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Thought for the Week: *The Australian*, 18 November 2015 found the nerve to ask the question: “Has ISIS found a way to beat surveillance?” And continues: “Paris attacks raise the possibility that extremists have found ways around western surveillance...”

But **Paul Craig Roberts** poses a more important question: “Why has there been no media investigation of the report that French police were blinded by a sophisticated cyber attack on their mobile data tracking system? Does anyone really believe that ISIL has such capability?...”

A BATTLE WITH NO FRONT – GILAD ATZMON

14 November, 2015: Yesterday morning, the news was broadcast of extensive ‘heroic’ allied drone attacks in Iraq and Syria in support of the battle for Sinjar. We also learned about the assassination of Jihadi John. We were told some revenge might be on the way. As promised, last night Paris was bathing in blood.

Welcome to World War III – a global conflict with unlimited battlefronts. We, as people of the world, are all caught in the middle in this disaster. We see that our universe is crumbling, we want peace, yet we don’t even know who the enemy is.

For some of us, this recent escalation is not a surprising development. We have been writing about it for years. We have been scrutinising the disastrous impact of the matrix of Ziocon immoral interventionist lobbies that have been relentlessly advocating more and more conflicts. The CRIF in Paris, CFI in London and AIPAC in Washington all push for escalation of the battle against Arabs and Muslims in accordance with the Israeli plan for a new Middle East.

We are forced to accept the fact that extremist Muslims are very upset and they can hit hard and in a very short time. Russia saw one of its planes falling out of the sky, killing more than two hundred innocent holiday makers. Paris has again suffered. We must ask, is it necessary? Do we have to live in fear from now on? Is peace an option?

The terror is a message that we have to understand. What is its message? ‘Leave us alone’ is what these homicidal terrorists are trying to tell us. Is that too complicated for the Western subject to take in? ‘Live and let others be,’ is what this is about. The pragmatic implication is obvious. The West must immediately stop serving Israeli and global Zionist interests. We must cease all operations in Arabia and the Mid East. For that to happen, and for a chance for peace, opposition to global Zionism and Israeli lobbying is imperative.

Here is some practical advice; next time Bernard Henri Levy, David Aaronovitch or Alan Dershowitz attempt to sell a new conflict-pack in the name of ‘human rights,’ we should politely advise them that we have learned our lesson – no more wars for Zion. Then, peace may prevail.

PARIS ATTACKS A LATE WARNING TO THE WEST?

Niall Ferguson is Laurence A. Tisch professor of history at Harvard, a senior fellow of the Hoover Institution, Stanford, has written an opinion piece for *The Australian* 16 November 2015, “Paris attacks: fall of Rome should be a warning to the West”. His piece commences:

“I am not going to repeat what you have already read or heard. I am not going to say that what happened in Paris on Friday night was unprecedented horror, for it was not. I am not going to say that the world stands with France, for it is a hollow phrase. Nor am I going to applaud Francois Hollande’s pledge of “pitiless” vengeance, for I do not believe it. I am, instead, going to tell you that this is exactly how civilisations fall...” (continued on next page)

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Although an historian of some repute, he admits "I do not know enough about the 5th century to be able to quote Romans who described each new act of barbarism as unprecedented, even when it had happened multiple times before; or who issued pious calls for solidarity after the fall of Rome, even when standing together meant falling together; or who issued empty threats of pitiless revenge, even when all they intended to do was to strike a melodramatic posture."

But he does go on to say: "I do know that 21st-century Europe has itself to blame for the mess it is now in. Surely, nowhere in the world has devoted more resources to the study of history than modern Europe did", and concludes with the words: "Poor, poor Paris. Killed by complacency".

Whilst we agree that the Paris attacks should be a warning to the West we think the West has received many warnings over many years – it's just that the West didn't take the warnings to heart – and yes, Paris has been killed by complacency – and government treachery!

Eric D. Butler, drawing on C. H. Douglas in "The International Idea" was warning the Australian people in 1987: "In his realistic approach to what is termed history, C.H. Douglas said that history was not a series of disconnected events, but crystalised politics and a study of big maps was essential. The seeds of the present plight of the world were sown a long time ago, but it was during *the last century* that they started to emerge in growth, which was to foreshadow the shape of things to come... "

The American Michael Lane, made a study of Douglas' writings and gave his readers an excellent summary in "Power and Freedom" February, March, April 1999: "No writings could be more of a challenge to the reader than C. H. Douglas's of the 1940s. The style is compressed, elliptical, and allusive; the order of treatment is anything but systematic; and the transitions are bewildering. Douglas had by this time so internalized his ideas that everything is connected to everything else, and he expects the reader to make connections that are by no means obvious... "

"A good brief statement of Douglas's main thesis is the following: "World Politics are (irrevocably, we think) committed to the centralisation of Power. We are committed irrevocably to the decentralisation of Power to the limits of the capacity of the individual. The first Policy postulates the equality of all men and women; the second recognises the absolute individuality and increasing differences of every human being. . . . "

Our task is not to capture politics, but to fragment them" (Development of World Dominion 112). Another passage that usefully gathers Douglas's major themes in short compass is the following: "We have to discard the idea that every child is born into the world to mind someone else's business, and substitute the fact that he is responsible for minding his own. . . . The next point is equally simple and far-reaching - that groups are inferior to individuals. Majorities have no rights and generally are not right. They are an abstraction to which it is impossible to impart the qualities of a conscious human being. . . . It is only possible to associate, i.e., to form a majority, for the purpose of a function - 'we descend to meet'. . . . Socialism is the complete rule of the individual by functions" (Big Idea).

Christian Anthropology

Douglas's attitude toward the relationship of the individual to the group is based, both implicitly and explicitly, on a Christian anthropology. Though habitually reticent about matters religious, it is clear that for Douglas, the coming of the God-Man defines the priority of the individual over the group, as indicated in the following interpretations:

"It does seem to me to be difficult to have a plainer and flatter repudiation of collectivism in all its aspects, and of the idea that an organisation can absolve an individual of the responsibility for his actions, than the statement "He took upon Himself, the sins of the world [Society].

As in (into) Adam (. . . Mankind, Collectivity) all men (individuals) die, so in Christ (Individual Consciousness and responsibility) all Men (Individuals) are made Alive. "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and unto God that which is God's." Caesar is, of course, functionalism, and if functionalism can be made paramount, if the Will can be paralysed by the Arm, if "The Good which I Will I do not" can be made uniform by the omnipotence of the atavistic Group over the emergent individual, then indeed the Devil is triumphant. (Big Idea, p. 65; "Land for the [Chosen] People" Racket, p. 41; Development of World Dominion p.1) . . . The individual soul is the substantial reality, whereas the association is merely the doing of something by individuals. If the doing assumes a life of its own, with needs and demands of its own (the result of some individuals' identifying themselves with the "group"), the group becomes a tyranny.

Full article here ... <http://www.alor.org/Triumph%20of%20The%20Past/PowerandFreedom.htm>

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Wallace Klinck of Canada gives a realistic background to our present plight in a response to a correspondent:

I am not so enthusiastic about receiving “refugees” from this troubled arena. Christian culture and Muslim culture are not compatible and their adherents are miscible only insofar as Islam remains a distinct minority. However, Islam is a highly militant religion which relies upon cohesiveness and a high birth rate for expansion. As its numbers increase, their leaders will agitate increasingly for Sharia law as has already happened in Britain and elsewhere. Our own laws, increasingly subverted, will be turned against us to facilitate this expansion and increasing dominance. If the present trend continues the Christian culture of Europe will be virtually eradicated within a surprisingly short time.

This is especially prone to happen because **we have failed utterly to develop realistic and constructive financial and economic policies which are consonant with Christian philosophy.**

This failure has prevented us from becoming an ensample to the world. At the same time we have become assailed by a secular materialism deriving its motive force from a non-proselitizing “religion” which works through insinuating itself, quietly but relentlessly, into positions of power and influence, is destructive of spirituality and by maintaining illusions of scarcity spreads its tentacles through fostering fear and envy.

If it were merely a matter of helping innocent souls who have been victimized by random forces of evil and injustice, I could be more accepting of charity with regard to migrants and refugees. However, knowing that both the majority of them and we ourselves are being victimized as unsuspecting pawns in a much greater and clandestine chess game of internationalist power-centralizing intrigue, casts a very different light on the entire matter. ***

WASHINGTON REFINES ITS FALSE FLAG OPERATIONS

Paul Craig Roberts website, November 16, 2015

Washington and its French vassal have refined how they conduct their false flag operations. With the Charlie Hebdo operation, they knew to immediately set the story in stone in order to avoid any questions from the print and TV media and in order to use the set story to take the place of an investigation. The set story made it unnecessary to explain the mysterious “suicide” of one of the main police investigators while engaged in the investigation of the event. The set story also made it unnecessary to explain why it was necessary to kill rather than capture the alleged perpetrators, or to explain how the French authorities could be so wrong about the alleged get-away-driver but not about the two gunmen. There has been no explanation why the authorities believed there was a get-away-driver, and no such driver has been captured or killed. Indeed, there are many unanswered questions of no interest to any media except the alternative Internet media. What the US and France learned from the Charlie Hebdo skepticism on the Internet is to keep the story flowing. Charlie Hebdo involved two scenes of violence, and the connection between the two acts of terrorism was vague. This time there were several scenes of violence, and they were better connected in the story.

More importantly, the story was followed quickly by more drama, such as the pursuit of a suspected perpetrator into Belgium, a French bombing attack on the Islamic State, a French aircraft carrier sent to the Middle East, a declaration of war by the French President against ISIL, and speculation that Hollande, pressured by Washington, will invoke NATO’s Article V, which will pull NATO into an invasion of the Islamic State. By superseding each event with a new one, the public’s attention is shifted away from the attack itself and the interests served by the attack. Already the attack itself is old news. The public’s attention has been led elsewhere. How soon will NATO have boots on the ground?

The Western media has avoided many interesting aspects of the Paris attacks. For example, what did the directors of the CIA and French intelligence discuss at their meeting a few days prior to the Paris attacks. Why were fake passports used to identify attackers? Why did the attacks occur on the same day as a multi-site simulation of a terrorist attack involving first responders, police, emergency services and medical personnel? Why has there been no media investigation of the report that French police were blinded by a sophisticated cyber attack on their mobile data tracking system? Does anyone really believe that ISIL has such capability?

The Western media serves merely as an amplifier of the government’s propaganda. Even the non-Western media follows this pattern because of the titillating effect. It is a good story for the media, and it requires no effort.

Initially even the Russian media served to trumpet the set story that rescues the Western political establishment from political defeat at home and Russian defeat in Syria. But it wasn’t too long before some of the Russian media remembered numerous false stories about a Russian invasion of Ukraine, about Assad’s use of chemical weapons, about US ABMs being placed on Russia’s borders to protect Europe from non-existent Iranian nuclear ICBMs. And so on.

We Are Going Through a Period of Intellectual Terrorism - Gearoid O Colmain:

Russian media began asking questions and received some good answers from Gearoid O Colmain who discusses the Paris attacks with RT International <https://youtu.be/L7GAbVhjTSw>

Read further here....

<http://www.paulcraigroberts.org/2015/11/16/washington-refines-its-false-flag-operations-paul-craig-roberts/> ***

NO MASSIVE MARCH THIS TIME – NO STREAM OF WORLD LEADERS

Ezra Levant of The Rebel Media flew to Paris to check out for himself the responses to the latest attack. He writes:

I arrived in Paris this morning, and spent the day on the streets trying to get a read on this bleeding city. I immediately went to Bataclan, the concert hall where 87 people were murdered by Muslim terrorists on Friday night.

France's president, Francois Hollande, called the attacks an "act of war" and said in response he will "lead a war that is pitiless". I'm sorry, but I don't believe him - and if my observations today were any indication, no-one else does either.

If my first impressions of Paris are accurate, Hollande doesn't mean it, and neither do most Parisians. In fact, the opposite has happened: France has developed a tolerance for terrorism. They accept terrorist violence as the new normal. They're numb to it now.

Here's proof. In January of this year, Muslim terrorists launched a series of five attacks that killed 17 people across Paris, including 12 at the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo. That led to a massive solidarity march through Paris, with millions of people - including many foreign leaders - swearing it would never happen again.

But it did happen again, ten times worse. By coincidence, Friday night also had five attacks, and the death toll (so far) is 139, with 352 injured.

But there's no massive march this time, no stream of

foreign leaders coming to pay their respects. And even at the actual site of the massacre, the mood was subdued. As you can see in my video reports, there were a few hundred people milling around, but there was no resolve, no conviction, no purpose. Outside Bataclan, a street performer set up to entertain the crowd - and no-one seemed to find it inappropriate.

Down the street at the Place de la Republique, a crowd of perhaps 1,000 gathered. They knew it was a momentous occasion, but they didn't quite know what it meant, or what to do or say. So they smoked marijuana, sang Top 40 pop songs, and took lots of selfies. There were a few patriotic flourishes — they sang the French anthem, and even chanted "Liberté!" a few times. But it felt more like a festival than a call to action, let alone a change of course.

To be fair, many of those at the plaza were students, who have never been taught a vocabulary of patriotism and have lived their entire lives in a cocoon of political correctness. But what of President Hollande himself and his promise of pitiless revenge? Today, French combat aircraft dropped a grand total of 20 bombs on the Islamic State. He surely killed fewer terrorists than they killed at Bataclan alone.

After the Charlie Hebdo attacks, nothing changed. Unlimited, unscreened Muslim migration continued — including the arrival of two new Muslim "refugees" who participated in Friday's terrorist attacks. At the plaza, the crowd chanted, "love is stronger than hate". But Friday night proved that's not true. And it won't be true after the next attack, either. ***

THE CRIME OF "HATE" by Ian Wilson LL.B.

Eve Mykytyn at Global Research.ca, November 9, 2015, reports on the latest "crime of hate" trial, that of Arthur Topham in British Columbia. Topham is being prosecuted under section 319 of Canada's criminal code which states that "Everyone who, by communicating statements, other than in private conversation, willfully promotes hatred against any identifiable group is guilty of (a) an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years; or (b) an offence punishable on summary conviction".

"Hate" is not defined but is typically broadly constructed. And once "hate" is found the defendant needs to prove either that the statements were true or some other statutory defence.

The trial is based upon allegedly anti-Semitic statements made by Topham and books and articles of his Radical Free Press. Topham had as his expert witness to the hate charge Gillard Atzmon who argued that "Jewish politics and ideology must be subjected to criticism like all other politics and ideologies". Mykytyn describes Atzmon's testimony as like a "rabbi on acid", so it must have been spectacular.

The problem here is with laws such as this Canadian one, which are so absurdly broad, as to squash free speech. "Hate" is now so widely constructed that any criticism to at least someone could be construed as "hate". As well, any "identifiable group" means that anyone could be offended, so free speech dies. ***

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF RHODESIAN DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE (UDI)

November 11 was the 50th Anniversary of Rhodesia's UDI. I did a 2 hour video to commemorate it. NB: This video is blocked by Youtube in Germany! Today we remember the whites of Rhodesia who rebelled against Britain in the first rebellion of its kind since the USA in 1776.

We look at Rhodesian history, why we rebelled against black rule, what the Declaration of Independence actually said, along with the consequences as well as some lessons for the White Race as a whole.

LONG LIVE RHODESIA!

Source URL: <https://youtu.be/ppJnzDrgMdY> ***

GERMANY'S MISUSE OF THE LAW: The Case of Ursula Haverbeck by Nigel Jackson

Michael Hoffman has just issued an important statement on this case: 'Elderly German Lady sentenced to 10 months in prison for doubting Auschwitz extermination claims.' Hoffman is the author of *The Great Holocaust Trial: The Landmark Battle for the Right to Doubt the West's Most Sacred Relic* and is the publisher of Johann Andreas Eisenmenger's *Entdecktes Judenthum*. His website is www.revisionisthistory.org

He reports that 87 year-old Ursula Haverbeck, former chairwoman of the now-banned free thought association *Collegium Humanum*, has been sentenced to imprisonment by the Hamburg District Court 'for doubting that people were "exterminated" by "gassing" in the Nazi concentration camp in Auschwitz.' More accurately, she is being punished for expressing this view in public.

It appears that in an interview with the German magazine *Panorama* she had stated that Auschwitz was not an extermination camp but a labour camp. The mass murder of Jews, she said, had not taken place.

During proceedings she asked the prosecutor: 'How do you as a lawyer prove the accusation that Auschwitz was an extermination camp?' The prosecutor mentioned that her 'fanatical delusion' had not abated. (In 2009 she was fined in the District Court of Bad Oeynhausen for having offended Charlotte Knobloch, president of the Central Council of Jews.)

Her request for a revisionist historian to give evidence that at Auschwitz no one had been gassed was rejected by Judge Jonsson, who stated: 'It is futile to argue with people who do not accept the facts.' This sentencing of this woman can justly be described as a crime against humanity. Why is this?

There are two possibilities: either she is right (or largely right) or she is wrong (or largely wrong). Let us assume that the latter is true. We then have a pitiful spectacle of an elderly person stubbornly and irrationally clinging to a mistaken view of historical events. Shakespeare's *King*

Lear is the archetypal work of art examining the ramifications of such a situation. As we watch *Lear* rave in misery on the heath, we feel compassion for him; but that does not stop us knowing that his disaster has been mainly self-inflicted as a result of his stubborn holding of illusions earlier in the action. None of us, however, would want to punish him for the awful threats he issues during his agon.

If Ms Haverbeck is wrong (and a formidable battery of opinion, including learned opinion, around the world maintains that she is), then what damage can her statements really do to anyone?

As we say, rather rudely, in Australia: 'You can't fart against thunder.'

If such is the situation, why on earth was she ever brought to trial? Why were her remarks not just passed over ('Poor thing! Off her head, of course!'). Why did the prosecutor maintain that her age should not prevent her from being sentenced? In this scenario, we plainly have an example of inhumane treatment being meted out to a too-elderly victim.

But what if she is right, or largely right? I happen to believe that she is just that, but, of course, I'm a human being and we are all prone to error. Moreover, the topic of 'the Holocaust' is a vast one and not easily to be assessed by the ordinary man in the street, lacking relevant specialised knowledge and not knowing the German language.

What if Ms Haverbeck is right?

Then she is a martyr to the truth and the Hamburg Court proceedings were a disgrace to the German legal profession and to Germany.

She was entitled to the following behaviours in court: (1) the prosecutor should have explained clearly and succinctly why he and the law believed that Auschwitz was an extermination camp; (2) The judge should have allowed her to call one or more revisionist historians to defend her position. Given the vast amount of revisionist scholarship on this topic now able to be studied, the judge had no right to claim that 'the facts' have been finally established.

It is inappropriate and unethical for any court or any government to claim omniscience on such a complicated and clearly disputed historical and scientific controversy.

The prosecutor's refusal to justify his position means that his claim that the defendant was suffering from a 'fanatical delusion' falls to the ground.

If Ms Haverbeck is innocent, then a much worse crime against humanity has been committed. The very dignity of mankind has been unwarrantably assailed and the ideals of Western European culture, especially the importance of intellectual freedom, wickedly scorned. Claims that her behaviour has 'given offence' will look like subterfuge designed to protect an endangered interest group.

But is there such a group? Yes, there is – it is an open secret that there is and that its power in many nations of the world is great indeed.

Shame, Germany, shame! Or, rather, shame on the German government and its legal profession!

Perhaps Mr Turnbull could take this serious matter up some time with Frau Merkel, his German opposite number!

RECONCEPTUALISING THE TPP: BROTHERHOOD OF THREE BLOCS

by Andrew Korybko, Vineyard of the Saker website

The common perception of the TPP among informed individuals is that it's an American-dominated 'trade' organization, a framework designed to secure the US' top position vis-a-vis all of the signatory states. While that's certainly true and isn't to be disputed at all, there are also deeper, more subtle geopolitical goals that are being pursued at the same time, which if fulfilled, would greatly increase the viability of American power over this integrated sphere. It's thus worthwhile to examine these finer intricacies that are often overlooked by many TPP analysts and introduce them into the larger conversation that's being held about the topic.

Upon closer scrutiny, it becomes evident that the TPP is designed to unify three distinct and expanding blocs, and that the US applies an economic version of its "Lead From Behind" stratagem in order to control the other two and thus secure its unipolar stranglehold over their Asia-Pacific and Latin American areas of 'responsibility'.

The Three Blocs

On the surface of things, TPP seems to simply be about tying Pacific economies closer to the US, but there's really a bit more detail to it...

Who Wins What?

As one can observe from above, most of the TPP countries are already in FTAs with one another, and actually, the arrangement is more like a union of the three blocs (partial in the case of the Pacific Alliance, as Colombia and Costa Rica are not involved) than a randomly scattered trading scheme.

It thus becomes important to understand exactly what

each bloc/core gains from the TPP in terms of new FTAs. One can refer to these official links for a comprehensive listing of all the FTAs that the US, Japan, and Mexico are currently in ...

Concluding Thoughts

In the long-term, if the US' grand strategy is advanced through the TPP, then East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific coast of Latin America will be part of the same trading structure controlled by Washington, which as just explained, will use it and its Japanese and Mexican cores' TNCs to "economically govern" each of the vassal states. Concurrently with this, the US would also ideally like to conclude the TTIP with the EU, thus allowing it to economically strangle its trans-Atlantic "partners" with the same force that it's already doing militarily with NATO.

In the fantasies of American policy makers, the US connects trans-Pacific and trans-Atlantic trade while also dominating everything in the Western Hemisphere outside of Mercosur (and if Brazil has a Colour Revolution or 'constitutional coup', then it too might get dragged into the net), using of course the revolutionary "governance" mechanisms rolled out in the TPP that are anticipated to become the 'new normal' in unipolar trading agreements.

Stretching things a bit further, if India joins the US in its "Chinese Containment Coalition" and the Cold War between it and Beijing heats up to unprecedented proportions, then New Delhi might find a way to figure into this global Ponzi scheme.

Full article here: <http://thesaker.is/reconceptualizing-the-tpp-the-brotherhood-of-the-three-blocs/> ***

JABBING AT "NO JAB, NO PAY" by Ian Wilson LL.B.

Abbotts Legacy "No Jab, No Pay" which will take welfare payments away from parents who fail to vaccinate their children, has rolled on without much criticism from Establishment figures. However the Law Institute of Victoria, while supporting policies designed to increase childhood vaccination rates fears that "this policy is not in the best interest of the child" and "takes a punitive approach to addressing the issue of encouraging childhood vaccinations". (The Australian, October 29, 2015, p.3)

The Law Institute of Victoria recommended that the bill not be supported in its present form.

Thanks, but the bill is now law.

If there is not a direct constitutional challenge, then as suggested by the Law Institute of Victoria's submission, there may be an attack based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: "the practical effect of the bill may be many disadvantaged families will lose important benefits, without an increase in childhood vaccination rates.

This outcome would not be in the best interests of the children involved (and would not benefit society generally through higher vaccination rates)". ***

Vladimir Putin Reveals That ISIS Is Funded by 40 Countries - Including G20 Members

Russian president Vladimir Putin has announced that he has shared intelligence with the other G20 member states, which reveals the 40 countries from which ISIS finances the majority of their terrorist activities. The list reportedly included a number of G20 countries.

"I provided examples based on our data on the financing of different Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL) units by private individuals. This money, as we have established, comes from 40 countries and, there are some of the G20 members among them," Putin told reporters. <http://www.alternet.org/world/vladimir-putin-reveals-isis-funded-40-countries-including-g20-members>

THE NEW CLASS OF WELL-TO-DO HOMELESS by Uncle Len, the dispossessed and vanless

Uncle Len, living in a friend's shed is pleased to announce that he has finally caught up on his mail from hundreds of right-wing fringe dwellers out there. In fact, the letters help keep me alive during the global cooling winter, especially since the UN announcement of the commencement of another ice age year. Wait - I may have got my wires crossed with conspiracies on that one, or was it a 1975 news clip that I read? In any case onward to my main subject, that of living in vans, a new trend. You see, not all homeless people are dispossessed Anglos like Uncle Len. It seems in places with high rents, like San Francisco, people are working in the day and sleeping in a van at night.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TO THE AUSTRALIAN

Ben Elton is right to argue that 'the Royal Family embodies a stability and continuation of the rule of democratic law that is unlikely to be improved on by the imposition of an elected or appointed alternative' ('Solution to head of state puzzle dwells in history', 13/11); but his attempt to argue that this applies only to Britain and not to Australia is illogical and untrue.

Elton is also correct to state that 'simple nationalism aside, arguments for dismantling the stability that the Queen and her heirs represent are hard to find.' Yes indeed - his preposterous proposal for an Aboriginal head of state is not even a horse that can run. The majority of today's Australians want a nation in which there is equal opportunity for all citizens, no matter what their ethnic make-up or the history of their forebears.

Nigel Jackson, Belgrave, Vic

TO THE AUSTRALIAN

Reading Lyndon Megarrity's review of David Hill's book on Australians and the monarchy ('View from the royal pedestal', 14-15/11) evokes memories of Mark Twain's famous comment, after reading an obituary for himself, that the reports of his death were somewhat exaggerated. Megarrity tells us that the 'notion' of British Australia was 'destroyed' from the 1960's on and that the mystique surrounding the royal family has been 'killed off' by media coverage in the last quarter of a century. Wishful thinking by another republican?

Though gradually acquiring a unique voice thanks to its increasingly cosmopolitan make-up, Australia remains profoundly British in culture, primarily because of the language we have all inherited. As for the sacred glamour of our 1100 year-old monarchy, this has easily withstood the scrutiny of the modern world and the verbal pebbles of disparagers, as crowds of admirers continue to demonstrate wherever the royals appear.

Nigel Jackson, Belgrave, Vic

They shower at the gym, keep a minimum amount of food in a bar fridge and Bob's your uncle.

In America about a half a million people live like that, according to an article which one reader a Mr Abraham Lincoln, sent me ("Surviving Poverty Part 1: How to Live in a Van", At Ready Nutrition.com)

Unlike John Steele's tent, a van offers comfort and stylish living. But on the downside, camper vans will become targets for roaming gangs looking to rob, rape and torture.

So, while I can dream of driving with the wind blowing in my hair - I mean over my bald head - I will stick to the security of my shed.

TO THE AGE

It is perfectly possible for us to 'acknowledge, embrace and celebrate the humanity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people' without fomenting unnecessary and unjust political division within our nation ('Leader backs Indigenous treaty push', 13/11). Aboriginal educational leader Chris Sarra's call for a treaty between 'indigenous' and 'non-indigenous' Australians is unrealistic and unjustified.

If our 'first peoples' suffered dispossession of their lands, their descendants are more than amply repaid by being able to participate in the modern, viable nation created essentially by the British settlers during the 19th Century.

Nigel Jackson, Belgrave, Vic

TO THE AUSTRALIAN

In defending his nation from an unfair and excessive attack (18/11), Russian ambassador Vladimir Morozov made one false move. He suggested that the current defamation of Russia comes from 'the conservative elite' in Western nations. This is not always the case. Conservatives presently tend to distrust the political Establishment and view Russia as an ally, not a pariah. We would also like to see the great Nobel prize-winner Alexander Solzhenitsyn's last important works freely circulated in English rather than being suppressed by powers behind the scene, as is the case now.

Nigel Jackson, Belgrave, Vic

TO THE AUSTRALIAN

It seems strange that New Zealand is undergoing two referendums over the proposal to change its flag when, apparently, around 64% of New Zealanders wish to retain the present beautiful, historic and profoundly symbolic flag they already have ('Veterans urged to preserve NZ flag', 18/11). One also wonders on what basis official proponent for change Malcolm Mulholland can claim that 'it's not a case of if, it's a case of when.'

It all sounds a bit like the mantras we get in Australia about a republic being 'inevitable' and a subsequent change of our own flag necessarily to follow.

Nigel Jackson, Belgrave, Vic

**GINGERBREAD RECIPE: in time for Christmass
from Beata Luks**

Dear Cookaholic,
A delicious idea came to us just in time for Christmas that may be some 4 weeks away, but why wait if one can do things to prepare and not rush later on.
Gingerbread of which Poland (Torun) is very famous for, was already baked and enjoyed in 1640.
Our recipe, though not authentic (but improved), is based on the same principle.

NOTE: In it's raw state the dough is to mature in the fridge for up to 4 weeks in a bowl covered with a plate & cling wrap or cloth.

Ingredients/method:

½ kg honey & 250g butter or lard - warm up to almost boiling point, then leave to cool.

Add small batches of the following ingredients to honey/fat mixture (after it cools down use your hand to incorporate all):

1 kg plain flour (Spelt is what you tasted at the National Weekend - delicious),

3 whole eggs,

3 level teaspoons of sodium bicarbonate dissolved in ½ glass of cold milk,

½ teaspoon salt,

1 tablespoon Cacao powder

2 to 3 sachets/tablespoons of mixed spice,

Add ginger to taste - can be freshly grated

Optional:

handful of walnuts,

3 tablespoons of candied orange peel.

Shape into a large ball, cover, chill & be patient...

When ready to bake (in 3-4 weeks time), roll into desired shape – round or square, or shape into flattened balls, or cut out gingerbread shapes, **or maybe even construct a proper Hansel and Gretel Gingerbread House!**

You are baking dough made with honey, do not burn, max 180°C for 15 to 18 min.

Fresh gingerbread is hard but after a few days it is so good it melts in your mouth.

Now you can glaze it with melted chocolate and decorate with almonds, pecans, dried or glazed fruit.

Bon appétit and Merry Christmass

Beata

MIXED SPICE contains: Coriander seed, Cinnamon, Cloves, Cumin seed, Ginger, Nutmeg.

B.

**BRAIN POWER GETS A LEG UP
by Brian Simpson**

C.J. Steves (et al.), “Kicking Back Cognitive Ageing: Leg Power Predicts Cognitive Ageing after Ten Years in Older Female Twins”, *Gerontology*, February 24, 2015, should be of interest, especially to our middle aged readers. It was found from a twin study (which allegedly separates genes and environment) that of all the lifestyle factors investigated, leg strength was the best predictor of cognitive ageing. Twins with the strongest legs, aged less mentally. This suggests that some sort of weight training or progressive resistance exercise to strengthen legs may help maintain brain performance. It is thought that the same physiological changes which cause leg muscle fibres to increase in cross sectional diameter also cause neurons to grow (or the interconnections to develop).

Excuse me a while while I do a set or two of heavy squats!

That's alright for you Brian, but I am going into my garden to dig up a few more weeds for mulching and prepare the soil for the next crop of carrots. After that I am taking my wife for a pleasant walk around our neighbourhood. I think either/or will help build my legs and clear my head – ed ***

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