that way; we have to leave our comforts and join in the fray to protect our children from those who would exploit them.

“The radical left wants our children. And they want them young. Their strategy is quite simple: Divide children from their parents by any means possible. Use social media, racism, and sexuality to confuse and lead them down a leftist path. In the minds of the left, raising children is too important a task to be left to the parents....

“The more godless our government becomes, the more insistent our educators will be that children belong to them, not the parents. Historically, Marx, Lenin and Hitler all saw the value of indoctrinating the next generation so that their respective ideologies could be passed along for generations to come.”

It all sounds so very much like life in the secular left West today. So many of our elites, politicians, educators and media personnel all feel the same way, and have declared war on our children. The question is: What will we do about it?

If we are willing to die for our children in the jungles of Columbia or the caves of Thailand, how about being willing to die for them here in Melbourne or Auckland or Chicago or London? And that means protecting them not just physically but psychologically, emotionally, mentally, morally and spiritually.

Jesus was not messing around when He warned that those who will go after our young ones would be better off thrown into the depths of the sea with a millstone around their neck. This is very serious business, folks. We need to pray much more and work much more to protect our children from those who seek to defile and destroy them.

Bill Muehlenberg is an American-born Christian apologist, ethicist and cultural commentator, who lives in Melbourne. He has written a number of books, including *Strained Relations: The Challenge of Homosexuality* (2011), *The Challenge of Abortion* (2015) and *The Challenge of Euthanasia* (2016). The above article is reprinted, with the author’s permission, from his website, *CultureWatch*, at: BillMuehlenberg.com

Endeavour Forum offer their deepest condolences to Bill, who recently lost Averil, his beloved wife of 41½ years, to cancer.

How the Nazis captured the German educational system

The Nazi conspirators publicly announced the purposes of their educational and training program. Adolf Hitler stated at Elbing, Germany, on November 6, 1933:

“When an opponent declares, ‘I will not come over to your side, and you will not get me on your side,’ I calmly say, ‘Your child belongs to us already... What are you? You will pass on. Your descendants, however, now stand in the new camp. In a short time they will know nothing else but this new community’.”

Hitler said on May 1, 1937:

“The Youth of today is ever the people of tomorrow. For this reason we have set before ourselves the task of inoculating our youth with the spirit of this community of

the people at a very early age, at an age when human beings are still unperverted and therefore unspoiled. ...

“This Reich stands, and it is building itself up for the future, upon its youth. And this new Reich will give its youth to no one, but will itself take youth and give to youth its own education and its own upbringing.”



Adolf Hitler

SOURCE: *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Office of the U.S. Counsel for Prosecution of Axis Criminality, 8 vols (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), Vol. 1, Chapter 7.*

What price our national security?

by John Morrissey

Alongside the distraction of the proposed Indigenous Voice to Parliament, the very real problems of inflation and the cost of living, and the rush to renewable energy at any cost, what should be the bedrock issue of defence and national security receives a low priority. It is an irony that in 1901 a Defence Act was of the highest priority for the founding fathers of Federation.

The potential threat now is the People's Republic of China, with its vast military and economic power and its clear objective of establishing hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region, alongside the perceived twilight of the Pax Americana which has prevailed since 1945. It should be clear to all that Australia is ill-prepared to stand up to this challenge and to fulfil its role under the ANZUS treaty, behind which we have sheltered for seven decades. While our governments have paid lip service to these realities, the neglect of what is needed has been little short of irresponsible.

As *The Australian's* foreign affairs editor Greg Sheridan observes, few countries spend more on defence forces for less military effect than Australia (*The Australian*, June 6, 2023). His reports on the Department of Defence have been scathing, the bottom line being that the nation is totally unprepared in the event of war.

Politicians are as culpable as bureaucrats for this state of affairs. Two glaring examples stand out. Without a keel being laid, we have endured the submarine saga for 15 years: it was "Son-of-Collins-class" under Kevin Rudd; Tony Abbott's intention to purchase Japanese-built vessels; Malcolm Turnbull's fantasy of a hybrid French concoction; and, finally, the Morrison government's AUKUS submarine deal — all cursed with decades of delay for delivery and the politics of employment in South Australia. And what could be more indicative of an army not fit for deployment than the over-reliance on the tiny Special Air Services (SAS) regiment in Afghanistan?

AUKUS is a partnership, involving the Australian, UK and U.S. governments, to enable us to acquire nuclear-powered submarines. It will have Australia hosting U.S. Virginia-class submarines in our waters, before acquiring several of them secondhand, and meanwhile building, together with the UK, a new "SSN-AUKUS" vessel, which will replace the Royal Navy's Astute-class submarine fleet — all over the next two decades.

This is of course condemned as warmongering by China, which itself has already built an extensive blue-water navy, larger than that of the U.S.

After the Labor governments of 2007–2013 had buried Kevin Rudd's ambitious naval plans and gone on to ditch over 30 other military programs, an incoming Abbott government attempted to catch up, especially in ship-building, with the belated appointment of Kevin Andrews as defence minister being hailed by the Australian Defence Force, if not his department.

His successors, after the Malcolm Turnbull coup, have allowed the department and some of the top brass to create the waste and lack of direction that Sheridan and others have decried for some years. The flawed frigate program, and the department's pretentious engagement — as if it were the Pentagon — in "off-the-plan" acquisitions with an uncertain outcome down the track, are just two obvious examples. Off-the-shelf proven military hardware would be a far more rational choice for a nation like ours, instead of behaving like kids in a toyshop.

Ever since President George W. Bush dubbed PM John Howard as "sheriff" in the Asia-Pacific region, Australian governments have treated our island neighbours chiefly as aid recipients. Meanwhile, the growth of China's power and influence in the region has been accompanied by large amounts of Chinese aid — but with strings attached. China's Belt-and-Road initiative has involved state-owned companies investing in assets, such as mining operations, in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and has enriched the local elites while often leading small nations into debt-traps.



**Defence Minister
Richard Marles**

Such was the flashpoint for populist riots against the Solomon Islands prime minister Manasseh Sogavare in 2021, which led to Australia sending a contingent of Australian Federal Police to assist with law and order. A larger Chinese force also arrived, and the incompatibility of the two groups led to the withdrawal of the Australians.

New foreign affairs minister Senator Penny Wong has made some well-publicised visits to the region to show the flag, and there have been some small commitments in the recent Budget; but it has been too little, too late. Just now, the Solomon Islands has signed a new policing pact with Beijing, with PM Sogavare accusing Australia of short-changing his nation on aid, and his gaining further funding from the Chinese Communist Party.

A more positive situation exists in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (commonly known as the Quad) involving India, Japan, the U.S. and Australia, with military exercises and recognition of mutual interests. To these should be added Vietnam, the Philippines and other South-East Asian nations apprehensive about Beijing's aggressive stance over the South China Sea. There is also renewed interest in the region on the part of several NATO countries, in recognition of an emerging Russia-China axis. The Australian government is urgently tightening up cyber security, after numerous cyber incursions believed to have their origin in China or Russia.

The megaphone diplomacy in 2021 of the then PM Scott Morrison and his defence minister Peter Dutton, which accompanied the AUKUS announcement, has softened somewhat under the Albanese government. It tries to present itself as co-operative with China as a neighbour and as chief trading partner, but strong on principle and Australia's national interest. It is noticeable, however, that Canberra has since refrained from joining in international condemnation of China for its human rights transgressions, for example, its use of Uighur slave labour in industry. Prolonged detention of a number of Australian citizens on likely trumped-up charges also needs to be addressed.

Labor's support for AUKUS in the context of an election campaign certainly neutralised any advantage therein for the Coalition; but the arrangements with the U.S. and UK to acquire and build nuclear-powered submarines have proceeded seamlessly under a change of government. However, beyond some confident announcements from defence minister Richard Marles, nothing concrete has eventuated beyond the recent graduation of several RAN submariners from their U.S. training on nuclear propulsion.

The project requires a massive financial outlay, but no specific provision for building either submarines or a proposed \$10bn east coast base has appeared in the recent budget. Of more concern is the 12 months' postponement, subject to a review, of acquisition of guided missiles, to be funded from cuts in military vehicle orders — an actual cut to defence spending. As Sheridan cynically observes, this government has mastered the Coalition's art form of strong rhetoric, tiny deployments and distant plans beyond the forward estimates.

One wag has suggested that the greatest danger to AUKUS would be a “woke” defence bureaucracy tinkering with the functioning of the Australian military with such things as solar panels to reduce carbon emissions, wind-power for transportation, trans “heads” and sleeping quarters, and accommodation for a diversity, equity and inclusion officer (*News Weekly*, April 1, 2023).

On a more serious note, interference looms at the coming ALP national conference, where many on the Left are adamant in their opposition to nuclear power. Former PM Paul Keating and former NSW premier and foreign affairs minister Bob Carr have also arisen from their slumbers to condemn AUKUS and, more recently, any suggestion of the “plague” of NATO involvement in our region.

The release of a Defence Strategic Review this year has received an enthusiastic response. Yet defence spending remains at only 2 per cent of GDP, instead of the perhaps 4 per cent needed to establish defence industries and the fuel stockpile required if our sea-lanes were threatened by conflict. Australia also relies on imported ammunition and artillery shells, while much of our inventory has been sent to Ukraine. Unfortunately, the government shows no intention of replenishing any of the gaps left by sending materiel to Ukraine.

A recent contribution to Ukraine of outdated military junk, at the inflated value of \$110m, has been rightly condemned by the federal opposition. A bright spot exists in the building of military vehicles onshore: the Bushmaster and Hawkei armoured vehicles and the Boxer heavy-weapon carrier. Perhaps as a consequence of the his attendance at a NATO summit in Lithuania, held in July, PM Albanese has subsequently announced, also at an inflated value of \$100m, a donation of 30 additional Bushmasters — although there was no mention of the Hawkeis specifically requested by Ukraine as ideal for launching battlefield guided missiles.

Behind all of the palaver concerning defence, there remains the assumption that the U.S. will continue to guarantee our freedom, on account of the ANZUS Treaty and the little more than token contributions which Australia has made to our ally's military missions in recent decades. Some have even chosen to believe that this commitment would hold, even if we were not to stand with the U.S. in the event of war with China to defend Taiwan.

This is the same delusion for which former U.S. President Donald Trump chided Western European nations during his 2017–20 term, as they made themselves hostages to Russia via their dependence on her for energy, while reducing investment in defence.

His “America First” pronouncement, suggesting isolationism, explains much of the opprobrium which he has experienced abroad; but the moral question remains of why should U.S. blood and treasure be expended in defence of nations unwilling to make the effort themselves? Now, perhaps, the Ukraine conflict has inspired a rethink in the Western world.

Despite the spectacle of a doddering President Joe Biden on the world stage, a woke administration in Washington and the debacle in Afghanistan in 2021, the U.S. remains an extremely strong military power. Its technological superiority overall, and especially its nuclear submarine and aircraft-carrier fleets, would seem to outweigh China's numerical advantage. Perhaps the greatest weakness is the number of command positions occupied by those fixated on carrying out the administration's identity politics agenda. Yet a hollowed-out industrial base, resulting both from much of its manufacturing capacity being outsourced overseas and the Democrats undoing Trump's efforts to “Make America Great Again”, renders the awakening of a sleeping giant less of a likelihood to an aggressor.

Of more concern is that the U.S. today has become a divided society, with both optimism and patriotism in free fall. *The Australian's* Washington correspondent, Adam Creighton, has composed a devastating analysis of these divisions and loss of public morale, based on current polling of the American people (*Inquirer*; July 8–9, 2023).

Optimism has dropped 20 points to 43 per cent since 2012, while patriotism is rated as important by only 23 per cent of those under 30 and only 38 per cent overall. This is reflected especially in the drop of recruits to the armed forces, a trend which is mirrored in Australia. Black Americans believe that relations with whites have deteriorated, and wealth inequality overall has worsened, along with trust in government. Prescription drug-taking has soared, along with crime, which remains elevated since the 2020 Black Lives Matter “summer of love” riots.

Identity politics, as espoused by the Democratic Party, translates to a belief that individuals' race, gender and sexuality should define their relationship with the state and with other citizens. This fragments society into hostile tribes. The party also displays an aversion to the cornerstone of the Constitution, that is, freedom of speech. Socio-economic issues, such as healthcare and tax rates take a back seat to this ideology,

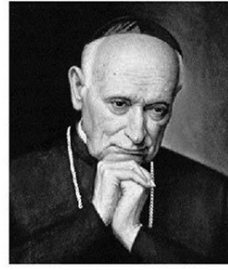
Meanwhile, the Democratic Party increasingly represents the wealthy and the establishment in a nation where the poorer 50 per cent of households own a mere 2.4 per cent

of total household wealth. Crippling inflation, which has dragged down living standards, has been largely caused by the injection of trillions of dollars by the Biden administration, much of it wasted.

The Republican Party has become the defender of the Constitution against the Democratic Party, which rejects some of its core principles. Recent victories in the Supreme Court's rulings on *Roe vs Wade* and race-based affirmative action in universities have given some heart to conservatives, while a Louisiana federal judge's condemnation of media companies' censorship of posts and articles, which subsequently turned out to be accurate, also suggests a positive trend. Yet the next generation, informed by woke education, social media and even Hollywood, offers little scope for confidence in the future.

All of these factors impinge on Australia's national security, a subject which should command more attention even than the related problems of cost-of-living increase and debate on the Voice to Parliament. It provides an urgent context for our misguided energy policy which makes our position with respect to China even more ludicrous. Trade and supply chains are also inseparable from defence, and Australia's dependence on China in these must be given the highest scrutiny in the deliberations of government on national security.

Labor has refrained from joining in international condemnation of China for its human rights transgressions.



From lizard-like aliens to Davos: Global government conspiracies, real and fake

Lizard-like aliens have taken over the government. Don't believe it? Just google "lizard aliens". Think that's absurd? Try some other global conspiracy theories: chemtrails, QAnon, Denver International Airport as the headquarters of the Illuminati, or King Charles III is a vampire.

As wild as these conspiracy theories sound, they have anywhere from tens of thousands to millions of believers. Such conspiracy theories can be used by global elites to dismiss anyone who disagrees with their agenda as conspiracy nuts.

The January 2023 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, brought elites from throughout the world together to talk. As conference founder Klaus Schwab declared at the meeting, "We must master the future, master the future." Schwab is the same guy who went on Chinese state television last year to tell an interviewer that he thinks China is a "a role model for many countries". He added, "I think we should be very careful in imposing systems. But the Chinese model is certainly a very attractive model for quite a number of countries."

Attending this year's conference were German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and the presidents of Spain, South Korea, Poland and the Philippines, along with 51 other heads of state. Fifty-six finance ministers, 19 central bank governors, 30 trade ministers, 35 foreign ministers, and more than 700 CEOs across the world appeared. President Biden's special climate envoy John Kerry was there. Former CNN host Brian Stelter showed up to warn, without irony, of the "clear and present danger of disinformation" in the news. Texas Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee pontificated about racism in the West to a largely white crowd.

It's as if the Davos meeting, with its theme "The Great Reset", went out of its way to confirm to the rest of the world that an international conspiracy is leading world political and financial elites to create a new world order.

The Davos conference provides easy fodder for conspiracy theorists. Talk of the secretive Bilderbergers, the Trilateral



**Klaus Schwab,
WEF founder**

Global elites see the masses as fools who don't know their own best interests.

Commission and the Bohemian Club has been around for 50 or more years. Maybe such talk was not so far-fetched, because the Davos conference shows that a globalist outlook permeates global elites. They disdain democracy, dismiss national sovereignty as an antiquated concept, and see the masses as fools who don't know their own best interests.

Some conspiracies are real

Obviously, some conspiracy theories prove to be true. John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry in Virginia in 1859 actually was a conspiracy. There was an actual plot organised by John Wilkes Booth to assassinate Lincoln. The effort by Soviet intelligence to penetrate the highest levels of American government in the 1930s to 1950s was all too real.

How to distinguish an actual conspiracy from a nutty theory? The shameful abdication by U.S. media, the FBI and intelligence services of their supposed mission to separate truth from falsehood in the last seven-plus years has made this determination more difficult. Nevertheless, we can start with a simple definition: A conspiracy is a plot by two or more people to undertake unlawful action.

American history is rife with conspiracy theories. The United States is not unique in this regard. Conspiracy theories can be found throughout history and in every country. The Masonic conspiracy gained traction during the French Revolution and would be transported to the United States. Papist conspiracies have a lengthy history in England, long before fears of Vatican plots to seize control of government ever appeared in America. The rise of industrial America in the 19th century introduced the alleged international Jewish conspiracy to the United States. The Cold War in the post-World War II era heightened apprehension of Soviet plots to subvert America democracy.

Many of the conspiracy theories that emerged in the course of our history can be rejected out of hand. However, the charge of a crazy conspiracy theory is not infrequently used to discredit opponents of more substantive projects by groups colluding in pursuit of their agendas. In other words, powerful and corrupt elites like to dismiss any challenge to their power or charges of malfeasance as merely a "conspiracy theory".

We saw this phenomenon during the Covid-19 pandemic. Those Americans — including distinguished scientists — who raised concerns about shutting down businesses and schools or questioned the efficacy of vaccines for young students, were branded as conspiracy theorists. Those challenging the established narrative were cancelled on social media and repudiated by the mainstream media. People who doubted the efficacy of masks might as well have been warning that the lizard-like aliens were in control of our government.

Elites commonly denounce anything contrary to the established narratives as a conspiracy theory, as we saw in connection with questions about the origins of Covid-19, the destructive economic lockdowns, and the January 6, 2021 “insurrection” at the U.S. Capitol. Wacky conspiracy theories — and there are some lulus out there — play right into the hands of those who want to ridicule any opposing point of view. Nonetheless, some of the wilder conspiracy theories have entertainment value. Exhibit A is the lizard aliens theory.

Lizard aliens control governments?

If a 2013 Public Policy Polling survey is to be believed, more than 12 million Americans thought lizard-like aliens are here on earth in control of our government and other governments. We can take some comfort that the number of Americans believing in the lizard alien conspiracy is smaller than those believing in a variety of other far-out theories, as shown by the following chart:

Conspiracy Theory	% Believing	# of Americans Believing
Government controls minds with TV	15 percent	47,087,106
CIA developed crack cocaine	14 percent	43,947,966
Bigfoot exists	14 percent	43,947,966
Obama is the Antichrist	13 percent	40,808,823
The moon landing was fake	7 percent	21,973,981
Osama bin Laden is alive	6 percent	18,834,842
Airplane chemical contrails	5 percent	15,695,702
Paul McCartney died in 1966	5 percent	15,695,702
Lizard people control politics	4 percent	12,556,562

Where did the lizard conspiracy come from? It can be traced to a single source, David Icke, a popular author and lecturer. He has followers throughout the world who believe that alien reptiles have infiltrated government. By 2023, more than 20 countries banned him from speaking within their borders. His followers viewed the bans as confirming what they already believed: that lizard aliens really do control those governments. Actually, he was banned because he was accused of anti-Semitism for arguing that the aliens had joined with already existing worldwide conspiracies of Masons, Jews and Catholics, among others.

Icke was born in England, played professional soccer, and became well known as a television sports commentator. While in Saudi Arabia he had a purported revelation about the world’s end. He saw the end of the world resulting from climate change. He became involved in the British Green Party as a leader, warning that earthquakes and climate change were going to end the world around 2005. He then turned to another apocalyptic warning: that aliens were taking over the world.

He asserted preposterously that the world is controlled by reptilian creatures known as the Brotherhood, who have the ability to transform themselves into human form. Most are male. They include George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush. Queen Elizabeth II, before she died, was an alien, and so is Tony Blair, according to Icke.

Icke finds followers on both the left and the right. After all, he started off as a Greenie in Britain. He turned to anti-Semitism

in the mid-1990s. He proclaimed that while the infamous “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” (a document faked by czarist Russians in order to smear Jews) was forged, the forgery was accomplished by a small clique of Jewish and non-Jewish elites working through an organisation called the Illuminati. The Illuminati conspiracy was composed of blood-sucking Satanists who were direct genetic descendants of trans-dimensional, shape-changing alien reptiles. He said we cannot detect the reptilians because they are visible only on a light frequency that humans cannot detect.

He writes books, 20 so far, published in 40 countries under such titles as *And the Truth Shall Set You Free*. His website apparently receives about 600,000 hits a week. He has made DVDs. He has lectured in Australia, the Netherlands, Canada and the U.S on the topic “Human race: get off your knees”.

Logic in conspiracy theories

Whatever else can be said about the lizard-like alien conspiracy, it has a certain internal logic. Other conspiracy theories often have internal contradictions. For example, the Masonic conspiracy that has deep roots in American history faced an immediate problem: that many of the U.S. Founders, including George Washington, were Masons. Andrew Jackson, one of our most anti-elitist presidents, was also a Mason.

Some of those warning of Communist subversion in 1950s and 1960s went off the rails by seeing Communists behind every disturbance or agitation in postwar America. This is not to deny Communist Party influence, but United Auto Worker president Walter Reuther, for example, was decidedly anti-Communist, even though he was clearly a socialist. President Dwight Eisenhower was not a Communist agent.

But let’s be clear: *There was a Soviet Communist conspiracy to penetrate the highest reaches of government in the 1930s and 1940s.* Unmistakable indications of Soviet intelligence operations to infiltrate the American government came out in congressional hearings and court trials in the late 1940s and 1950s, including the case of Alger Hiss. Whittaker Chambers provided persuasive evidence that Hiss, while serving as a high official in the Roosevelt State Department, was a Soviet agent. Hiss was convicted of perjury and imprisoned.

Proof in the Venona papers

While some patriotic Americans in the mid 20th century spoke out against Soviet infiltration (and were attacked by the left for doing so), they could not know the full extent of spy activity in America. Only in 1995, with the release of the so-called Venona papers, was the true extent of Soviet infiltration into government in the 1930s and 1940s revealed.

The Venona documents, consisting of messages between the Soviet embassy in Washington and Moscow that were intercepted by the National Security Agency (NSA), were released in 1995 at the insistence of Senator Daniel Moynihan (Democrat, New York). The documents revealed that *at least 105 Americans working for Soviet intelligence had entered New Deal agencies, as well as the Roosevelt White House.* The release of the Venona papers, as well as Soviet archival records, should have forced re-evaluation of the so-called Red Scare in the 1950s.

Yet, some of the wild-eyed conspiracy theories at the time allowed opponents to paint the anti-Communist movement as nut cases. The problem is that there were some nut cases. One of the most convoluted anti-Communist conspiracy theories was promoted by Louis Bielsky, author of *The Soviet-Israelite Claw Strangles the Arabs*. First published in Paris in 1965, and

then republished in Spanish by a Mexican press, the 50-page pamphlet gained a wide readership, especially in South America. Its circulation in the U.S. was mostly confined to small neo-Nazi circles.

Bielsky posited an international Jewish-Communist conspiracy to dominate the world. He strained to explain Soviet support of Arab nationalism against Israel, as well as the Sino-Soviet split following Stalin's death. If Jews were controlling the Soviet Union, why was Russia supporting Arab nations against Israel? How could the Sino-Soviet split be explained if the Jews were pulling the Communist strings? And, how could the Cold War be explained if an international Jewish conspiracy controlled both the U.S. government and the Soviet government?

With incredible acrobatics, Bielsky explained that there was a power struggle in the Council of the Elders of Zion, between American Jews (headed by Bernard Baruch and Harry S. Truman) and Soviet Jews (headed by Stalin and Nikita Khrushchev). This split provided an opportunity for Mao in China. Bielsky contended that Truman, Stalin, Khrushchev (whose real name, Bielsky claimed, was Solomon Pearlmutter) and even Mao were all Jews. Bielsky argued that Jews migrated to China more or less 2,000 years ago, but mixed with native Chinese.

More recently and harmfully, a phony conspiracy theory about collusion with Russia tied the Trump administration in knots for four years. We now know that this theory was a dirty trick fomented by the Hillary Clinton presidential campaign with the help of the FBI.

Davos: conspirators or buffoons?

This brings us back to the Davos conference. The World Economic Forum was organised by Klaus Schwab in 1971 when he invited executives from European companies to the tiny ski resort of Davos to address major global issues and learn best practices of leadership and management. From this modest beginning, the Davos conference became a major international event bringing elites together. George Soros became a regular at these meetings, although he missed the most recent one.

Those who gathered in Davos shared a sense of world crisis. Schwab in his opening address in January warned that 2023 was to be the "Year of Polycrisis" created by food and energy shortages, inflation and rising public dissent. He told his audience that the intent of the conference was "to make sure that leaders

do not remain trapped in this crisis mindset but develop a longer-term, constructive perspective to shape the future in a more sustainable, more inclusive, and more resilient way". The agenda doubled down on the need for renewable energy, the codification of environmental, social and governance (ESG) investment standards, more "social and green jobs for building inclusive and sustainable economies", and "diversity, equity and inclusion [DEI] lighthouses".



Hillary Clinton

What in the world are diversity, equity and inclusion "lighthouses"? What is clear from the meeting is that world leaders sense a global crisis, but don't know how to address the problems, other than huff and puff that they are the world leaders. They share a globalist outlook and agenda, but they are more buffoons than conspirators. Writing in *The Times* of London, journalist Gerald Baker observed that Davos is less a "satanic cabal" than a "groupthink incubator for the self-appointed elite".

Perhaps more to the point, Fox television commentator Tucker Carlson got it right when he said that the Davos crowd wants to "save the planet" and assume global leadership, but they are not just "supervillains", as they are often portrayed; "they're also hilariously idiotic — not just evil — buffoonish".

The problem is that buffoons can be destructive. Nor do they need to be lizard-like aliens to be snakes slithering about in the snows of Davos. Come next year, they won't have shed their skins. They will say the world is falling apart and only they can save us. They will continue to dismiss their critics as conspiracy theorists. They have been working on solving the world's problems since 1971 and are no closer to solutions.

Who needs a conspiracy of lizard-like aliens in control of governments, when we have the real Davos crowd, who fly in on their gas-guzzling private jets to lecture the rest of us that we should give up cars and meat?

This article is published by the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation in St Louis, Missouri, USA. The original article, complete with references and footnotes, is available from the foundation's website: www.mindszenty.org. The *Mindszenty Report* is not copyrighted, and readers are invited to forward copies to their local bishops, priests and pastors.

UK journalist Gerald Baker observed that Davos is less a 'satanic cabal' than a 'groupthink incubator for the self-appointed elite'.

We have banned 'foreign spy' as hate speech, Mr Everidge. The acceptable term is 'undocumented knowledge worker'.



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BOOK SHELF

How abortion negates equality and choice

Book review by John Morrissey

Tearing Us Apart: How Abortion Harms Everything and Solves Nothing, by Ryan T. Anderson and Alexandra DeSanctis (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2022). Hardcover/paperback 256 pages.



Authors Ryan T. Anderson and Alexandra De Sanctis

Only a few months before the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the constitutional right to abortion invented in the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, Dr Ryan T. Anderson and Alexandra DeSanctis published *Tearing Us Apart: How Abortion Harms Everything and Solves Nothing*. In this exhaustive work, they show us the wider impacts of abortion, which corrupts society, politics, the

law, science and medicine itself.

It begins with the familiar case of an abortionist, Dr Anthony Levatino, experiencing his Damascus moment while performing an abortion, shortly after the death of his five-year-old daughter who had been hit by a car.

The irrefutable reality of human life in the womb and the tragedy of abortion, which has killed over 65 million babies in the U.S. alone, demand the reform of the legal, structural and cultural frameworks which support it. These allow those in power to deem certain lives expendable, allowing people to eliminate “populations that we don’t want to have too many of”, in the words of the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. As Mother Teresa of Calcutta put it in her 1994 brief to the court, “Human rights are not a privilege conferred by government. They are every human being’s entitlement by virtue of his humanity.”

Early chapters address the harm of abortion to the unborn child and the myth that it empowers women with choices which enhance their equality in their careers and lifestyle. The writers assert the personhood and worth of the child in the womb, and insist on the consequent right to protection. As for the advantages to women, they point to the lack of support for pregnant women from men who view it as the woman’s problem alone. The physical harm to women, described in the scandalous Kermit Gosnell case, demonstrates how fake is the rosy picture of safe and legal “clinics”. These authors’ arguments are developed at length and portray the hypocrisy of the so-called pro-choice case.

It is in the chapter detailing the actual harm done to equality and choice that this work punches a huge hole in the fictions built to dignify legal abortion. Statistics of abortion among non-whites, the poor, disabled and those deemed mentally unfit show that the dreams of the early 20th-century eugenics movement — then focused also on sterilising the immigrant masses — are being fulfilled today.

Wittingly or not, Planned Parenthood — the largest single provider of abortions in the U.S. — perpetuates racially discriminatory beliefs. Black women are five times more likely

than whites, and Hispanic women twice as likely, to abort their babies. This is why Planned Parenthood centres are heavily concentrated in areas of low-income households, while it claims to provide services to minority women who need affordable health care. Meanwhile, white women have the lowest rate at 6.6% abortions per 1,000 whites, alongside 23.8% for blacks.

Another form of discrimination occurs on the basis of sex and disability, where abortion is chosen on account of unwanted characteristics of the unborn child. Although there is insufficient data on gender-selective abortion in the U.S., progressive elites are silent on the global destruction of millions of girl babies, due to the feminist dogma of female autonomy, and are opposed to requiring patients to give a reason for their choice.

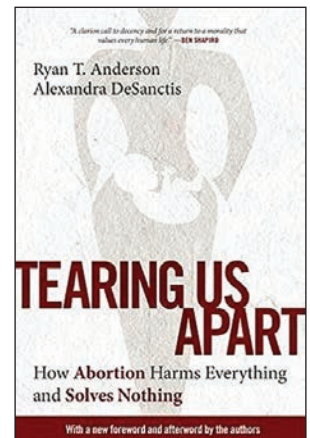
Early diagnosis of Down syndrome has made abortion almost a matter of course in the Western world, and the authors are passionate on this issue. No child is “perfect” and children with disabilities are no less valuable and lovable than those without them. They write: “The truly human response to suffering is compassion — not to eliminate suffering by eliminating the one who suffers.”

In any event, the “suffering” is overstated, and the case study of “Jon” and his fulfilling life in a supportive family, with his routines and interests, demonstrates this. Anderson and DeSanctis insist that the term “pro-choice” is a misnomer, and it is the absence of alternatives, such as those offered by Manhattan’s Sisters of Life, which forces women into abortion, too often compelled by “partners” and one-way counselling to see it as their only choice.

One chapter begins with two reflections on how abortion has corrupted the practice of medicine. One is an account of the wonderful advances in maternal care, such as ultrasound screening, which have contributed so much to the health of mothers and babies. The other concerns the Hippocratic Oath, once the gold standard of doctor care, but now too often stripped of its millennia-old prohibition of abortion.

The authors trace the decline of the medical profession through the story of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and how its ethic shifted from the life-of-the-mother consideration to a complete revision of the meanings of “healthcare” and “therapeutic”. Moreover, ACOG became a lobby for the expansion of abortion “rights”. It even provided support for the Clinton administration’s opposition to legislation before Congress in 1996 banning partial-birth abortion.

We learn that the original impetus for ACOG’s change was chiefly to protect its members who carried out abortions, rather



This work punches a huge hole in the fictions built to dignify legal abortion.

than any abstract concern for women's rights, and that this was the basis of its argument to trust the physician on *good medical practice*, which helped secure the *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973. Finally, in 1992, the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* removed the issue from one of doctors' judgement to one of female freedom and autonomy.

All along, the argument was supported with false statistics of thousands of women supposedly dying in "back-alley" abortions. In 1973 an obstetrics textbook claimed that 5,000 pregnant women died each year from clandestine abortions, when the national total of maternal deaths in the U.S. was fewer than 150! Pro-abortion advocates believed that these shameless fabrications were totally justified by the "morality" of their cause, as another reformed abortionist, Dr Bernard Nathanson later admitted.

Abortion has surely perverted medicine from its aim to heal and never harm!

The remaining chapters of *Tearing Us Apart* are devoted to the harm that abortion does to the rule of law, politics and the democratic process. The slippery concept of the Living Constitution, or judicial pragmatism, which maintains that a centuries-old document can be radically re-interpreted in light of current needs, thrived in the era of *Roe v. Wade*.

It is noteworthy that even eminent jurists who were no friends of the pro-life movement have branded the decision as bad law. Obama administration official, Edward Lazarus — former law clerk to Supreme Court judge and author of the ruling, Harry Blackmun — has branded it "indefensible" as constitutional interpretation and judicial method. Even the late Justice Ginsburg described this imagined discovery of a "right to privacy" in the Bill of Rights as "heavy-handed judicial intervention".

The issue of foetal viability has featured prominently in recent "heartbeat" laws in states such as Texas. Back in the 1970s, it was raised in the debate on *Roe v. Wade*, but was left unresolved. In 1992, *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* went further, however, ruling that states may not prohibit abortions before the point when a foetus could survive outside the womb in any way that amounts to a "substantial obstacle". This led to a general understanding that the law upheld abortion on demand. Authors Anderson and DeSanctis rightly call these decision perversions of the rule of law, which have stood for decades solely to permit elective abortions.

When we turn to politics and the democratic process, we meet a procession of Democratic Party politicians who progressed from professions of mildly pro-life views to ardent support for permissive abortion laws. Even Bill Clinton's 1992 campaign slogan of "safe, legal, and rare" had become anathema by the time of the 2019 Democratic Party primaries, as it suggested that abortion is a bad thing.

Pro-life politicians have been marginalised by Democratic Party power-brokers, and many professing Catholics, such as Joe Biden and the late Ted Kennedy, have recanted their former opposition to abortion. Some have preferred to champion women's autonomy and declared their own unwillingness to impose their faith on others.

In a famous speech at University of Notre Dame in 1984, New York Governor Mario Cuomo claimed to be able to oppose abortion in his personal life while not opposing it politically, a

line that Biden has taken ever since and used to pitch for left-wing feminist support during the 2019 primaries.

He has also reversed his support for the Hyde Amendment, which has denied federal Medicaid for abortions, and its repeal has become an issue, with the Democratic Party currently committed to full funding. This remains a decision for individual states; but the authors explain how Planned Parenthood has been able to milk federal funds by inflating the extent of concurrent services which it claims to have provided to its clients.

Public opinion is confused, with 38 per cent of Americans polled unaware that *Roe v. Wade* is connected with abortion, while a majority want it to stay in place; yet respondents split on 49 per cent as to whether abortion should be legal. Nevertheless, contemporary culture has long since normalised abortion and now even celebrates abortion-on-demand as a human right, even while many Americans are unaware of the history about it.

The mainstream media, the social media and even the government-school system exercise strict censorship of pro-life views and information. Journalists and TV anchor-persons apply different standards of interrogation when hosting representatives of opposed sides in the debate.

Tearing Us Apart provides several case studies of this phenomenon, such as how the U.S. media has unflinchingly downplayed the horrors of partial-birth and born-alive abortions. Concerning the film industry, we learn that Planned Parenthood has advised on more than 150 movies and shows, and that at the 2017 Oscars prominent actresses sported

this organisation's pins!

The authors warn that even after the 2022 overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, pro-lifers will still face an uphill struggle to convince their neighbours that unborn children deserve protection under the law.

Now that this bad law has been overturned, and abortion law is once again solely a matter for the states, what do we have to show for it? Heroic Supreme Court justices, such as Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett, have been hounded and threatened, while law-makers in progressive states have shored up permissive abortion regimes. However, a raft of heartbeat laws and other pro-life measures have been passed through legislatures in states such as Texas.

Unlike here in Australia, the abortion issue is a more equal battle in the U.S., although still an uphill one for the pro-life movement. We can only marvel at the size of the U.S. life marches, the prominent role of Christian churches, and the proliferation of groups prepared to support women with unplanned pregnancies.

Tearing Us Apart is an important addition to the resources of the pro-life movement, as it shines a light on so many more aspects of the abortion issue, other than those concerning merely the ethical, medical and social aspects. It has much to offer the Australian reader and covers so many aspects in impressive depth, with an abundance of reasoned argument and evidence. It comes with a wealth of end-notes and a useful index. Endeavour Forum commends it to our readers.

John Morrissey is a retired secondary school teacher who has taught in government, independent and Catholic schools. He lives in the Melbourne suburb of Hawthorn with his blue heeler, Missie.

Abortionist Dr Anthony Levatino experienced his Damascus moment while performing an abortion, shortly after the death of his daughter, 5, who had been hit by a car.

BOOK SHELF

See no Islam, hear no Islam

Book review by William Kilpatrick

The New Apologetics: Defending the Faith in a Post-Christian Era, edited by Matthew Nelson (Washington, DC: Word on Fire Institute, 2022). Paperback 288 pages. ISBN: 978-1685780043



William Kilpatrick

The New Apologetics is a collection of 41 essays by noted Catholic apologists.

It's a valuable book for those who are interested in spreading the Christian faith in a time of secularism and relativism, as well as for those who merely wish to deepen their own faith.

However, I do have one large caveat. None of the 41 essays deals with Islam. And that, to my mind, is a major omission. Although, *The New Apologetics* begins with a discussion of threats to Christianity

— such as atheism, moral relativism and scientific materialism — one of the biggest threats is ignored.

For example, the first essay discusses the “nones” — those who claim no religious affiliation. This group is expanding rapidly and it is pulling most of its membership away from Christian Churches. As their numbers increase, the number of those who identify as Christians declines.

I agree that the problem of the “nones” needs to be urgently addressed, but there is another category of “nones” that is equally important, but is absent from the pages of *The New Apologetics*. I am referring to all those Christians who are “nones” in the sense that none of them is any longer among the living because they have been killed by Muslims in the name of Allah. For example, in Nigeria alone, 18,000 people have been killed by Islamic terrorists in just the last two years (2020–2022). If the rest of Africa is added on, it's now possible to speak of a Christian genocide in that continent.

The spread of Islam is not just a threat to Africans. Many other parts of the world are under the same threat. Because of the rapid increase in the Muslim population, even Europeans are now at risk of violence.

The essay on the “nones” makes much of the fact that in the U.S. between 1970 and the present, the number of “nones” has increased from three percent to 25 percent. But during an even shorter time frame, the percentage of Muslims in numerous European cities has increased by approximately the same amount. In Marseille, the second largest city in France, the percentage of Muslims is closer to 40 percent.

The essay points out that almost 40 percent of those under thirty in the U.S. are “nones”. But the same holds true in many of Europe's major cities in regard to the Muslim population. According to Giulio Meotti, Islam is now the dominant religion among children in Birmingham, Leicester, Bradford, Luton, Slough and the London boroughs of Newham, Redbridge and Tower Hamlets.

Meanwhile, “Mohamed” has been one of the most popular names for baby boys in Europe for many years. Due to the high

birth rate, there are now more Muslims at Friday services than Catholics at Sunday Mass in many cities in France and England.

If Islam really were the religion of peace that Catholic prelates and professors make it out to be, then the discrepancy in birth rates between Muslims and Christians might be no great cause for alarm. But rising crime rates among Muslims in Europe suggest that Islam is not a religion of peace but of aggression.

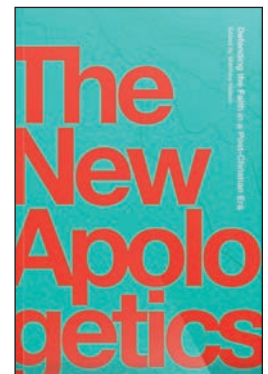
In France, for example, Muslims commit almost all of the violent crimes and constitute almost 80 per cent of the prison population. According to Hugh Fitzgerald, “[Muslim migrants] are creating a parallel society, hostile to French authorities and contemptuous of the non-Muslim French.”

In response to the Muslim crime wave, Didier Lallement, the recently-retired head of the Paris police has written a book warning of social breakdown and civil war. He's not alone. Pierre Brochand, the country's former top intelligence director has also warned of civil war due to mass immigration. Moreover, in 2021 about 1,000 active servicemen and women, including 20 retired generals signed an open letter to the government warning of civil war due to “religious extremism” (i.e., Islamism.)

The situation is not so dire in the U.S., of course; but let's not forget the attacks on New York's World Trade Center in 1993 and in 2001, and dozens of other Islamic terrorist attack, including the Pulse Nightclub massacre in Orlando, Florida, which left 49 dead and 53 injured, the San Bernardino massacre which left 14 dead and 24 seriously injured, the Fort Hood massacre which resulted in 14 deaths and over 40 injuries, and numerous other deadly jihad attacks since 2001.

The point is, Islam is a deadly threat to Christians all over the world. Its aggressive and expansionist nature, moreover, is built into its theology. In addition, its founding scripture, the Koran, directly attacks and threatens Christians and Jews. One would expect that at least some Catholic apologists would turn their attention to the subject, but few do.

To the extent that anything is being taught about Islam in Catholic schools and colleges, it is the Pollyannish version that emanates from the Vatican and places such as Georgetown's Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Christian-Muslim Understanding. For its part, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops puts most of its efforts into upbeat dialogues with their Muslim counterparts and into helping Muslims fight a supposed epidemic of “Islamophobia”. Meanwhile, the bishops show little curiosity as to why so many people fear Islam. Don't Christians and other non-Muslims in Africa who are slaughtered on a regular basis in



Islam is a deadly threat to Christians all over the world. Its aggressive and expansionist nature, moreover, is built into its theology.

the name of Islam have good reason to fear Islam? Don't ask. Such questions are off-limits in Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

A number of years ago I gave a talk on Islam to FOCUS (the Fellowship of Catholic University Students) during one of their training conferences. The organisation is made up largely of Catholic university graduates. The group of about 60 that I talked to seemed intelligent and highly motivated. And they seemed to have a good understanding of the Catholic faith. But not of Islam.

Before my talk I administered a 20-question multiple choice quiz about Islam. The questions were on a very basic level: e.g., “the word ‘Islam’ means _____”; “The word ‘jihad’ means _____”. Yet only 33 per cent of the group passed the quiz. Most thought “Islam” meant “peace”, and that “jihad” meant “an interior spiritual struggle”. Most were probably unaware that, in Africa, a Muslim’s “interior struggle” might well be the agonising decision of whether to use an AK-47 or a machete in the service of Allah.

Undoubtedly, these graduates had been exposed to some first class works of Catholic apologetics, but with a few exceptions such as Fr. James Schall SJ and Fr. Samir Khalil Samir SJ, most Catholic apologists have steered clear of Islam.

Indeed, most of the apologetics work on Islam is being done by Evangelical Protestants, Orthodox Christians, and ex-Muslim converts to Christianity. Some of these are “official” apologists in the sense of holding advanced degrees in theology, and some may not even think of themselves primarily as apologists. For example, former-Muslim Nonie Darwish who speaks and writes about Islam might not qualify as an “official” apologist, but her book *Wholly Different* is one of the most informative, insightful and clearly written books on the subject of the differences between Islam and Christianity that one is likely to find.

Likewise, historian Raymond Ibrahim writes mainly about the history of conflict between Islam and Christianity, and about present-day persecution of Christians. He isn't exactly doing apologetics, yet his work is packed with the kind of information and insights that Catholics are so badly in need of.

Ibrahim is a Coptic Christian — in other words, a member of the Orthodox Church.

Robert Spencer, who has to rank as today's preeminent authority on jihad and political Islam, is also Orthodox.

Once again, I'm not sure if Spencer considers himself a Christian apologist, but it seems to me that he ought to. Although he writes and speaks about all aspects of Islam, he has written frequently and authoritatively about the theological issues that divide Christians and Muslims.

Ironically, Catholics already had, in Spencer, the world's leading Catholic apologist on the topic of Islam, but Catholic leaders ignored him; and, when that was no longer possible, they tried to censor him. Although Spencer was frequently invited to speak to Catholic audiences, he was almost as frequently banned from speaking by the relevant local bishop. The fact that the Catholic hierarchy treated Spencer as a pariah, probably contributed to his eventual decision to join the Orthodox Church.

The reason that Spencer was suppressed by elements in the hierarchy was that what he had to say about Islam was almost in direct contradiction to the pleasant narrative about Islam that the Church leadership had been pushing ever since the Second Vatican Council.

It's likely that many Catholic apologists avoid the subject of Islam for the same reason. Presumably, they don't want to be put in a position where they might have to contradict the prevalent Catholic notion that Islam is a fellow Abrahamic religion that reveres Jesus and embraces the same values that Christians do.

In fact, I wouldn't be surprised to find that some Catholic apologists accept the cotton-candy version of Islam. Indeed, Peter Kreeft, one of the leading apologists of our era, and a writer who has frequently been compared with C.S. Lewis, did paint a favourable portrait of Islam in a 2010 book entitled *Between Allah and Jesus*.

Not long after, Kreeft had a friendly debate with Robert Spencer (who had once taken courses taught by Kreeft) at Thomas More College in New Hampshire. Apparently, Spencer had benefited from the courses because he beat Kreeft handily — a point which Kreeft graciously acknowledged after the debate.

Although Kreeft is an accomplished debater, Spencer's wide-ranging knowledge about Islam carried the day. Peter Kreeft has an open and curious mind, so I wouldn't be surprised if he eventually changed his mind on the subject.

Coincidentally, Kreeft is one of the featured apologists in *The New Apologetics*. His essay on Blaise Pascal is well worth reading. So are all the essays in the book. But one wishes that the editor had found some space for an essay on Islam — the political religion that is arguably

the major threat that Christians now face.

Unfortunately, Catholic apologists who are inclined to take a critical look at Islam won't get any support from Rome.

At a time when well-trained Muslim apologists are successfully proselytising non-Muslims in every corner of the globe, Pope Francis has made it clear that proselytism is no longer acceptable for Catholics. The only kind of evangelisation that passes muster in the Vatican these days has to do with “listening”, “accompanying”, and pretending that all religions are essentially the same.

But the Great Commission that Christ gave his Apostles was not to listen but to teach: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

Moreover, the misguided message that all religions are essentially the same will only serve to convince Muslims who are dissatisfied with Islam to join the ranks of the “nones” rather than to convert to Christianity.

Catholic apologists are well-advised to follow the command of Jesus rather than the advice of Francis. Catholics and many other Christians as well, are ill-informed about Islam. As a result, they are ill-prepared for what will happen to non-Muslims in a world that is increasingly Muslim.

Muslims, likewise, are poorly informed about Christianity. Many are unaware that there exists a much more profound and powerful version of Christianity than the sketchy one that Islam teaches. Catholics should think twice about the wisdom of withholding the Gospel from them.

William Kilpatrick is the author of *Christianity, Islam, and Atheism: The Struggle for the Soul of the West* (2015) and other books about culture and religion. The above book review is reprinted, with the author's permission, from *FrontPageMag.com* (November 14, 2022). For more on William Kilpatrick's work and writings, visit his website, TurningPointProject.com.

Most of the apologetics work on Islam is being done by Evangelical Protestants, Orthodox Christians, and ex-Muslim converts to Christianity.



NEW RELEASE

'Street Drugs': The New Addiction Industry by Elaine Walters OAM

Foreword by the Hon. Greg Hunt
(Melbourne: Elaine Walters
Foundation, 2023)
Paperbacks: 416 pages
ISBN: 978-0646877044
RRP: AUD\$34.95

Available for purchase from the Drug Advisory
Council of Australia and Drug-Free Australia.

To be reviewed in future Endeavour Forum Newsletter



March For The Babies
www.marchforthebabies.com



Saturday, October 7, 2023

Melbourne's annual March for the Babies commemorates the passing of Victoria's Abortion Law Reform Act 2008.

Join your pro-life friends in Treasury Gardens on Saturday, October 7, from 12:30 pm for a peaceful march through the streets of Melbourne and rally on the steps of Parliament House.

www.MarchForTheBabies.com
www.facebook.com/MarchForTheBabies

News and views from around the world

Biden's endless gifts to China

The gifts the Biden Administration has already given the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in just two years have been nothing short of exorbitant — and often to the detriment of the U.S.

They have included cancelling the China Initiative that was countering CCP espionage on American soil; allowing the CCP spy-balloon to leisurely hover over America's major nuclear and military sites while gathering sensitive information to send back to Beijing in real time; permitting CCP interests (there are no private interests in China) to buy up American farmland — especially near U.S. military bases — also with the potential of controlling the distribution of food inside the U.S. or manipulating the crops; poisoning to death more than 100,000 Americans — *each year* — with fentanyl and other drugs; placing at least six CCP police stations inside American cities; doing nothing as the CCP has established naval and other military facilities in the Pacific, Cambodia, Equatorial Guinea, Africa, Djibouti, Sri Lanka, the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, Mexico, Argentina, and has established a significant presence on both sides of the Panama Canal.

Excerpt from Robert Williams, *Gatestone Institute* (New York), June 26, 2023.

Emasculating Indiana Jones

"Those days have come and gone," says Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford) at one point in the newly-released film, *Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny*.

And they sure have, for our hero has been emasculated on the altar of political correctness in this film, with an immoral, money-grubbing, narcissistic, feminist character usurping his place.

Excerpt from Stephen M. Klugewicz, *The Imaginative Conservative* (USA), July 9, 2023.

The high calling of motherhood

We are going against the grain of our culture when we try to raise daughters who value being a wife and mother as a high calling.

My oldest daughter was recently talking to a married couple in our neighbourhood. They asked her, "So what do you want to be when you grow up?" My daughter cheerfully replied, "I want to be a wife and have lots of children."

The neighbours started laughing because they thought she was joking. They expected her to say something like, "I want to be a brain surgeon." They mocked the idea that an intelligent and energetic teenage girl would aspire to be a wife and mother.

I'm glad that my mother didn't think that way, and I'm glad that the mother of my children doesn't think that way.

Excerpt from Andy Naselli, *American Reformer*, July 28, 2023.

Canada now killing the poor and disabled

I find the Canadian term "medical aid in dying" (MAiD) deeply pernicious. It conjures up an image of someone who is already dying of a painful and terrible disease, and the aid they receive seems good and possibly even heroic. So I will switch from the misleading term "medical aid in dying" and now speak of "physician-assisted killing", or PAK.

In what kinds of cases are the powers that be in Canada telling people that they might be better off dead? Well, how about a veteran who asked for PTSD treatment? Or another veteran who asked that a wheelchair ramp be built into her home? Though neither was dying, in both cases they were asked if PAK would be a better option for them. *The Toronto Star*, the largest and most progressive newspaper in Canada, described the move toward these practices as "Hunger Games style social Darwinism".

Excerpt from Charles C. Camosy, *Public Discourse* (USA), June 12, 2023.

Christian alternative to drag-queen story-hour

A few months ago, Tim Stephens, a Baptist pastor from Calgary, Alberta, in Canada, launched an initiative that he and his church put together to provide an alternative to the drag-queen story-hours that have been popping up in libraries across the country.

His events, called True Readings with True Royalty, are open to all and feature age-appropriate stories that are a positive celebration of boyhood and girlhood and an affirmation of the goodness of how we were made.

The positive message has caught on, and now these events are taking place at libraries across the country.

Excerpt from Adam Soos, *Rebel News* (Canada), July 4, 2023.

The greatest drama ever staged

Official Christianity, of late years, has been having what is known as “a bad press”. We are constantly assured that the churches are empty because preachers insist too much upon doctrine — “dull dogma”, as people call it. The fact is the precise opposite. It is the neglect of dogma that makes for dullness. The Christian faith is the most exciting drama that ever staggered the imagination of man — and the dogma is the drama.

This is the dogma we find so dull — this terrifying drama of which God is the victim and hero.

If this is dull, then what, in Heaven’s name, is worthy to be called exciting? The people who hanged Christ never, to do them justice, accused Him of being a bore — on the contrary; they thought Him too dynamic to be safe. It has been left for later generations to muffle up that shattering personality and surround Him with an atmosphere of tedium. We have very efficiently pared the claws of the Lion of Judah, certified Him “meek and mild”, and recommended Him as a fitting household pet for pale curates and pious old ladies. To those who knew Him, however, He in no way suggested a milk-and-water person; *they* objected to Him as a dangerous firebrand.

Excerpt from an article by English author Dorothy L. Sayers in *The Sunday Times* (London), April 3, 1938.

Tribute to Babette Francis AM and a celebration of 44 years of Endeavour Forum

Please join the Endeavour Forum team as we pay tribute to Babette Francis AM and celebrate 44 years of Endeavour Forum



Also hear talks on:

- The persecution and marginalisation of Christians in Australia
- The benefits and challenges of home education

Start time: 2pm, Saturday, November 25, 2023

**Location: St Philip’s Catholic Primary School,
60 Junction Rd, Blackburn North, Vic. 3130**

Refreshments and a celebratory cake.

Free and accessible parking

Abortion is the sacrament and greatest symbol of woke religion

Abortion is the sacrament and greatest symbol of woke religion because in one act, it destroys each icon of the family: the child, the father, and the mother. All three are corrupted and made to become contrary to their nature.

Man is able to impregnate woman but obligated to neither the woman nor the ‘product of conception’ (in the sterile vernacular of the abortion industry).

Meanwhile, woman is also liberated from any bond to a man or their child inside. In this dystopian vision of humanity, each

of us is an island, autonomous and adrift — void of duty and hardened to love.

Woman and child, united in one body, walk into Planned Parenthood and emerge dismantled and shattered: one literally, the other symbolically and spiritually. Another tie is severed, and she is deeply and profoundly alone.

Excerpt from Noelle Mering, *Awake, Not Woke: A Christian Response to the Cult of Progressive Ideology* (Gastonia, NC: TAN Books, 2021).

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