



FALLOUT

THE Electronic Newsletter of the
AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR VETERANS ASSOC. Incorporated in NSW
Circulation the World Via www.tac.com.au/~anva

Edition No1

Last Quarter

Oct-Dec. 2003

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT DENIES JUSTICE TO NUCLEAR VETERANS

The recommendations of the Clarke report regarding participants in the British Atomic Weapons tests held in Australia (Nuclear Veterans) were submitted to the Federal Government many months ago by Justice Clarke who had been commissioned by the Government to make such a report after studying anomalies in the Veterans Entitlement Act.

After very careful consideration of our submissions and those of others, i.e. the McClelland Royal Commission, the Donovan Report, the Kaldor report etc. The Clarke Committee arrived at the same conclusions as the Australian Nuclear Veterans Association has held for close on fifty years, which is that all bona fide nuclear veterans (Nuclear Weapons Test Participants) should come under the Veterans Entitlement Act. Via the hazardous service section.

The full report and recommendations of the Clarke Committee can be accessed on the ANVA website: (www.tac.com.au/~anva). The review of Veterans' Entitlements was first announced by Mr Bruce Scott who was then Minister for Veteran Affairs in 2001.

The Government announced the establishment of the Clarke Committee and its members who were the Honourable MJ Clarke QC Chairman, Dr David Rosalki and Air Marshall Douglas Riding AO, DFC on 8th February 2002. Their findings and recommendations were finally handed to the Australian Government on 6th January 2003.

It is fairly plain to see that like all the other phoney Committees, Commissions and Reports etc created by the Federal Government to make it look like it was doing something in relation to Nuclear Veterans' problems. This one went wrong for them because it was made up of three honest men who were no longer worried about politics, their career paths or future that may be controlled by the Government.

All the others were in fact cunning and manipulative stalling tactics as reported by The Hon justice Jim McClelland shortly before he died, the Government is fully aware that time is on their side and not many years are left before all Nuclear Veterans have passed away and the problems for the Government have gone with them.

Up until this time the Government have deliberately delayed in implementing the Clarke committee's recommendations for nuclear veterans that were given to them almost a year ago and we take the view that ***justice delayed is justice denied.***

CONSULTATIVE FORUM

As most members would be aware Ric Johnstone and Major Alan Batchelor (rtd) attend the Consultative Forum Meetings held in Canberra once every few months when someone in Government or a public servant feels like they should call one, Ric and Allan have continued to attend since the first one held in Canberra in 2001. Ric Johnstone has reported that these so called Consultative Forums are wrongly named as was mentioned by one of the Government Officials who attends the meetings. Rather than being Consultative with Nuclear Veterans, of which only two bona-fide Nuclear veterans attend (Alan and Ric.) out of around 23 other members most of whom have no input at all, these meetings are as phoney as any other Forum or committee put together by the Federal Government on this matter. They have no interest in the well being of surviving Nuclear Veterans or the widows and families of those who have died as a result of their nuclear service to the nation.

They are only concerned with those who are dead and how many of these veterans have died of cancer, they have already at the very first meeting laid the groundwork for saying that if it can be proven that many have died from cancer then it is most probably caused from excessive drinking or smoking, exposure to asbestos, the sun, benzine or diesel fuels insecticides used to spray the campsites etc. They did this by presenting a document at the first consultative forum meeting outlining this possibility to the 23 people present, and they have no intention of looking into other confirmed or presumptive radiogenic and psychosomatic diseases of which there are many that affect surviving nuclear veterans.

The Government continues to create phoney Committees

They also now have the S.A.C. (Scientific Advisory Committee) made up of so called scientists who are paid by or receive grants from the Federal Government. No bona fide nuclear veterans sit on this committee or represent the interest of or are appointed by Nuclear Veterans.

They are about to create another Committee which will be called the Dose Reconstruction Committee. The question is how can anyone reconstruct something that was never constructed in the first place. This is all smoke and mirrors from the Federal Government who will no doubt endeavour to have their paid people come up with the answers that they need to continue to deny that there were any hazards or risks associated with detonating atomic bombs in Australia some far larger than the ones that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki whilst Australian Service Personnel were ordered to stand and watch, then enter in to the contaminated areas where they were used for

salvage, clean-up and decontamination operations which involved re-entry into very contaminated areas without any training in these jobs and in some cases without protective clothing or breathing equipment.

The Federal Government and the Labor opposition seem to hold to the view that although all other atmospheric nuclear weapons tests held in other parts of the world by various countries were extremely dangerous, the tests in Australia were perfectly safe.

There has never been an opposition, Government or indeed a political party of any kind in Australia that would take on the Federal Government about the hazards involved to service personnel and the population of Australia. because the truth is that both major political parties have an interest in the nuclear industries (and need no nuclear victims in Australia) and neither in opposition has done anything to reveal how great those risks were to the Australian public at large and the hazards involved or what the tests were really all about. It continues to be well covered up by successive governments which have made it all too hard for bona fide nuclear veterans to proceed with claims for health effects; except for one political party that did bring it to the attention of the Government only to be told that the matter was closed, Pauline Hanson was later given a phoney 3 year jail sentence connived by a federal minister a member of the Liberal party.

THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT KNOW

One of the biggest problems faced by Nuclear Veterans has been and still is today that not a single member of Government or any politician of any kind has actual first hand experience of having been personally involved in the British nuclear weapons tests in Australia, only a few were ever told of what was really going on and the hazards involved to participants and the Country in general. That was how it was planned by the British, that is how they wanted it to be. We have Second World War Veterans in politics; we have Korean Veterans and Veterans from Vietnam in politics but no Nuclear Veterans so your average Australian politician including John Howard and Simmon Crean knows nothing of the British nuclear tests in Australia. They are advised by the Public Service.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The Public Service which like the consultative forum is incorrectly named. It is actually a Government service that looks after Government interests not those of the public. The heads of the public service at the very beginning were told only that the tests were absolutely top top secret and nothing must get out about them to the public and anything that looks like it might get out must be denied or stopped in the best and quickest way possible; this was documented by those early public servants who are now gone but when a minister or politician seeks advice on the matter from the public service who really know nothing of the subject, to cover their own backsides all they can do is refer back to the old files and documentation that say it is top secret and nothing must get out or be admitted to.

AUSTRALIA'S MILITARY HISTORY

Further to the matter of the secrecy about the British Nuclear Weapons Tests in Australia as a joint Military undertaking by British and Australian forces. It has been noted that the people involved in Canberra creating the military history of Australia have excluded or expunged anything at all to do with the British Nuclear Weapons Tests in Australia that made history by ushering Australia and its military forces into the atomic era; it was the first time in history that Australian troops were exposed to the effects of nuclear weapons.

SIR ROBERT MENZIES

You might also be interested in the fact that Sir Robert Menzies Founder of the Liberal Party and the Prime Minister of Australia who negotiated the British atomic weapons tests in Australia with the British Government during the late 1940s early 1950s and received many high decorations from the British Government for his efforts has not a word of this or anything else to do with his ushering of Australia into the atomic age in his published biography.

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

Moving on to other things, most members would now be aware that although there have been pilot issues, this is the first real edition of our electronic newsletter and is available from the ANVA website or by email on request: (anva@tac.com.au). For those who do not have computers or are perhaps not yet on the net, most computer shops or internet cafes will download you a copy and print it out for a small fee; if you give them the website address and tell them what you require.

Incidentally, Ric Johnstone the National President of ANVA, who has not been in great health these last couple of years, looks like he will make it to 70 in November this year. We had our doubts a while back but we hope now that he makes it through to many more years.

NUCLEAR VETERAN= VERBATIM THEATRE PROJECT

An Update - November 2003 Report From Elise Barclay

Since securing funding for script development from the Australia Council for the Arts in August, a dedicated group of veterans, theatre workers and researchers began working on a play which will tell the story of 1950s nuclear testing in a new way. The play is a project jointly of the Australian Nuclear Veterans Association, scriptwriter Paul Brown and Sydney's Belvoir Street Theatre.

With the working title of 'Half a Life', the play will cover not just the tests, but the fifty year aftermath - in a way that will help the story live beyond the life span of nuclear veterans. The play is about recognition and justice, centring on the experience of the veterans and their families, using the verbatim theatre approach which is anchored to interviews with veterans, their widows and children. In verbatim theatre, the interviews are taped and meticulously transcribed, before a script is devised from the interviewees' spoken words.

The play-making process is also geared toward fairness and recognition of the value of the contribution of the veterans and their widows. Rather than the usual forfeiting of ownership to the playwright that occurs in theatre productions, in this

application of the verbatim theatre technique, the interviewees share in ownership of the intellectual property, along with the interviewers and the scriptwriter. Recordings and transcripts of interviews are accessible to interviewees, and drafts of the play are fed back to interviewees so they can ensure that the play is reflective of their life experience. At any stage of the play-making interviewees can impose limitations or even withdraw permission entirely for their words to be used.

The project's first phase of script development has involved approximately 20 interviews being conducted by researchers with veterans and family members representing experiences from atomic tests at both Maralinga and Monte Bello. The geography covered to record these accounts has been vast, with interviewees being visited across NSW, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia.

The stories recorded so far are timely (it is almost the 50 year anniversary of the Maralinga tests) and have been absolutely riveting. The colourful and emotional accounts shared by veterans and their families continue to provide invaluable insights, honesty and perspectives vital for determining the script and the desired outcomes of the play. The spirit and enthusiasm shared by the interviewees is greatly appreciated.

The next phase of the play's development will include a feedback night in December (see overleaf) and a workshop with actors at Belvoir Street Theatre to refine the script, scheduled for early 2004. The premiere season of 'Half a Life' is expected to play at Sydney's Belvoir Street Theatre in early 2005, with possible regional tours of the play in Australia and abroad (in affiliation with USA based nuclear veteran organisations).

For more information contact Paul Brown on 02 95607156, or the Australian Nuclear Veterans Association via ANVA's website at (www.tac.com.au/~anva) or contact Ric Johnstone, ANVA National President via [email: anva@tac.com.au](mailto:anva@tac.com.au), or phone: (02) 43221777.

This project is supported by the Community Cultural Development Board of the Australia Council.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE (but nearly)

To become involved in the play production, if you are a nuclear weapons tests participant (Nuclear Veteran) or widow or family member and have a story about your experiences during or after the tests, effects on your life and family etc. and would like to be part of the play contact any one of us at the above listed contacts, you do not have to be a member of any particular veterans group or organization

INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

Ric. Johnstone was criticized by an official of the "Public Service" for saying publicly that it was his opinion that the aboriginal owners of the Maralinga lands where the nuclear test were held do not trust the Federal Government, Fair Dinkum is he kidding?

These people without their consent, approval or permission were removed from their own lands by the Federal government (no compensation), their lands were then contaminated with the most toxic substance know to man Plutonium and other radioactive materials, the whole of Australia has been told on several occasions now by the Federal Government that these lands

have been satisfactorily cleaned up as was recommended by the McClelland Royal Commission, only to find out later that this is not the case and further “cleanups” have to be done. We also find out that this Government has plans for many nuclear reactors (power stations) and radioactive waste dumps in Australia. This is the same Government that maintains there were no hazards or risks involved in the nuclear weapons tests in Australia, remember this is the children overboard Government and the Government that joined the hunt for Weapons of mass destruction that never existed, it is the opinion of some of us that the majority of Australians don't trust this Government or the opposition.

ANVA Now has a relative bookshop on the website and Ric. was a co-author of a recently published book called **THE BRITISH NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAMME 1952-2002** The book is edited by Douglas Holdstock and Frank Barnaby with a forward by Joseph Rotblat it is becoming a best seller among those interested in the subject, details of the book are on the ANVA website along with details of a book by Dr. Roger Cross called **FALLOUT** which is also good reading for those interested. Ric also has another book happening soon and another one coming.



MEMBERSHIP

Sadly more members of our Association have passed away this year including some widows of Veterans we send our sincere commiserations to the families.

WE THANK THOSE WHO ARE AGAINST US FOR GIVING US THE STRENGTH TO CONTINUE.

WE WISH EVERYONE,

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

And in particular to John De Busk and Family in Texa USA, John is an American Nuclear veteran and our rep. in American Atomic Veterans groups he is also the editor of our website, and a life member of ANVA.

THANKS MATE

ANVA ADMINISTRATION PROFILE 2003-4

AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION Inc.
Incorporating the AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL VETERANS ASSOC.

All Mail to: P.O. Box 6201 West Gosford 2250 NSW Australia

Telephone:(02) 4322-1777. Fax: (02) 4322-0776

E-Mail: anva@tac.com.au

Website : www.tac.com.au/~anva

NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Mr. D.R. Johnstone National President
Major Alan Batchelor MBE (Rtd).. Nat. Vice President
Ms Leay Ceng Chung..... Executive PA
Mr. Barry Atkinson..... Nat. Secretary
Mrs. Vicki Atkinson..... Assistant Secretary
Dr. Paul BrownHon. Media Officer
Dr Bill Wilson.....Hon. Medical Officer
Mr Paul Nass..... Hon. Legal advisor

Members

Mrs. Kay Burandt
Mr. J Bailey
Mrs. Bev. Beaver
Mr Fred Kirkland AVADSC Rep.

State Co-ordinators

NSW Mrs. Bev. Beaver
Vic. Mrs. Margaret Green
SA Mr. Avin Hudson
Qld. Mrs. Kay Burandt
WA Mrs. Sandy Caporn
USA Representative Mr John De Busk (LM)
Mr Fred Kirkland AM, JP Representative to AVADSC