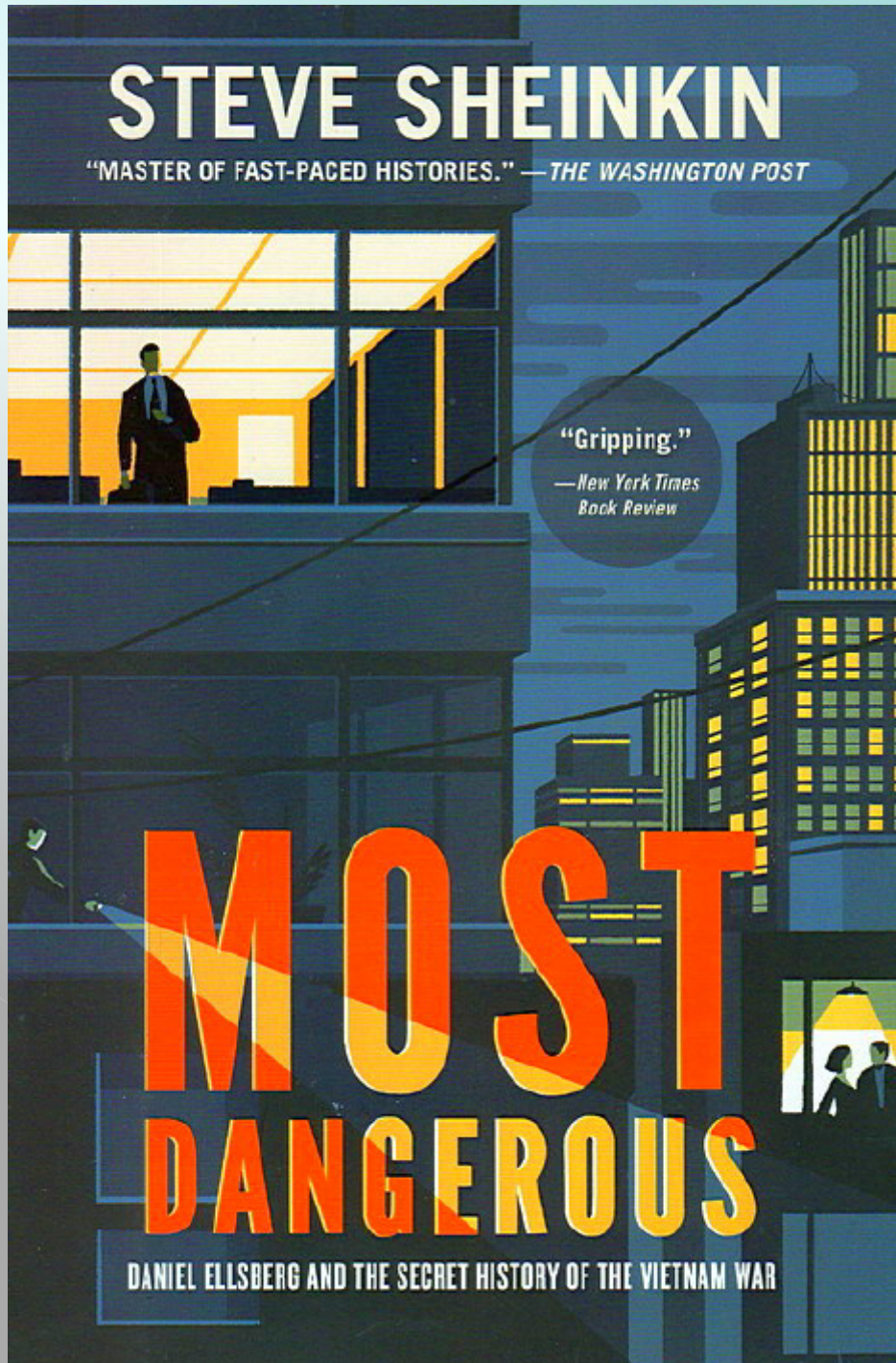


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Any excuse for stirring up the universe

Edited by
Graham Price

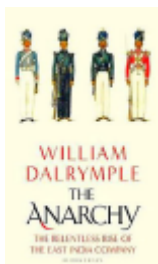
Once was weekly now highly irregular in more ways than one

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The editor's desk

This edition was supposed to be a December 2019 one, but fate had other intentions. An eye operation in October went dramatically wrong and left your editor half blind. Like all good soldiers I staggered on, hoping things were not too bad, then in December misfortune hit again with a successful virus attack on the main computer. So, almost 12 days without being online or without email contact pre and during Christmas was an interesting phenomenon to behold. A time for learning. And it was, because it made me keenly aware of holes in the system. As for the eye, much appreciation of the blind and the half blind was duly impressed upon me. I hadn't quite joined the white cane brigade, but I surely knew how they felt. After further treatment and care, by mid or late February my eye should return to normal.

What should also return to normal — for a time at least — will be relief from the torturous bush fires that have been sweeping this country. A dry land and at times a flooded land. Always has been, always will be, though perhaps the native aborigine people managed to keep the burning of it under some control. Western humans, with all their technical knowledge, don't always know what is best, but we do come together during ravaging emergencies. There's always the proof of that. There were bush-fires in this country long before humans set foot on it. Nature's way of destroying the old and renewing the land. As Dorothy McKellar put it in her poem *My Country* of 1904 fame. "*I love a sun-burnt country, A land of sweeping plains, Of ragged mountain ranges, Of droughts and flooding rains,*" Which went on:

*"Core of my heart, my country!
Land of the rainbow gold,
For flood and fire and famine
She pays us back threefold.
Over the thirsty paddocks,
Watch, after many days,
The filmy veil of greenness
That thickens as we gaze..."*

And the fires will stop for a time, then will come again as is the way with this country with its intensely flammable eucalyptus trees that fire up even when they're green. We can't prevent bush-fires from occurring but we can take steps to reduce their effect, to protect properties and life, though it requires co-operation between all states and the federal government, and hopefully, that is what we are going to get ASAP.

It fascinates me why certain generations consider programmes such as *Married at First Sight*, and even *My Kitchen Rules*, and others of similar nature are harmless and good fun. The fact is that these are part of a growing trend in society — and often within online social media — to bring people down, to diminish them in front of others. This is the cruel ego taking over *en masse* without conscious realisation. It is a warping of the sense of humour. The wise Eckhart Tolle, in his book, *A New Earth*, writes: "The natural expansion of one's life. . . has traditionally been usurped by the ego and used for its own expansion. 'Look what I can do. I bet you can't do that' says the small child to another as he discovers the increasing strengths and abilities of his body. This is one of the ego's first attempts to enhance itself through identification with the concept of 'more than you' and to strengthen self [the ego] by diminishing others." Let none of us embrace this degrading and damaging concept. So, another year. Let's make the most of it.

Graham

Feedback to Cat's Eye Weekly
is always welcome.
Click onto my purrfect nose!





The Four Little Ravens

How four successive presidents lied to the American people

Devastatingly revealing! That's what comes across within the first few pages of Steve Sheinkin's book *Most Dangerous*. This refers to Daniel Ellsberg, a government insider who had access to what is known as the Pentagon Papers. It is a frightening exposé of America's involvement in the Vietnam war and the continuing lies told to the American public over numerous years, simply because no president was willing to be the first to lose a war. All their deceitful efforts were in vain because that is exactly what happened at the end of a most vicious slaughter of several million people.

This book, though factual in its presentation, reads like a thriller — an horrific one at that. Sheinkin was born in Brooklyn, New York, 1968 and is the author of numerous historical books for young people, including *Two Miserable Presidents*: the story of the American civil war.

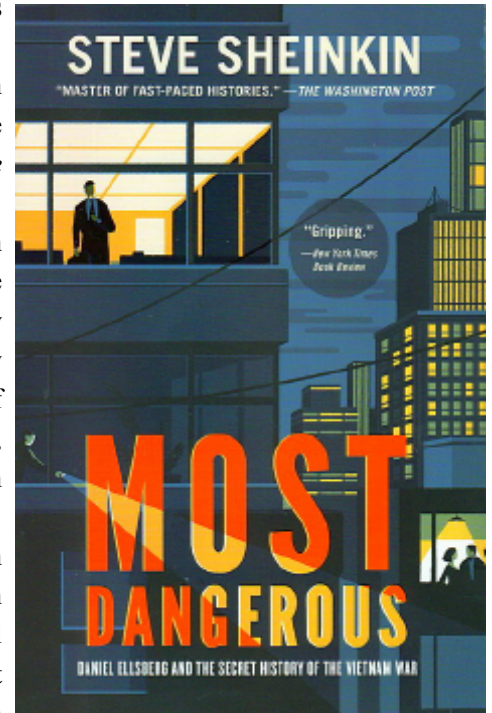
What makes *Most Dangerous* so gripping and believable is that Sheinkin had access to President Johnson and President Nixon's White House tape recordings. How the first person in the land could have been so naive as to allow incriminating recordings of conversations from the oval office to be kept, simply blows the mind. Incredible naivety at work, which shows at times, the idiocy of presidential brain capacity! Sheinkin also had access to hundreds of other sources, including the Library of Congress and personal interviews with the main antagonist, Daniel Ellsberg.

The Pentagon Papers were Top Secret and contained much information about the Vietnam war and America's association with the President of South Vietnam that revealed much deceit and the urgency to keep this information well away from American citizens. *Most Dangerous* pp156-157 "McNamara's [Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense] study was a beast, weighing in at forty-seven volumes in thick three-ring binders. There were about a million words worth of secret government and military documents, and another 1.5 million of narrative history written by the researchers. Ellsberg knew the story, so there was no single item he found shocking. What struck him was the pattern of deception—and how clearly it was documented."

There is a similarity here with World War II, when the Nazis kept meticulous records of those they tortured and killed. Ellsberg was amazed that it was all there from the beginning, even President Truman's decision to give support to France to re-capture its former colonies after the Japanese surrender. As Ellsberg read further into the seven-thousand page documents he discovered a massive cover-up — one that proved beyond any doubt that while the government was telling the

American people that officialdom was supporting free elections in Vietnam, the secret policy was that they did not. While pretending to support democracy, the American government was quietly opposing free elections in Vietnam. Further deception by the government was shown, in that U.S. Bombings of North Vietnam were successful in 'cowering' the North Vietnamese, when they were not having that effect. Again, the public was not told when Kennedy sent Special Forces troops into combat in Vietnam for the first time in 1961. So much was kept from the good citizens of America, that Ellsberg was determined to let the dogs out.

The biggest lie was in 1964 when the two American destroyers, *Maddox* and *Turner Joy* were at rest in the Gulf of Tonkin and considered they were under attack from North Vietnam speedboats. The night was dark and the sea was unruly. The Captain of the *Maddox* thought he was under attack and his instinct was to hit back and hit hard.



A U.S.A.F. Crusader fighter/bomber dropping rocket-bombs onto land near Saigon in 1965, under Operation Rolling Thunder.



At one time crew from the *Maddox* believed enemy boats were closing astern of them with torpedoes, meanwhile all this information was being forwarded direct to the White House and to President Johnson for further action.

U.S. Crusader fighter/bomber jets were despatched from a U.S. aircraft carrier to the scene of the supposed attack, but all the pilots could see were lightning strikes. There was no sign of any enemy speedboats.

One of the pilots, a seasoned 40-year-old — Commander Jim Stockdale — was bemused by all of this, telling himself to calm down and think. “There’s something wrong out here. Those destroyers are talking about hits, but where are the metal-to-metal sparks? And the boat wakes — where are they? And boat gun flashes?”

Stockdale didn’t know, nor did the other pilots. All Stockdale saw was gunfire coming from the destroyer, but what they were firing at is anyone’s guess — certainly not enemy speedboats. Eventually, Captain Herrick of the *Maddox* came to the conclusion that the noise his crew was interpreting as that of enemy torpedoes, could be coming from the ship’s own propeller. But it was all too late. The White House, under President Johnson, had given instructions to strike back hard at North Vietnam.

In 1968 through 1969 Ellsberg began reading the thousands of pages of the Pentagon Papers and had decided to do something about it. There was a new president in the White House — Richard Nixon; another president who was determined to keep certain knowledge of the Vietnam war out of the public arena. Ellsberg now made a life-changing decision. He would copy the papers and release them to the newspapers. The American public had a right to know how the government under various presidents had deceived them. It took some considerable time as copy machines were slow in those days, but with the help of certain friends, his wife, and at times his son and daughter, the project was completed. Now for the cloak and dagger activities to keep the copies out of the hands of authorities. It was the beginning of the period in Ellsberg’s life when he would become most dangerous and also the most wanted.

Undercover work of people from the CIA and the FBI (some ex-members) and some Cuban shady (possibly criminal) helpers with White House secret approval, set out to illegally target Ellsberg and his associates. This is where *Most Dangerous* enters into thrilling escapades of spying and break-in activities which were all sanctioned by President Richard Nixon. And unfortunately for the president, many of those talks to underlings were recorded on tapes within the Oval Office of the White House.

And so begins the downfall of an American president, whose filthy lies, along with those of three former presidents, brought shame, devastation, and great sorrow to the people of America. Each of the former presidents told the public that they were winning, while pouring more and more troops into battle, when the truth is they were continuously losing regardless of how many thousands of troops they employed into battle. Sacrificed, would be a better word. It wasn’t long after publications of the Pentagon Papers appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and other American newspapers, that the trail led to the Watergate spy break-in scandal, virtually organised and authorised by the president. Nixon was as plucked and cooked as a Thanksgiving Day turkey.

During and after the Vietnam war, numerous American and other Western writers show a bias toward the American war effort. The fictionalised account of the war by authors Graham Greene in *The Quiet American*, and Anthony Gray *Saigon*, give a more balanced view, but Bernard Fall’s factual *Viet-Nam Witness 1953-1966* is an even clearer statement of how the French and then the Americans failed to understand the mood of Vietnam’s citizens. Bernard Fall was in a unique position. From editorial notes: “During the course of his extensive and often firsthand study of Indochina, he has had personal contact with all the key figures in the drama of Viet-Nam—French, American, North and South Vietnamese. He is one of the few Westerners to have visited Soviet and Chinese built factories in North Viet-Nam—and he has also been ambushed with South Vietnamese troops. As the London *Economist* put it, ‘He. . . brings not only personal experience and academic soundness to his task, but also the curious detachment of one who can see French faults through American eyes and American faults through those of a Frenchman who remembers the not so distant past.’ ” •

Footnote: The Vietnam war cost America the lives of over 50,000 military personnel. All told, the Vietnamese loss from both sides North and South, totaled more than 1.3 million, with approximately 365,000 civilians killed. Out of that figure, the loss of children killed during the conflict was 84,000 — an immense tragedy of horrific proportions.

***Most Dangerous* by Steve Sheinkin, Roaring Book Press, New York, 2015.**

Reprint 24th September 2019

Dymocks \$AUD19.99, Booktopia \$AUD17.50 plus postage



CHINA INFILTRATION AND AGGRESSION

The cat is out of the tiger's cage

The exclusive *The Age* report

How ex-prime minister Keating got it wrong

Australia and the South Pacific islands at serious risk

China spy defects

It has taken the Australian public a very long time to come to a certain understanding that China, governed by the CCP (Central Communist Party), is authoritarian, judgmental, dictatorial and highly suspicious of any criticism. And if that wasn't enough for you, it staggers our minds to realise that Australian state leaders and local government authorities have often been the last to know just what China's infiltration into other countries is doing — in particular, within our region of the South Pacific.

With the publishing of an ex-China spy's revelations in *The Age* newspaper of 23 November 2019, any recent government friendliness between Australia and China will be put on the back blocks for some time to come. It was only a couple of days before *The Age* article *China Spy Defects*, that *The Australian* newspaper very kindly published an article from Wang Xining, the *charge d'affaires* at the embassy of China in Canberra, in which the diplomat reproached certain Australians for having distorted views of mainland China, claiming that there is overwhelming support by Chinese people for their government's actions — particularly for cancelling the visas of two outspoken Australian politicians, Andrew Hastie and James Patterson.



Photo courtesy 60 Minutes 9 MSN

Wang "William" Liqiang is an ex China operative (read spy) who has come out and given an exclusive report to not only an Australian newspaper, but also to ASIO (Australian Security Intelligence Organisation). This sudden outing reminds CEW of the Petrov case during the 1950s, when the diplomat Vladimir Petrov and his wife Evodkia from the Russian Embassy in Canberra claimed diplomatic immunity from Australia. Russian KGB agents quickly put them on a flight back to Russia, but were intercepted at Darwin airport by a tall Australian policeman, who arrested a KGB agent at the door of the aircraft. The Russian agent had pulled out a pistol but was no match for the tall Aussie who tackled him. The Petrovs went on to live the rest of their lives in Australia under assumed names and protection of the security forces. Their defection was extremely helpful in locating under-cover Russian agents in Australia. It also initiated a Royal Commission into Russian spying in Australia. That was yesterday, but now there are numerous under-cover Chinese agents in this country.

After defecting in 2005, former Chinese diplomat Chen Longlin told Australian intelligence officials that China had over 1000 spies in Australia and that China's Ministry of State Security was heavily involved in collecting security data from other countries, especially from Australia. Chinese hackers were well underway in attacking government and commercial agencies, also that several Chinese companies set up in Australia were covertly there for the principal purpose of accessing information useful to China, while at the same time monitoring Chinese citizens living in Australia and targeting/identifying visiting university students and spying on their political persuasions.

Before you read any further concerning these dramatic developments, let us assure you that CEW has known, befriended, and respected many folk of Chinese origin over numerous past decades. Chinese folk have a wonderful heritage and those who have settled in Australia for many years do integrate magnificently. Chinese culture brings to this country a peaceful literate Confucian identification and an exciting celebration at Lunar New Year. Many Chinese born people in Australia have settled from Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Taiwan, but others have come from Canada, America and the U.K. to settle into what we Aussies consider to be a more egalitarian way of life, which perhaps has some drawbacks because we tend to be too laid back at times and not so inclined to investigate creeping spying movements. But it seems, social media is changing that, sometimes *not* so truthfully. Again, there is a large population in this country who are descended from Chinese market gardeners and gold diggers of the 19th Century,



certain ones who have over the generations gone on to mixed marriages with local Caucasians. We must not forget those of several generations who are as Australian as the very earth beneath our feet.

But of late, mostly fuelled by the real estate industry, we find some criticism of rich Chinese buying up homes in our cities — often at extravagant prices — and having them demolished to be replaced by ‘MacMansions’, generally of fake French colonial architecture. Whole streets are indeed being consumed as such in some of the more affluent suburbs. But if one checks out other metropolitan suburbs one will find that others of a different immigrant nationality are doing much the same, gracing their large homes with balustrades of Greek or Roman nature. Then there are Chinese government associated companies buying up farm properties, industrial companies etc. in Australia, while the selling off or leasing of some of our ports is a contentious issue.

Over recent decades there have been a number of defectors from China, many to Taiwan (you are not allowed to call it that by name in some of Australian universities!) but many to America and Canada, where they have written of their negative experiences when living in China. Sour grapes? Not from what we know. Again, there is much discussion concerning prisoners in China being used for organ transplants. Once more, what certain Chinese authorities call re-education camps are reputed to be nothing but prisons for incarcerating activists away over many years.

China’s *charge d’affaires* in Canberra, Wang Xining, is free to write for Australian newspapers with his views, but China newspapers will not allow criticism in return by Australian authors. A number of Mandarin speakers and China historians in Australia understand the hegemony in Wang’s article. One such, Jim Wilson of Beaumont South Australia, writes in *The Australian* 23 November 2019 “Wang Xining’s article. . . is a prime example of dissembling Chinese Communist Party propaganda infused with Orwellian double-think. Chinese bureaucrats have been writing this stuff for millennia. The Chinese perspective means that we must accept China’s brutal totalitarian system and eventually kowtow and ‘tremblingly obey’ the emperor’s orders in the new celestial empire.” Quite lyrical, but true. Anything China sees as a threat is challenged, denied and re-formulated as a hate against China’s society. Wang Xining tells us that we need to know China better and to study Mandarin. But tourists and official parties visiting China don’t get to see the down sides of that enormous country. Many have studied Mandarin and many do make it their business to understand where China is coming from and where it may go. Australia has a long history of friendship with China and long may we keep it that way, but that doesn’t mean we should be uncritical of interference into our own territory and the territories of our South Pacific neighbours.



It is not only a number of Australian politicians and human rights activists who indulge in critical combat with China, it is academics and ex-foreign affairs government individuals. Foreign Affairs analyst Allan Gyngell, writing in his book *Fear of Abandonment* (Latrobe University Press) writes “As [China’s president] Xi consolidated his power as the dominant figure in the leadership, China’s defence spending and capability grew. Its navy was now the largest in Asia and it was more explicitly asserting its claims to disputed maritime territories in the East and South China Seas. In the South China Sea, a rich fishing ground and prospective source of energy, it was building up its presence on small reefs and islands within a large and contested area bounded by a vague and expansive ‘nine-dash line!’ China’s approach was causing divisions within ASEAN, especially between Vietnam and the Philippines, claimants to some of the disputed islands, and Cambodia, which acted as China’s proxy in the group.

As noted in the last issue of CEW, much of what China has now taken over in that area, has for centuries belonged to Vietnam and other south East Asian countries, and not China. Earlier century maps prove this beyond any doubt. China’s *Belt and Road Initiative* is seen by China as a way of helping poorer and less developed nations (particularly in Africa and the South Pacific) to expand facilities for road, rail, ports and airports. China has very



generously handed over cold hard cash and industrial personnel toward the development and modernising of infrastructure. Which seems all well and good, except that it all come with a catch. We help you, you help us. Do not criticise our expansion and allow us the freedom to document all of your infrastructure, which naturally enough includes the size and power of your military.

Labor’s Victorian state premier, Daniel Andrews has long been a fan of China’s *Belt and Road Initiative*. As a go-go-go infrastructure premier, he has set himself the task of bringing up to date Victoria’s rail system, at the same time pouring into projects for road. His interest in China’s outreach is not only due to his left-wing politics, it is also with an eye on getting something from China, hence his ‘selling off’ the Port of Melbourne to investors in 2018, 20% of which was China investment. Premier Andrews,



after about 25 trips to China, hailed the sell off as brilliant. His government pocketed over \$7 billion from the sale. The federal government in Canberra was not amused.

The Northern Territory government sold off the Port of Darwin to China. One wonders how on earth such a military strategic infrastructure could have passed the Foreign Investment Review Board, and indeed the Australian military? But it seems the FIRB has been asleep on the job for many years, with the buying up of numerous Australian farms by overseas Chinese government associated firms. Australia's Defence leaders were sidelined on the Darwin Port sale because they were at the time considered to be middle and not top management. Even the Minister of Defence was not told of the sale until after the Northern Territory government announced the deal as done. Result: considerable anger and disruption within federal government corridors, and particularly within the American Pentagon, which has a certain number of training troops at Darwin. It has long been the nature during peace prior to warfare that so-called civilian companies are actually spying upon local activities. This is how the Japanese managed so successfully to roll their military down Malaya from Southern Thailand and the East coast of Malaya during World War II.

Covert military intelligence was carried out for years by so-called civilian enterprise, which has been the downfall of many a country. Japan had its 'civilian' spies in Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, and numerous other Malayan towns, together with surveillance in certain country centres where industry and commerce was large. The intelligence they gathered was that although Singapore may well have been protected from the sea with its naval guns, nothing much else was — particularly in the princely northern states along the east coast of Kelantan and Trengganu, where beaches were much isolated from human activity. Also in the more populated western states of Kedah and Perak including the Province of Wellesley, there was a limited air defence in the form of the Royal Air Force at Butterworth. British intelligence had earlier only suspected that the Japanese had outdated and underpowered aircraft, but by the time of the bombing of Pearl Harbour a review was taken and attempts were made to shore up Malayan defences. It was too late. The RAF had a squadron of Brewster Buffaloes at Butterworth, which were criticised as being poorly engineered, and the odd Bristol Blenheim fighter/bomber, while at the smaller airfields at Alor Star and Sengai Patani, there were only a few Blenheims and other scattered aircraft — nothing that would have been a real threat to the super efficient Japanese Mitsubishi's soon to arrive in the northern skies. During an attack on RAF Butterworth on the 9th of December 1941, only two RAF planes managed to get off the ground — one was quickly shot down, while the other under the captainship of 28-year-old Squadron Leader Arthur Scarf bravely managed to fly through the hail of bombs and bullets to reach the Japanese aerodrome at Singora in southern Thailand, where he dropped his bombs. On his return flight his aircraft, almost full of holes by Japanese bullets, crashed not far from Butterworth, killing him, but allowing two other members of his crew to survive. Scarf was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in absentia for his bravery. In 1946 he was gazetted with a Victoria Cross.

The protection of ports and aerodromes of any country is most important and should not be left to civilian politicians to decide on their future. So, the virtual selling off of two major ports in Australia, considerably to





China interests, can be likened to Swedish teenager activist Greta Thunberg with her *Climate Change* statement “How dare you!” Victorian premier Daniel Andrews, referring to the Melbourne port, stated that it was the right thing to do. Many disagree, even though it has brought billions of dollars into the Victorian economy. But it is interesting to note that the previous Coalition Naphthine government was also looking at that possibility with hungry eyes. Premier Andrews is now receiving briefings from ASIO, to keep him up to date with China activities, hopefully to help steer him into a more protective mode than he has been of recent times. His somewhat past enterprises remind us of Don Quixote and his dream of the impossible dream, so much inclined to tilt at windmills. His is the only Australian state to sign up with China’s *Belt and Road Initiative*.

It is little known that China-backed companies are engaged in building infrastructure in Australia. For instance, most Australians would not be aware that the once western owned company, John Holland, is now totally owned by the China Communications Construction Company Ltd, listed on the Hong Kong stock exchange. While there is nothing illegal in that deal and so far no suggestion that the China CCP has an interest, it nevertheless allows a future entry of China into that company if circumstances in Hong Kong change. The take-over was approved by the Australian government in 2015.

The Australian Strategic Forum recently gathered together apparently enlightened minds from around the country, with speeches from many. There were pro and con words spoken concerning China. Among the current and long gone political leaders was ex-Australian prime minister, Paul Keating, who blasted Australia’s current foreign policy toward China with: “My concern is what passes for the foreign policy of Australia lacks any sense of strategic realism and that the whispered word ‘communism’ of old is now being replaced by the word ‘China.’”

Peter Harcher, writing in *The Age* of 23rd November, reckons Keating has gone soft. “Paul Keating was one of the hardest men in Australian politics of the last half-century. So it’s touching to see him go soft on the Chinese government. . . [re. his past political bravery] it doesn’t make him infallible. He’s due recognition but not unthinking reverence. Let’s be plain. His speech this week was a remarkable apologia for the Chinese government. . . It was also the most telling. With trademark Keating colour, he disdained the ‘nominally pious belching of *do-gooder* journalists. . . [in reference to certain articles] he calls [them] anti-China. Keating does two things. First, he adopts the tactic of the Chinese government, dismissing any critical coverage as ‘anti-China’ or racist. [Ah, that word again that has so much going for it these days!] By that metric, most of the news stories reported in the Australian media every day would be ‘anti-Australia.’ Second, he implies that the Australian media should not publish information that reflects poorly on China. He said in the speech that Australia’s media had failed to paint ‘a balanced picture, of the rise, legitimacy and importance of China. If it’s about balance he could count the number of other China related stories that the *Herald* runs. . . So far this year the paper has run 94 stories related to China’s economy, many about the trade war with the US, and another 35 stories on China’s economic links to Australia.”

'Good news for Australia': Chinese economy going better than expected

By Kerry McKeown
April 17, 2019 - 5:30pm

Beijing: Chinese economic growth kept going strong, defying all ailing economy and slowing export sales of physical goods up 20 per cent in the first quarter of 2019, compared to a year earlier.

Online shopping now accounts for 38 per cent of all retail sales of consumer goods in China.

Despite operations of a slowdown, the country's GDP growth led globally at 6.4 per cent in the first three months of 2019. Driven by government stimulus policies and strong consumer and business confidence by infrastructure projects.



No, Paul Keating these days is very soft on China and is blind to their expansionist activities. Perhaps he needs a good long talk with Allan Gyngell? *The Australian Strategic Policy Institute* which runs the *Australian Strategic Forum*, believes that China has driven a wedge between the Federal and Victorian state governments, and it would not surprise CEW to consider that this is what China wishes. A win win for them — *divide and conquer*. There is little doubt that China has an ongoing agenda, whether that be through gathering useful information through its *Belt and Road Initiative*, or whether it be through covert progressive military means, such as positioning naval communication ‘listening’ ships off the shores of other countries during times of allied military exercises, and using such naval ships to hang around South China seas near Malaysia and Vietnam.

Censorship in China is heavy. Many middle-class Chinese are doing well, as some of the capitalist millionaires also have managed to strangely work within the communist system. No one wants to rock the boat. Okay, so dissidents, activists, free-speechers are targeted and locked up out of sight. It has nothing to do with us, say the well-off fat cats. The country is rolling along well. Look at the amazing infrastructure we have accomplished. Look at how we have brought the masses out of poverty. All is well. Stop your harping and criticising.

China’s *Belt and Road Initiative* helps other countries manage their infrastructure, but it does have other effects, in that China accrues information from those countries that may well be to the benefit of China’s future expansion. Sixty-eight countries have signed up with China, so premier Andrews of Victoria is but another bit player entering the cozy but imperial arms of China. One of the intriguing issues concerning Victoria’s signing up is though it was supposed to have been released to the Victorian public on the 8th of October, it was held back to Armistice Day, the 11th of November, when the state’s people were focused on remembrance ceremonies, hence not all that notice was given to



the sign up. Victoria's opposition leader, Michael O'Brien, stated that Victorians should have been consulted. "They've [the Andrew's government] done this behind Victorian's backs."

Information from SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) reveals that for China to keep Cambodia close to it, China has built and paid for seven dams in that country — and unlike Vietnam, Cambodia these days is cozy and close to the beating heart of China. Sri Lanka borrowed more than \$1 billion from China for a deepwater port, but couldn't repay the money. Result: the port is now in control by China, which is leasing it for 99 years. South Africa turned to China for a \$1.5 billion coal-fired power plant — one of at least 63 such plants around the world, financed by China, which effectively pollutes more than the whole country of Spain does. Pakistan is now running out of money and cannot repay China in the for-seeable future, which becomes dependant upon pressure from China. The added factor of this situation is that India's not so distant future may see a looming shadow from a combined China/Pakistan military force.

China gave Zambia 94 million for a Soccer stadium of over 50,000 seats, merely one of 600 projects China has offered to make friends and drive into local markets. 41 pipelines and other oil and gas projects help China secure valuable resources, with new bridges, roads and railways around the world to help China market. As always, what is used for times of peace can also be used in times of uncertain conflicts. SBS found 112 countries where China has funded projects around the world as part of the *Belt and Road Initiative*, but considers that China has pushed far beyond that. The boundaries are entirely flexible from China's point of view. And China is now pushing into the Middle East and expanding operations in Africa, lending heavily to Zimbabwe and Nigeria.

It is now known that the combined population of countries involved in the *Belt and Road Initiative* has reached 4.6 billion, with 61% of the world's population involved. China is setting itself up for future protection and expansion, on one side to help its burgeoning population and the other, to become the leader of the world. Vladimir Putin, eat your heart out.

For China spy Wang "William" Liqiang to come out of the cold — not to be confused with the China embassy *charge d'affaires* Wang Xinjing — life here-on for him and his young family is going to be one of security, not dissimilar to the Russian Petrov case within Australia in earlier years. Wang Liqiang has blown wide the willingness and steadfastness of Chinese Communist Party members to infiltrate other countries for the purpose of intelligence operations, even to the extent of allowing Chinese students in Australia who favour CCP practice, to join religious and other cultural groups simply to spy on other Chinese Australians and/or Chinese visitors. *The Age* reports that Mr. Wang Liqiang was responsible for coordinating a 'cyber army' to shift political opinion on Taiwan. He was also given a false South Korean passport in order to commence operations within Tapei to influence the coming presidential elections with the aim of bringing down the Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen. "We also controlled media, like buying their ads to propagate the trend, and let them report in favour of those candidates we were supporting." Wang Liqiang has also given exclusive information concerning the removal [kidnapping] by China from Hong Kong to the mainland of five of Hong Kong's booksellers who were stocking books considered unsuitable to the CCP — reminiscent of Nazi Germany's banning and burning of books during the 1930s-40s and Cambodia's Pol Pot's crushing of literature and cultural works during the 1970s.

While Wang Liqiang was working undercover in Hong Kong he posed as a businessman and played a role in an organisation that directed bashings and cyber attacks upon Hong Kong citizens. The organisation also infiltrated Hong Kong universities and student associations. He stated that he had met the head of a deep-cover spy ring operating with impunity in Australia, the name of whom will be presented to ASIO. Naturally enough, China has labeled him as a fraudster and a liar.

CEW and other blogs do not set out deliberately to be doomsayers, but numerous Australian and other nationalities around the world, are simply so slow at getting the real picture, that it makes one wonder if all they are interested in is having a good time. •

"Only the mob and the elite can be attracted by the momentum of totalitarianism itself; the masses have to be won by propaganda. Under conditions of constitutional government and freedom of opinion, totalitarian movements struggling for power can use terror to a limited extent only and share with other parties the necessity of winning adherents and of appearing plausible to a public which is not yet rigorously isolated from all other sources of information.

It was recognized early and has frequently been asserted that in totalitarian countries propaganda and terror present two sides of the same coin. This, however, is only partly true. Wherever totalitarianism possesses absolute control, it replaces propaganda with indoctrination and uses violence not so much as to frighten people. . . as to realize constantly its ideological doctrines and its practical lies."



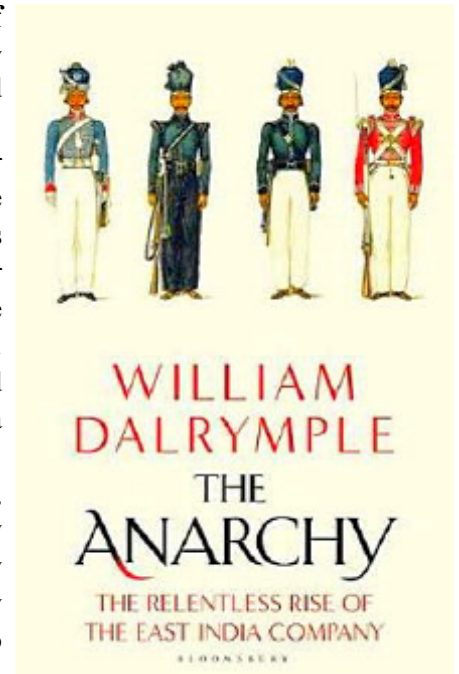
INDIA: THE BRITISH RAJ

Two fine books about British dominance in India from 1599 through to independence in 1947. *The Anarchy* by William Dalrymple, factual, and *Smoke and Ashes* by Abir Mukherjee, fiction.

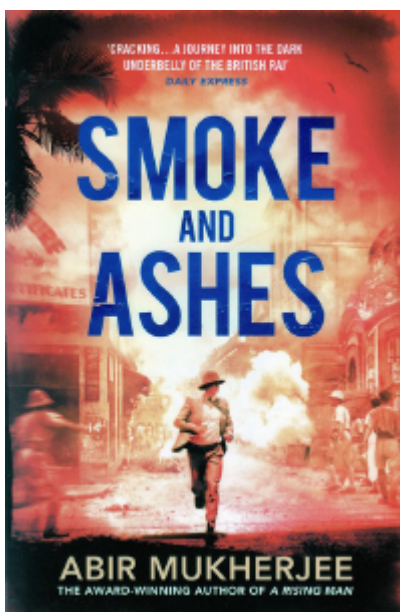
How did it happen — almost the whole of India ruled by a number of greedy Englishmen from a board room in London? A private company which was founded in 1599 sought a Royal patent for trade with the East Indies, and thus became the scourge of India.

The East India Company was granted approval by royal charter in 1600 for trading with the East Indies. From there the East India Company grew into one of the largest traders in the world's history, backed by a private army. Within 500 years this gigantic behemoth had risen from small beginnings to having a military force of over 260,000 men. By 1765 the Company had over-run so much of India as to force the Mughal emperor into setting up taxes, collected of course by the Company's army. Never was such a capitalist venture so successful in trade, persecution, and downright piracy. The giant was rolling along confidently, taking fortunes from India back to Great Britain on behalf of its shareholders.

But like all movements that have their beginnings in greed and despotism, it was bound to fail. It took several hundred years, but the crunch came in the early 19th Century after numerous decades of uprisings by the Indian people. The country appeared to be at war more than at peace. By 1833 the British parliament eventually took action, removing the East India Company's right to trade, thus "[turning] it into a sort of governing corporation. . . Finally on 10 May 1857, the EIC's own private army rose up in revolt against its employer. . . Enough was enough. The Victorian state, alerted to the dangers posed by corporate greed and incompetence, successfully tamed history's most voracious corporation. The Company's navy was disbanded and its army passed to the Crown." *The Anarchy* p384. •



The Anarchy, by William Dalrymple
Bloomsbury
Dymocks \$AUD 29.99 paperback, \$AUD 69.99 hardback



Ah, opium, which many were addicted to during the late 1800's-early 1900's. Captain Sam Wyndham, of the Imperial Police Force in Bengal, knows all about it, becoming addicted and frequently smoking the pipe within numerous opium dens around Calcutta, while trying to hide his addiction from superior officers

Abir Mukherjee puts himself in the shoes of the addicted officer, who is ex the horrors of the 1914-1918 war, now chasing criminals in India. The first person narrative suits the times when Britain was besieged by protesting crowds wanting independence through the 1920's. At the time, murders of Caucasian people were rare, but when this begins to occur, along with several native folk, Wyndham begins to smell a rat. Somehow these grizzly murders seem connected, but how and why is a mystery.

Thus commences the task of trying to unravel what clues there are, in an attempt to link the murders. Wyndham and his Indian sergeant — Surendranath Banerjee, are hot on the trail. Because of the British finding Surendranath's name difficult to pronounce, a senior officer nick-named him Surrender-not.

Abir Mukherjee, also the author of *A Winning Man*, is the winner of the 2017 Crossed Red Herring award. He now lives in London with his wife and two sons.

Smoke and Ashes, by Abir Mukherjee
Harvill Secker paperback
Dymocks \$AUD19.99, Hardback \$29.99



A 1920's Indian mystery

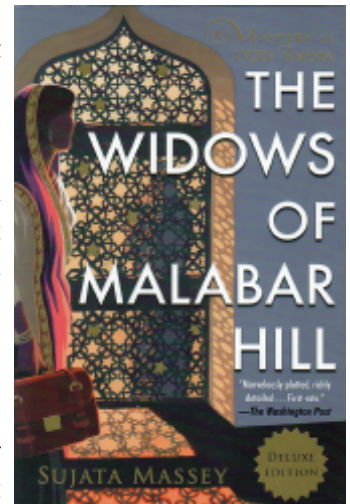
Set in old Bombay and Calcutta, this novel by prolific writer Sujata Massey, centres around a female solicitor, Perveen Mistry, who finds herself caught up in a murderous crime set among three widows not of her own religious faith, which is Parsi.

Being Muslim, the widows had the same husband — Omar Farid, shortly deceased, whose will and specific requirements are in the hands of Perveen, who must visit the widows in accordance with their seclusion. The situation is awkward as the widow's male trustee is living within the villa — albeit within a divided section only accessed through a laced grill gate, which is kept locked — the grill gate being only for emergency conversation between the two separate living quarters.

Massey writes about the restrictions of the women of India during 1910-1920's, some which Perveen finds herself caught up in, especially when she marries into what first appears to be a loving family. The restrictions imposed upon her by her in-laws only serve to make her furious about the conditions of women, particularly in Bengal. The British Raj is in full swing and Massey depicts some of the quaint British 'holier than thou' attitudes carried out from separated districts.

While Perveen is interviewing the widows individually during their strict seclusion from the outside world — according to Muslim law — in *purdha*, there is a murder on the premises within the close proximity of the laced grille gate. Perveen had earlier left the premises and had forgotten her briefcase, which she returned to retrieve. Unfortunately, it is found blood-smeared with the corpse of the victim.

Because of the various cultural and religious differences in India, Perveen is limited in her quest to solve the murder — so many details are kept in wraps within the multi-crowded Indian society. Cultural and religious restrictions prevent an in-depth incursion into the finding of truth. Massey weaves a fascinating tale of deception and discovery within a world simply aching for change. •



The Widows of Malabar Hill
Soho Crime, paperback
Dymocks \$AUD29.99

The amazing kid from Kogarah

He is gone now, this sweet, humorous Aussie bloke Clive James, who captured Cambridge, and indeed the whole world. This energetic, good-natured soul, an ex-pat from his beloved Sydney suburb who went on to amuse and thrill the British public has died.

He was an associate of Germaine Greer, Barry Humphreys, and other ex-pats who made their home in the UK in the early 1960's, sometimes shocking the staid English public, well. . . Germaine set out to do that. . . but Clive was a man of letters — a wordsmith of the highest. Critic, poet, and also broadcaster, he cast his spell on many. Words were his specific tool. He was brilliant at them, and his idea, even while writing, was to speak the words out loud — the only way to give them the priority they deserved. Shakespeare would have done no less. Clive's brilliance won for him a place at Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he studied English literature. After several years of wanderlust and enjoying the English life within the Aussie ex-pat community, he had found an almost perfect notch within an ancient English university.

It is where his last days were spent — a fitting environment for an old battler who charmed the world with his grace and gentle character, who thrilled us with amusing critical interviews of personalities on TV, who suffered debilitating leukaemia, liver disease, and serious heart problems with an astuteness and fore-bearing that would have troubled a saint. His good humour during his last years — in spite of these afflictions — made him endeared to many. There was no grumbling, no complaining. If that's the way it has to be, then so be it. In 2014 he sat in his Cambridge home, looking out the window at the Japanese maple in the garden, and wrote: "*When the maple leaves outside my Cambridge window turn to red this year, I will be gone. . . In the meanwhile one can read.*" And the amazing thing is, he was still reading (and writing) almost up to the time of his death in November 2019. Five years after virtually being given the death sentence by his opinionated medical people, he was still in control, boosted no doubt by his inbuilt sense of humour. When you are going, there's no sense of whining. Laugh, be joyful—accept. You've had a good life, why now do you wish for regrets? **Clive James 1939-2019. R.I.P.**

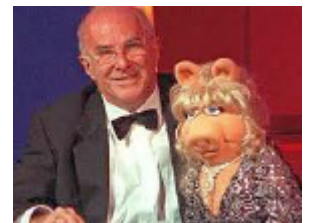


Image Standard.Co.UK.

*Unreliable Memoirs — a biography — by Clive James and J.P. O'Rourke is
still available — Pan-Macmillan paperback. Dymocks \$AUD19.99*



**THE
ANIMAL
REHOMING
SERVICE**

For further information,
please log onto
<http://www.tars.org.au/>
The Animal Rehoming
Service Inc. is a
registered charity.
Donations over \$2 are tax
deductible. (ABN: 51 275
837 567)

Re-advertised: We're still looking for a loving home together!

Peppa (a 4 year old, 21kg female Kelpie x) and Bitzer (a 5 year old, 29kg male Kelpie x Labrador) are looking for a loving home together. They're both desexed, vaccinated, wormed and microchipped.

Peppa and Bitzer are affectionate, cuddly, playful and active dogs. They would suit an active family, happy to exercise them daily. They love their walks as well as time at the off leash park, playing fetch and playing with other dogs. They're great with other dogs, but aren't good with cats.

Peppa is a sensitive soul who may have been abused as she's quite nervous around



men, but once she trusts you, she's very sweet and affectionate.

Peppa and Bitzer would suit an all adult home or one with older, dog friendly children. They'd love a home where they'd be cherished members of the family, enjoying an indoor/ outdoor lifestyle and sleeping indoors.

Their combined adoption fee is \$750. Peppa's Microchip Number: 900079000030803 Bitzer's Microchip Number:

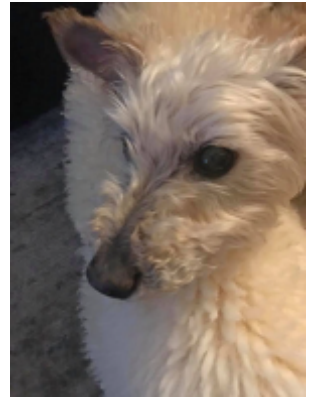
900032001899169 Pet Exchange Register Source Number: EE100709 If interested, please call Michaela on 0409213131 (South Morang based, but we go to you)



Happy Adoption Tale (update)!

We all need a bit of good news at the moment, so here's an update on Millie, the 11 year old Toy Poodle x, which we received today from Tina her new mum.

Have a look at her now... from listless, depressed pooch (left) to *Adventure Girl* up at Noosa. Yes, she's on an interstate holiday with her new family, the lucky girl. In two months, they've managed to wipe years off her and look at that smile... Amazing what some TLC can do. Thanks Tina!



Re-advertised: I'm still looking for a loving home!

Luca is a 1 year old desexed, vaccinated, wormed and microchipped 30kg male Bull Arab x possible Labrador and/ or Wolfhound, who's looking for a loving home.

He's a playful, active and loving boy who adores people and is also great with other dogs. Luca would suit a home where he'd be a cherished member of the family, ideally with another dog for company. He's also lived with cats.

An active family, happy to exercise him daily would also suit. One with dog savvy, older children or an all adult home would be great. He enjoys an indoor/ outdoor lifestyle, sleeping indoors.

Luca's adoption fee is \$400 Microchip Number: 956000010548225 Pet Exchange Register Source Number: EE100709 If interested, please call Michaela on 0409213131 (Frankston based, but we go to you)





A big thanks to 9 year old Emilie from Clifton Hill who raised \$274 for The Animal Rehoming Service by baking and selling gingerbread at her mum's work Christmas Party. What an amazing effort! The last piece was auctioned off for \$150. Thank you to the person who kindly bought it!
We presented her with this Certificate of Appreciation



**We are now much loved in our new home and very grateful to TARS Inc.
 Such a new lease of life!**



MS Research Australia has significantly contributed to big picture impacts in MS by dramatically increasing the funding dedicated to MS research in Australia.

Some of these include:

Hospitalisations of people with MS in 2011 have declined by 75% compared to hospitalisations in 1984 according to a recent study (Marrie 2014).

- Over the last 15 years, people with MS are being diagnosed ten times earlier (Brownlee et al 2015), and disability milestones are being reached almost 10 years later on average (Kister 2012).
- Long term follow-up of people treated with interferon-beta medications showed mortality (death) due to MS reduced by almost 47% (Goodin 2012).
- In 2006, we only had 2 daily injectable treatments for the most common form of MS. We now have 5 times as many treatments in combinations of injections, tablets or infrequent infusions. Some with the ability to stop MS in its tracks in many people. (Broadley 2014, MS Research Australia published report).

Since 2010 employment rates have improved significantly for people with MS. Additionally, 95% of people with MS received requested changes in their role received them and 82% of people who asked for changes to their environment obtained them. Previous studies have also shown that disclosure of an MS diagnosis helped job retention.

<https://msra.org.au/donate/>

(Author: MS Australia)

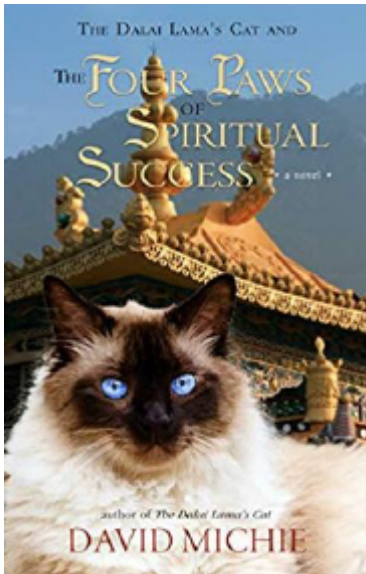
Wire Women's Information Referral Exchange

One in three calls WIRE receives from women are related to family violence. Wire: 372 Spencer Street, West Melbourne 3003. Telephone Support Service Line 1300 134 130 Mon-Fri 9.00-5.00.

<http://www.wire.org.au/>



Off the Shelf



We can hardly wait to get into this novel — the fourth book of the Dalai Lama's Cat series by David Michie. It is sitting beside the bed waiting for night to approach, so all that can be revealed about this book at this time must come from the publisher's own words and a peep or two into the pages. From the publisher: "When the Dalai Lama's inner circle is set about the task of providing is Holiness with a book he can give his visitors, an unexpected volunteer stretches out her paws. . . Through encounters with celebrity visitors and her own intriguing adventures, the Dalai Lama's Cat explains all four key themes, not so much as ideas but as practices to be embodied. Along the way she even gets a new title — 'Therapy Cat.'"

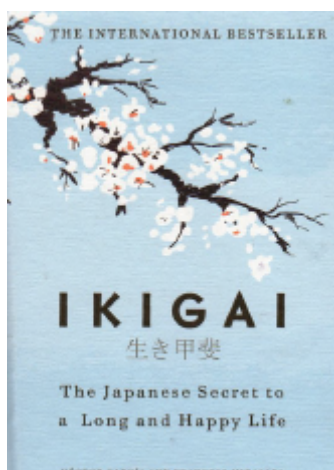
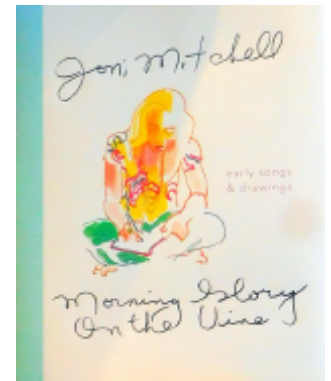
A peep into page 27: "We cats are the most versatile of creatures, who know exactly how to make ourselves at home in a great variety of places. It appeals to our enigmatic nature to be able to segue effortlessly from one role to another, manifesting intriguingly different identities, depending on where we are and what we are doing. That way we can never be pinned down. Categorised. Accused of being predictable in any way except, perhaps, of being utterly unpredictable."

Why else is it that so many cats are known by more than one name? In my case, as a sentinel on the Dalai Lama's windowsill, I am his 'Snow Lion', On top of the filing cabinet in his Executive Assistants' office, I go by the more formal title of 'His Holiness' Cat, or HHC for short—His Holiness the Dalai Lama being referred to in official correspondence as HHDL. At the Himalaya Book Cafe, I am referred to as 'Rinpoche', a Tibetan title meaning 'precious' and usually bestowed on much-loved lamas."

**The Four Paws of Spiritual Success — a novel — Hay House, paperback
Various prices \$AUS19.99 to \$AUS29.99**

You would probably need to be over 60 to appreciate the art of Joni Mitchell, folk-music wise. This iconic songbird and daughter of Vietnam war protest years, topped the charts in 1971 with her album *Blue*. She then created a gift for her nearest friends, titled *Morning Glory on the Vine*, which in honour of her 75th birthday, has now been released for the public. It is a selection of her own lyrics and poems with fascinating water-colour paintings. In her own inimitable script, faithfully captured in this edition, Joni brings alive the decades of the 60's and 70's. The book contains 30 full-colour illustrations of land-scapes, still life, with portraits of Joni with her friends. It is a book that fans of her will want to keep and treasure.

Hardback by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Dymocks \$AUS49.99



Ikigai: The art of staying young while growing old. And as a Japanese proverb states: "Only staying active will make you want to live a hundred years" — and they do, in the Japanese province of Okinawa. This book of Ikigai draws much on the lifestyle of the people of Ogimi, Okinawa, where centenarians are common and elderly residents still drive. Organic foods, grown in their own plots, and birthday parties are common. Ikigai pp107-108: "The woman turning ninety-nine blows out the candles and thanks everyone for coming to her party. We eat homemade *shikuwasa* cake and end up dancing and celebrating as though it were the birthday of a twentysomething."

Ancestor worship is an important practice in Okinawa. . . Every person has an essence, or *mabui* which is "Our spirit and the source of our life force. It is immortal and makes us who we are."

The book is full of reasons and practices for a long, healthy life — information about cultivating good habits, how to be optimistic, Okinawa's miracle diet, the benefits of Yoga, Tai Chi and Qigong, and green tea; how to reduce food portions and skip sweets, yet still feel satisfied; how to attain resilience and a host of other ideas for a long life.

Ikigai, a small hardback by Penguin — \$AUS19.95



Mercury O'Proud

Political correspondent

Why Iran is a hologram of Hitler's Nazi party

In 2017, Saudi prince Mohammed bin Salman labeled the supreme leader of Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei, the nearest thing the Arab world had to Hitler. Is this true? After all, president Trump of the United States of America, has also been called a Hitler.

The word is not to be bandied about lightly, for Adolf Hitler was the worst mass murderer the world has seen. But when a dictator can rustle up millions of subjects to rally for his cause, such as the spiritual leader of Iran has recently done in opposition to certain of his subjects who call for truth and freedom, and then excites his mass crowd much the same as Hitler did at his rallies, there is cause for much concern.

In a sense, Nazism was a religion, and a fervent one at that. Germany's people were caught up in untold excitement with the idea of a master race, that blue eyes and blonde hair identified them with the old Norse and Germanic gods and engendered a pureness of race. It was Nazi policy that only people with Aryan blood in them would be suitable for citizenship within the state. Germany under Hitler was not a democracy. Iran uses a similar method by allowing its theocratic control of Shiite Islam to justify the imprisoning of journalists and researchers, and condoning undemocratic journeys into other countries by its Revolutionary Guards — particularly into Iraq and Syria. Iran has long supported al-Qaeda and given refuge to terrorists.



Hitler authorised the research of nuclear weapons, hoping his scientists would find the secret to a nuclear bomb before Germany was eventually crushed by the allied powers. If he had succeeded, the whole history of the world would have been vastly different. Iran has nuclear capacity and though sanctions have been applied, is still eager to be a nuclear armed country.

Hitler was expansionist as he moved his armed forces into Austria, the Sudentland, France, Belgium, Poland and other European countries. Iran is also expansionist. Amir Tehari, executive editor-in-chief of the daily *Kayham* 1972-79 and the writer of eleven books, states that to remain in place the Islamic Republic of Iran has, to the best of estimates, executed 15,000 people and forced more than eight million Iranians into exile.

Hitler had absolute control of the media. Iran is the same, imprisoning journalists who differ as to the regime's actions. The last issue of CEW revealed how foreign journalists and writers who entered Iran, were watched wherever they went, often assigned a 'guard' to ferry them around and make accommodation arrangements for them, and no doubt, to refer the movements and activities of the visitor to higher authorities.

Saudi's crown prince Mohammed bin Salman may have accused Iran in spite, for Saudi Arabia's human rights record is not unstained, but there is some truth in his statement. Iran has its spys in many Arab countries and is engaged in undercover military activities within some of these states. Iran has repeated numerous times that it will destroy Israel. Under Khamenei, Iran has a volunteer paramilitary force, the Basij, to carry out missions; the extraterritorial group Quds Force, and of course, the Revolutionary Guard Corps and another militias. Iran is well equipped to come down hard on dissenters to its autocratic rule and to carry out subversive missions into other Arabian countries. Hitler had his SA and SS groups for the purpose of security and surveillance. Iran, under Khamenei, the same.

Unlike Hitler, the Ayatollah is prepared to wait. But how long will the Western world — in particular the European Union — wait, while the pot is simmering so close to the edge? •



Saigon sunset

A saga in several episodes by Graham Price

Chapter two

The story so far: It is 1959 and widower, James McKinnon, with his three children Michelle sixteen, Samantha thirteen, and Jules eleven, have recently settled in Saigon having arrived from Kuala Lumpur in Malaya. James is with Asia Barr, a company that excels in buying up rubber plantations and other likely mining investments throughout South-East Asia. James has employed a French governess, Charmaine Curtaine, to attend to his children, but is encouraged to send Michelle to a prestige school in Saigon named the Nguyen Académie. Michelle is excited by the prospect and not quite by accident the family is introduced to the English teacher — the elegant Vietnamese-French Phuong Duval at the market place in Cholon. Also entering the scene at Cholon and being introduced to the family is an inspector of the secret French Sûreté, Claude Bastein. James is at first suspicious of the inspector's intentions, but then comes to accept the big man as a friend. Arrangements are made for a dinner at James' French colonial home in Saigon, with invitations to both the inspector and Phuong Duval.

The young Vietnamese man with the tick in his left eye watched as the French policeman bid his farewells to Charmaine Curtaine and the McKinnons. Pham Van Kim rose from a table in the back of the bar-restaurant opposite the Cholon market and followed the big man out of the building. The Sûreté inspector of police stepped into a faded green 203 Peugeot and drove away, while Pham Van Kim scrambled onto his blue Mobylette moped and followed the Peugeot out of Cholon, heading for Saigon. He kept it in sight, deliberately hanging back in the dense traffic so as not to be observed. He knew what the French secret police were like — they were always looking about them for some signs of trouble. Even now, thought Kim, that man would be watching the rear vision mirror, though there would be no perceived threat. It was simply habit, obtained from years of investigations in France, then in Hanoi and Saigon, and within the towns and villages of the many provinces of Vietnam. Kim knew that the man ahead in that Peugeot could smell a rat some kilometres away. They would have to be one of the most cunning police forces in the world, he thought, and most of them had nerves of steel and a strength of interrogation that made the American CIA people look like tame mice.

Pham Van Kim was not a nationalist, nor Viet Minh — he was one of the newly formed guerrilla groups, the Viet Cong — allied of course with Ho Chi Minh's nationalists, but able and willing to carry out massacres and torture that the Minh would balk at. His leaders were not interested in negotiations at the Paris peace conferences between the North and the South, but were only determined to rid the country of all foreign powers and to destroy the reign of the capitalists and blood sucking leeches of the South.

His cousin, Pham Van Dong, had already paid a glorious price for his dedication. It was said he was held in an underground prison at the Saigon Sûreté headquarters, where perhaps inspector Bastein was now headed. Slowly, a plan began to form in the mind of Pham Van Kim. They would hold this inspector for ransom in exchange for their cousin. It would not be too difficult. . . the shadows were lengthening and soon it would be dark. And he felt the coolness of the sharp-bladed knife under his shirt, tucked into the waistband of his trousers, and if necessary the disguised hand grenade hanging from his belt within a camera case. He would force the inspector back into the Peugeot and take him by knife-point to his brother's flat in Cholon. Hoang was also a sympathiser with the Viet Cong and would be pleased to help. We will keep the inspector hidden for days, even weeks, until Dong is released by a secret exchange of persons.

It was a good plan and it would work. The inspector, even though he was an elite member of the Sûreté, would not be expecting such an attack, especially after enjoying the day at Cholon with liquor still flowing through his veins. Pham Van Kim was certain that the policeman would be turning his mind over and over to the very favourable reunion with that fair French woman — the governess to those British children. Kim smiled to himself as his plan grew in strength. It would not be long before his cousin was free again.

The temperature was still debilitating. Claude Bastein parked the heat filled Peugeot and made for the shade of the old French Sûreté building, now mostly taken over by President Diem's Vietnamese secret police. He stood in the shadows for a moment, sensing that something was not quite right, and then it came. . . the knife raked up through the



surface of his chest splitting his shirt in two and heading for his throat. Years of combat training and instinctive survival came into play. He slammed his right knee into the testicles of the Vietnamese attacker, who screamed with pain and dropped the blade just as it pricked the inspector's throat. Claude Bastein quickly wrapped his strong arms around the thin boyish figure in front of him, squeezing as tight as he could and locking his hands behind the man's back. There was a quiet pop, followed by a second, and the inspector thought it was one or more of the attacker's ribs snapping. The agony on the face of the Vietnamese was the signal for the inspector and he squeezed tighter and tighter until the boy's head fell limp upon his chest. Two Viet policemen leapt from the entrance of the Sûreté headquarters, kicked Pham Van Kim in the head, and grabbed the limp body of the attacker as it slumped to the pavement. They turned him over and slapped handcuffs on his wrists. Claude Bastein, not even out of breath, looked upon the scene with satisfaction. "Take the *imbécile bârtard* inside," he spat. "We'll be questioning him later, that is, if he survives."

True to her word, Phuong Duval had sent a message to the McKinnon household, stating that her diary was blank on the Friday evening that James had suggested for a dinner engagement at the McKinnon household. She arrived at 7.15 on the night, driven in her black Citroen Light 15 by her chauffeur, Kam. This time she was dressed in a pale blue *ao dai* with blue medium-heeled shoes. James greeted her with amazement. Not only was she more beautiful than when he had first seen her at the Cholon market, she was even more slender and taller than he had previously imagined, with he considered, curves in all the right places. Put her into any French or even British society, he thought, and she would pass as someone of the utmost regal importance. And to have come alone — apart from being chauffeured — this was someone of a strong independent mind. His respect for this woman rose considerably.

James had arranged other guests, apart from Charmaine the children's governess, to make up a table of nine or ten. He was not without some considerable influence in Saigon, especially in the diplomatic circles — mainly due to his superior in Dalat, Justin Trevallyn, whose wife Nguyet was descended from the old emperors of Annam. One of the emperor's daughters had married a provincial governor of the Red River Delta, and several generations down from there, Nguyet still retained a family connection with royalty. She was a distant cousin to the last emperor, Bao Dai, who had abdicated in 1945 under pressure from the Viet Minh. Because of this connection, James was able to organise certain high profile people almost at a moment's notice.

The first couple to arrive was the assistant consul of the British Embassy, Howson Pendlebury and his wife, Hilda. They were new to Saigon, coming from a previous posting at Rangoon in Burma. James greeted the forty-something-year-olds and couldn't help but notice how devoted they were to each other, as if they were newly-weds. There is sparkle in their eyes, he thought, that many other couples could but wish for. The second to arrive was the middle-aged Vietnamese Major General, Dao Hu Loc, accompanied by his wife Trinh. James looked over the short, but slim General, in his immaculate white uniform decorated with numerous ribbons, and James nodded with approval. Trinh, who was in her early twenties and slightly taller than her husband, held James' hand a little longer than he expected and beamed at him with a slight inclination of her head. He felt himself blushing and quickly squeezed and released the toes within his shoes.

While hors d'oeuvre's and light wines were being consumed, the third couple had not yet arrived. James glanced at his Omega Seamaster watch and wondered why the delay. His other guest, Claude Bastein, had also not arrived, but just as he turned to speak to the General he heard the Peugeot enter the semi-circular drive-way. He looked out and watched as the inspector stepped out of the vehicle. Very smartly dressed, thought James, though his face seemed a little more ruddier and tired than usual. The headlights of a black Cadillac swung up behind the inspector, causing the Frenchman to turn and view the new arrivals, while James's Vietnamese man-servant rushed forward to open the front passenger's door. The long slim legs that issued from the American car belonged to a blonde-haired occupant in her mid twenties. James held his breath. He had certainly and unknowingly invited Saigon's most beautiful women to his humble abode. The wife of the American Legation's first secretary was stunning, dressed in a long satin green gown with what appeared to be a cream orchid in her hair above her right ear. The only blonde among the women present, thought James, and she really knows how striking she is. The elegance with which she eased herself out of the car impressed him greatly. Her husband, Vernon Clement Harris, an ex Lieutenant Colonel of the United States Marines, curled his hand around her forearm, smiled at his wife, Melody, and together they moved toward the entrance. Sure will be some night, mused James as he turned to find Charmaine looking at him with a subtle smile on her face. He winked at her and gave a grin. She nodded back, knowing that this would be a night to remember.

Phuong Duval was leaning back onto a casement window with a glass of white wine in her hand. She was talking to Howson Pendlebury and his wife Hilda. They seemed absolutely fascinated with her. "So, Miss Duval, apart from France, you were a visitor to our noble British land for a time?" queried Howson, holding a glass of red wine.



Phuong had warmed earlier to this couple, though much older than her almost by a generation. Now, she was having second thoughts. There was something defenseless about them. She thought they were like children living out a pantomime while the world around them turned other people to dust. Were they living in a goldfish bowl, while the real world slipped and slithered around them? Embassy people, yes, but old school — no doubt educated within the public school system of England between the world wars, but with staid upper-class parents. So, perhaps somewhat detached from everyday life out in the fields and the factories. And what would they know about Vietnam's impatient urge for nationalism? Perhaps they were not so much different from some of the rather well-off children in her school? Even so, their child-like quality had some attraction to her. She was going to answer Howson's question when Charmaine butted in.

"If everyone is comfortable with it, we might head for the dining room."

James had skipped upstairs to check on the children, when coming down again he saw Phuong moving with the others toward the dining room. See how graceful she walks, he thought, his eyes gilded upon her figure. She was laughing at something Hilda Pendlebury had said. James stood there at the foot of the stairs for a moment, simply drawing in the breathless image before him. She will ask, no doubt, if he has made up his mind to send his daughter Michelle to the Nguyen Académie, and his answer surely had to be 'Yes'. It would cement his wish to see Phuong again and again.

Charmaine had arranged the specially rounded cuisine teak table so that she and James were almost at opposite sides, with Claude Bastein to her right, followed by the General and his wife, and next to James was Phuong Duval. On Phuong's right side were Howson Pendlebury and Hilda, then the Americans close to Charmaine.

During the meal there was much conversation, with James balancing and encouraging comments from all parties, but he was particularly attentive to the young slim English teacher of the Nguyen Académie in Saigon. He noticed that she sipped her wine carefully, unlike the men in the room who left no doubt in James' mind that they were more than moderate drinkers. Perhaps it is the lifestyle, he thought, or perhaps the uncertainty of the political and military scene. After what all the guests agreed was a sumptuous feast, the conversation began in earnest, helped along by some vintage French white and red wines. They had consumed Vietnamese hot pot soup, a number of Chinese fried rice dishes, various courses of fish, deep fried bananas with coconut ice-cream, Vietnamese wine, and Jasmine tea. Up to then, the conversation had been light and at times hilarious as each told of their younger days — most of them had at one time or another, been in Europe through delightful summers and freezing winters. Then somehow the conversation returned to Asia. Howson Pendlebury leant back in his chair, a glass of shiraz in his right hand, and with a wave of his left, said.

"We put on a number of variety shows for the troops in Burma. We were posted there twice. . . once, when we had only just been married during the early stages of the war. We raked in lot of folk from the embassy and some of the military. I got to sing Coward's 'Mad dogs of Englishmen go out in the midday sun'. I think I was a bit croaky but it went down all right."

Hilda laughed. "Oh, don't be so modest, Howson. They loved it."

"Perhaps," interrupted Claude Bastein, "You could sing it for us after dinner. That should be a riot."

"Did you know," said Howson, that Noel Coward wrote that song here, traveling down from Hanoi to Saigon?"

Claude frowned. "That must have been a long time ago!"

"Oh, early thirties, I believe."

"Quieter days," said Vernon Harris, "Long before any of the troubles the world still finds itself in."

"Ah yes," said Claude, "Such wonderful days in Paris. The country had recovered from the war to end all wars — nightclubs were flourishing, and oh, how I enjoyed the Folies Bergere. The motor industries were booming — great advances in our Renault, Peugeot and Citroen factories."

"Much the same in America," said Vernon Harris. "We were building cars by the millions, solid automobiles that have lasted up to today. We exported them all over the world. There wouldn't be any country today that didn't see vast numbers of American vehicles."

"I think we French got there before you, Harris, oh, and the Italians too. Technically, we would be hard to beat anywhere in the world."

Howson Pendlebury piped up: "You're both forgetting the Germans. To my mind, their automobile technology is vastly superior to any other."

"Wa-al," said Vernon Harris, "Couldn't have been all that marvelous, otherwise they would have won the last war, don't you reckon?"



General Dao brushed some specks off his immaculate white uniform. “During my youthful days in Paris while studying at the military academy, I had the good fortune to obtain one of those Italian Lancia’s — a soft top touring Lambda — and I can tell you it was far superior to anything the French, the Germans or even the British could produce in those days, let alone the Americans. A ripping car that would blow anything off the road. Those large headlights, the flaring mudguards, the swept-back body — the French girls loved it. We cruised around the country roads outside of Paris almost every week-end having picnic after picnic.”

Trinh dug her elbow into his ribs. “Ooh, you never told me about that, you romantic beast! How many girl friends did you have?”

The General laughed and spilt some of his wine on the table. “Oh, we were so young and wild in those days. All good fun. Yes, the thirties were heady days, but it was totally in innocence.”

James looked at Phuong and smiled, then turned his attention to the General. “I can well imagine a good looking young officer at a French military academy would attract a considerable number of young French girls. You must have had your pick of the Parisian ladies, General.”

General Dao chortled. The wine had taken an affect upon him and he was in the mood for talk. “Yes, my fellow officers and I had our pick of the girls. Some of the French officers were jealous of us, so much so that they would sabotage our cars — usually flattening the tyres, so we retaliated on their cars. One of my colleagues painted over a French officer’s windscreen prior to a Saturday evening dance, so the man and his companions couldn’t go anywhere in the car that night. It was all good fun.”

“Really, Loc!” said Trinh, “What else have you not told me?”

“Ha ha, I will tell you later, my darling, when you are putting on your silken night gown. Or taking it off.”

“So,” broke in Melody with a giggle, “The dashing officer is still very romantic. If the whole world was like this, there would be no need for wars.”

“Oh, we still have our little bedroom wars,” said Trinh, taking a sip of her white wine, “But perhaps tonight there will be some overtures of peace.”

The group broke out into laughter. “Here’s to love and romance,” said Claude Bastein, raising his glass and they joined him, each touching glasses with the person next to them.

James’s man-servant was hovering around, topping up drinks. General Dao squinted at him and watched as the young Vietnamese worked his way around the table. Claude Bastein noticed the little interlude just as he was trained to do. He flicked his eyes back and forth from the manservant to the General, pocketing the almost unseen drama into his memory for later recollection. Something odd there, he thought. Earlier, he had noticed the manservant talking energetically to Phuong Duval’s Vietnamese chauffeur. He sighed and looked at the expensive Swiss chronometer on his left wrist. Might be time to get moving. He had to see about that Viet he had captured, but when he looked at Charmaine he thought perhaps it could wait until the morning. He thought she was quite charming, and he noted the way she had arranged the evening, with a sumptuous meal provided and the best French wines. She really was exquisite, and he would have to do something about that. He glanced around the table at the other guests, who seemed to be having a jolly time. His eyes settled upon James and Phuong. They appeared to be engrossed in some serious conversation, then Phuong smiled at James and nodded her head. At that instant Claude knew there was a flame ignited between the young couple that soon would turn into something more tangible. It’s early days, he thought, but passion shall have its way. . . then he thought, *and not only for them.*

The conversation had turned to local incidents. Howson Pendlebury switched his attention to Vernon Harris. “I heard through the embassy that two American soldiers had been killed at Bien Hoa — a Major and a Master Sergeant. What do you know about that, Harris?”

The American bit his lower lip. “All I can tell you is that it is classified at the moment. We shall be releasing a statement to the press in due course.”

“But,” said Howson, it is my understanding that your people here — and several hundred of them at that — are all civilian aid personnel. What are American soldiers doing up country? What are you hiding?”

It was obvious to all around the table — where silence had suddenly fallen — that Vernon Harris was not pleased with the way the conversation had suddenly changed. Claude Bastein thought, here we go. . . he’s stuck between a wall and a charging bull. If he admits that America has troops here, the shit is going to splatter all over, and if he somehow



squirms his way out of it by saying they are soldiers on leave from some other base — perhaps the Philippines — who is going to believe him? But to Claude's amazement, the American came right out with it.

"I have to say, that yes, we do have some army personnel here, but they are simply as advisors to General Dao's people. Naturally, we would prefer that this knowledge would have remained between the AVRN* military and our own government, but I do not see that with this incident breaking, it makes much difference. The men are only advisors and as our two countries are eager that any insurgency from the north does not escalate, then that's fine by our American public."

Melody Harris opened up: "I don't see the problem. You all know that we are here to help. We are not here to fight someone else's war for them, but communism must be contained otherwise it will spread throughout South-East Asia and down into other Pacific countries. What began in China and North Korea must not be replicated here. In this room we have unity — French, Vietnamese, British, American, all friends together. We stood with each other during the last world war, and we stand with each other now to protect freedom. I propose a toast to freedom. Let us raise our glasses. TO FREEDOM!"

The gathering stood from the table and raised their voices and glasses. "TO FREEDOM! TO FREEDOM!"

The cell was almost bare, and even within the heat of the rising sun outside, a certain chill engulfed him. Pham Van Kim shifted on the tiny bunk where he had lain almost unconscious during the night, to a searing pain in his chest. He hardly noticed the tick in his left eye, manifesting badly. Someone had strapped his upper body up with bands of tight strong cotton and elastic. He dared not move, the pain was excruciating, so he lay there and looked around. There was a bright insect-specked electric light bulb hanging from the white ceiling — cobwebs in the corners where no doubt spiders lurked watching out for prey, not that he considered there would be much in this airless room. Whatever air there was that he could breathe seemed stagnant, and with each breath he did take, the pain in his chest struck him like a whip. There were ghosts in this room, stark reminders of those who had been before him, probably ending up as emaciated beings not knowing who or what they were in the end. He knew that it was a torture chamber, the dried blood in one corner of the room alluded to that. What they might do to him he could not imagine, not that it would make any difference to his quest. They would not break him.

Apart from the steel bunk, the furniture was minimal — a small wooden table in the centre of the room with two steel chairs each side, and a rusted, dented bucket in one corner which was obviously used as a toilet. There was nothing else. The walls were painted a heavy shade of grey with patched cracks on all, snaking from floor to ceiling. In some areas near the corners, there was considerable green and black mould. He could see it, he could smell it. On one side there was a heavy metal door with a small barred glass window. Beyond was a brooding darkness.

He'd heard some metallic crashing noises at times. He didn't know what time it was, whether it was night or day because they had taken his watch. They had also taken the ring his mother had given him for his sixteenth birthday. He rubbed his right hand where the gold ring had been and remembered that day. The family had all been around him, his mother, father, two sisters and his elder brother Hoang. It was a happy occasion and he'd had his first taste of liquor. He fondly remembered his mother's voice — he being the youngest of the family she tended to dote on him more than the others. She was well overdue when she gave birth and the midwives were concerned for her health, but in the end the birth came naturally and surprisingly painless. This was, she had thought, a good omen. The child would grow up to be someone who would make his mark in the world, possibly to be famous. He would be a leader. Out of habit he reached down for the camera case where he often carried the grenade, but it was gone, as also was his trousers. He was lying there with only a pair of urine stained underpants to clothe him. It was then that he noticed the chain and the heavy locked clasp around his right ankle with one end of the chain firmly attached to the wall.

Kim was eighteen. He had a girlfriend, Cuc, which means Chrysanthemum, who he intended to marry as soon as the South was defeated. The couple would have to wait, for the prime purpose of his life now was to bring about the saving of his beloved country from foreign influence, and that meant he was determined to do anything to achieve that purpose. In his mind he knew it was a holy cause, and that murder of enemies was totally justified because it removed them from spheres of corrupt influence. He could never understand why many of his own people were supporters of the South Vietnam government, which to his mind, was evil. They sit there in their marble palaces eating and drinking expensive luxuries and fornicating night and day, while the peasants in the fields have nothing. These capitalists must be destroyed and replaced by the correct Lenin/Marxist regime that is all consuming and spreading like righteous wildfire across the world in the name of freedom. As he thought of this he smiled, knowing that the pain he was going through was insignificant with the good fight for a freedom that would eventually come. The red star of the North would rise and



conquer and it was his destiny —and Cuc's too, for she was with him in body, mind and spirit — to help bring about a new dawn for Vietnam, after having been subjected to colonial powers for so long. The influence of the French — although their troops were now gone, defeated by that hero Comrade General Giap at Dien Bin Phu several years ago — was still strong within Vietnam and with the government of the South. All must be defeated, all must be either thrown out of the country, or be buried. There was no other way. This prison was but a tiny episode in his life. He would survive it and go on to be the destroyer of imperialism.

He saw a light appear on the other side of the small glass window on the door, and heard voices. Shortly, a key snapped into the lock and turned. There was a sharp click and the door opened to reveal a large Chinese male in jungle greens, carrying a small case. Behind him was also a large man, a Caucasian person whom Kim recognised as the inspector of the Sûreté he had tried to kidnap. And now he wondered if his cousin Pham Van Dong had been incarcerated here earlier, and if so, where was he now? In another cell, or had he been eliminated? Kim had a fair idea of what was in the case, but any pain that the big Chinese could extract from him would simply be an addition to the pain he already felt and he was ready for that. Already he could smell the body odour of the Chinese who had no insignias or stripes on his uniform. Kim was at a loss to know who or what he was, except that he knew that the man was very dangerous.

The inspector stepped forward, wiping some perspiration from his forehead. "Well, good morning my little friend. Oh don't worry, we have your moped safe within our compound, no one is going to steal it. Now, as soon as you have answered some fascinating questions of ours you will receive food and drink. It may not be all that tasty, but it will help in your recovery. I won't go so far as to say that you may be released anytime in the near future, but depending upon your answers, you may get a taste of the open air — that is to say, a small re-education camp not all that far from Saigon, where you may, or may not. . . depending upon your rehabilitation. . . entertain visitors from your family. If you co-operate, you may even get to see your girl-friend, Cuc."

So, thought Kim, they know all about me, my family, my love. What is there that they do not know? If only I could get some warning to my brother Hoang.

Chu Lam Long held the Russian AK47 semi-automatic rifle steady. He and his cadre of eleven Viet Cong men and two women, watched the small convoy of American aid trucks move through the mountain pass north-east of Saigon. The Cong were looking for any signs of military intrusion and were anxious to know what was under the tarpaulins covering the trucks. Several of Long's men wanted to attack the whole convoy, but he had issued a stern caution. As a compromise, he considered that they might take the last truck in the convoy when the vehicles entered a sharp bend to the right of where the cadre was hiding. The only snag was the escort of AVRN* soldiers in front and coming up behind, which was larger than usual, with several armoured troop carriers. Perhaps, thought Long, we might let this one go through. It is too much of a risk and there are other ways of finding out what the cargo is. They would return to the village and discuss a new plan.

His younger brother, Hung, screwed up his face at this decision. "We had them right where we wanted them. What are you doing? We must destroy the imperialists. . . those trucks would be full of guns and ammunition for the provincial regiments."

Long thumped him on the shoulder. "It is best to be sure, rather than unsure. Our glorious leader, Comrade Ho Chi Minh, would recommend that. You will need more instruction in the Way. Be careful, Hung, lest I send you north for instruction."

"That's not fair. I was only making an observation."

"It was more than an observation, little brother. You have much to learn about tactics. I really might just do that. . . send you north."

"If you could get me under the command of Comrade General Giap of our comrades, the Viet Minh, I would go lovingly, though I would then miss you so much. It was always my wish to be with you in this sojourn for release from the imperialist pigs."

Long smiled and clapped his brother around the shoulders. "Well, maybe you should learn more by watching and listening to me. It is better that brothers stay together in this cause, do you not think?"

One of the female cadre members — Du Truong Linh — shouldered her rifle as she passed by, smiling at the two brothers.



“Comrade Du, will you guide my brother to the village and make sure that he is instructed in party principles regarding the surveillance of suspect vehicles.”

Linh laughed and took Hung by the hand. Long grinned at her, knowing how she felt about his brother, Hung. They were a couple, but Long had warned them to make sure that Linh did not become pregnant. Follow the rules, he had reiterated time and again. Follow the rules.

The villagers crowded around them when they returned. An old man with a limp simply spat on the ground and waved his stick at them, but women and children were smiling and gaily welcoming the cadre, as if the soldiers were coming back from a successful campaign. The old man, sprouting a wispy grey beard and slightly hunched of back, came up to Hung and poked him in the stomach with his stick.

“You are bad people, take our food and give nothing in return.”

Hung laughed. “Go away stupid old man, or I will put you in your grave.”

“Ignorant peasant boy! Take your people and leave us.”

“If we leave, old man, others will come and burn down your village. Is that what you want?”

The man leant on his stick. “And that will be because of you. We lived in peace before you came, now we are living in fear from soldiers everywhere. When you go, the others come and search, and *they* also take food. We had good supplies from our small farms before, now we are in trouble of feeding our children. You are parasites.”

Hung hit him then, not hard, but a light stinging blow to the face and the old man fell to the ground. Long came rushing up, handed his automatic rifle to Linh, and slowly picked the villager up.

“Here’s your stick venerable aged person. Now, it is best for you to go to your hut and rest. Be assured that we will find other resources and leave the village food for yourselves, but of course it is an honourable act for village people to give to the revolutionary cause, so if your people can do that in some small way, our leader Comrade Ho Chi Minh will look kindly upon you and your people. One day there will be no other soldiers to come and upset you, for we shall be victorious.”

Long turned to Hung. “Don’t forget, little brother, I can always send you back north.”

Hung seemed puzzled, but dropped his head and softly murmured “Commander.”

Later, as the moon began its shining climb into the night sky, the cadre rested away from the village, greatly hidden within the jungle. At a distance from the other cadre members and resting under a makeshift canopy, Linh and Hung lay together on a waterproof sheet. They were fully clothed, both being aware of the movement’s rules. You could have affairs, but pregnancies were out of the question. Linh stroked his face. “You shouldn’t have hit that old man, my love. He could not fight back.”

“He was rude, and rudeness is not accepted under our new jurisdiction. Did you hear what he called us—parasites! If anyone is a parasite, it is him. He has outlived his usefulness. What good are old people like him, even to his village? Soon he will need someone to spoon-feed him and change his underwear. Stinking, filthy old man.”

“Hush. He is someone’s father, and undoubtedly someone’s grandfather. You do not know what his life has been like over the years. For many in those villages it has been a grim struggle, with bad weather, failed crops. And with many children to feed and clothe. They don’t have much. I myself, came from a poor village in the north — I know what it is like to wonder where the next meal is coming from. You and Long came from a better class of village where your father was well off and respected. You didn’t have to worry about anything.”

“Yes, but they were the old feudal days when the tiers of village command were incorrect, imperialistic. Now my father is living a modest life helping to eliminate the capitalist way, being pardoned for his superior ideas, and now even helping with the work of re-writing our history. He is a changed man, wishing to give Comrade Ho Chi Minh his full support. It is not the same as a dirty old man who still clings to feudalism and shits in his pants.”

Linh sighed and pushed her body closer to him. “You see things somewhat differently, my love, but I know where you are coming from. Let us follow in the footsteps of our beloved Comrade Ho Chi Minh and let him guide our thoughts. He has sacrificed so much for us not to lose sight of the honourable things of life. Whatever the old village man’s thoughts and attitudes are, we need to respect him and slowly help to bring about change in his thinking. Any violence towards him and his like can only lead to a separation of ideas.”



Hung kissed her. “I can see now why you wish to be a school teacher when this is all over. We shall settle in Hanoi where I will be a member of the Minh politburo and you will be head teacher of a new school our administration shall build. My clever brother, Long, will not always be a Commander, but will be part of Comrade General Giap’s divisional chiefs. As you know, he was recalled to Hanoi the other month and given a commendation for his work in the field. Soon he will be promoted and we, dear angel, will also find promotion under his leadership.

She returned his kiss, then caressed his face and neck. “Let us sleep, for we have a full day tomorrow. Commander Long has received instructions of the whereabouts of an AVRN* platoon that he plans to ambush. As second in command, I fully endorse such a tactic.”

Commander Long, however, had other things on his mind. He had received news that his sister’s boyfriend — a dedicated member of the Cong, had been taken prisoner and was held inside the old Saigon Sûreté headquarters. So, how would they get Pham Van Kim out of there before the torture began? •

To be continued.

* Army of South Vietnam

Oz Child

Early intervention key to better protect children and young people

A new report released by **Social Ventures Australia Limited (SVA Consulting)** makes a strong economic case for long-term investment in targeted early intervention and intensive family preservation to prevent children entering out-of-home care (OOHC) in Victoria.

“Diverting children from out-of-home care, preserving family relationships and keeping kids with family is not only the right thing to do, it makes sound economic sense,” says Michelle Van Doorn, National Executive Director of Services, **OzChild**.

“The report paints a pretty clear picture, over a 10-year period Victoria can save \$1.6 billion in the child protection and out-of-home care systems alone and divert 1,200 children a year from out-of-home care. It is imperative, through greater investment in early intervention strategies, for the system to evolve to ensure better outcomes for children and families,” adds Ms Van Doorn.



The number of children involved in the child protection and OOHC system in Victoria is increasing – both in terms of numbers of children as well as a percentage of the population. From 2013 to 2018, the number of children in OOHC increased 11% per year (SVA analysis. Compound annual growth rate of all children in OOHC, based on AIHW Child Protection Australia 2017-18).

The total cost of protective intervention and OOHC services in Victoria in 2017-18 was \$943 million (Productivity Commission Report on Government Services 2019, 2017-18 costs).

Creating safe and nurturing environments for young Victorians by supporting parents to better prepare them to care for and nurture their kids to prevent child abuse and neglect is imperative in turning the tide on the number of children receiving child protection services.

That is why, for the past five years **OzChild** has been working hard to implement evidence-based programs to address the growing number of children being placed in OOHC.

“**OzChild** has been delivering Multisystemic Therapy – Child Abuse and Neglect and Functional Family Therapy – Child Welfare in NSW as part of the Their Futures Matter strategy to overhaul the coordination and delivery of services to vulnerable children, young people and families.

Over the two years to 2017/18 the number of children entering out-of-home care in NSW has fallen by 44.5%. NSW now has the lowest rate of children and young people admitted to out-of-home care.

“There is no doubt in my mind the investment in evidence-based early intervention programs in NSW has contributed to these significant reductions, a greater investment here in Victoria would see similar results,” adds Ms Van Doorn. •



Pet medical crisis

from Jennifer Hunt

MAYA- LOVES A CUDDLE IN THE SUN

January 10, 2020. Maya is a 13-year-old kitty that loves to laze in the sun with his elderly pensioner Mum Tania. Tania has owned 'Maya' for virtually his entire life, the soft-natured cat is loyal, quiet and never far from his Mum.

"We just about live out in the garden, he snoozes in the sun most days. If I sit in the lounge he always comes over and tucks in beside me for cuddles, he is always there. He is such good company for me as I am on my own and a constant source of love for me so he really is my best mate and yes he is spoilt why not."

Three years ago when 'Maya' had really bad pain in his teeth and gums Tania was unable to afford the costs, and being unaware of Pet Medical Crisis meant that she was unable to get the treatment needed. Thanks to the kind nature of Vet Dr. Chris Gallagher from Hallam Park Animal Hospital he sent the application for the cat's procedure to us at PMC, and it's been our pleasure to manage the case and donate to cover the costs. Tania whose sister sadly passed away without a will now look forward to leaving the inheritance to help more humans and animals at PMC — stay tuned to learn more about our bequest program in the New Year.



Pet Medical Crisis relies on public donations to assist pensioners and disadvantaged owners who cannot afford life-saving veterinary care.



Pet Medical Crisis

A not for profit fund to save pets whose owners cannot afford their emergency care.

www.petmedicalcrisis.com.au

Email: petmedicalcrisis@gmail.com

PMC is now on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PetMedicalCrisis/>

Also, a walking harness — 'Dog-A-Long' — is available to assist your dog to become more mobile — supports dogs with hind leg problems associated with ageing, arthritis, hip & spinal problems. For suitability check with your Vet.

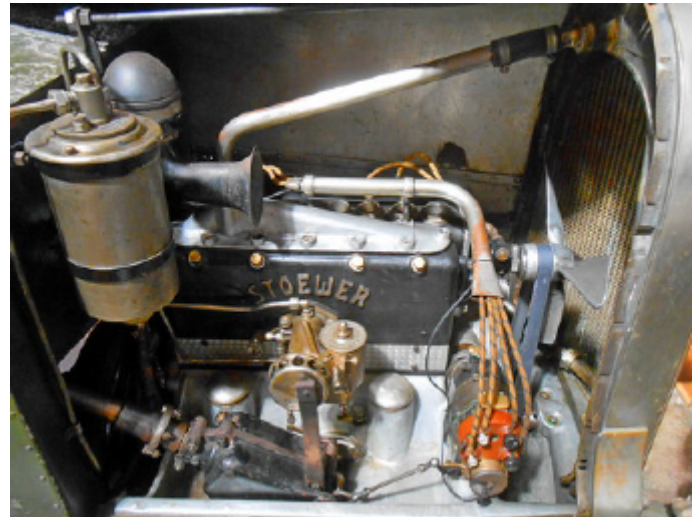
The environment: "Most important, the sacrifice needed to bring carbon emissions down by half and then to zero is greater than forgoing jewelry: it would require forgoing electricity, heating, cement, steel, paper, travel, and affordable food and clothing. Climate warriors, indulging the fantasy that the developing world will do just that, advocate a regime of 'sustainable development,' As Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus satirize it, that consists of 'small co-ops in the Amazon forest where peasant farmers and Indians would pick nuts and berries to sell to Ben and Jerry's for their 'Rainbow Crunch flavor.' They would be allowed solar panels that could light an LED or charge a cell phone, but nothing more. Needless to say, the people who actually live in those countries have a different idea. Escaping from poverty requires abundant energy. . . Faced with such facts [p141], climate justice warriors reply that rather than enriching poor nations, we should impoverish rich ones, switching back, for example to 'labour-intensive agriculture' (to which an appropriate reply is: You first). . . Economic progress is an imperative in rich and poor countries alike precisely because it will be needed to adapt to the climate change that does occur. . . Part of our response to climate change must be to ensure that these gains in resilience [p142] continue to outpace the threats that a warming planet will throw at it. Every year that developing countries get richer, they will have more resources for building seawalls and reservoirs, improving public health services, and moving people away from rising seas. For that reason they must not be kept in energy poverty."

Steven Pinker: *Enlightenment Now*, Penguin Science paperback, published 2019. \$AUS24.95



Motoring Memoirs

1924 Stoewer D10 Tourer



In the north German seaport of Stettin, in the province of Pomerania, the Stoewer ironworks was an important feature of commercial life in the 1890's. Founded in 1858 by Bernhard Stoewer, the company originally manufactured sewing machines, later branching out into typewriters and bicycles.

In 1897, Bernhard's sons Emil and Bernhard began building motorbicycles, tricycles and quadricycles powered by De Dion engines built under licence. One of these vehicles won a silver medal at the Berlin Exhibition; but already the Gebruder Stoewer had their sights set on something more ambitious, for the first full sized Stoewer car was on the road within a couple of months.

The D10, which boasted 2.6 litres and 50 bhp was the most popular Stoewer model of the period. This example is the only known survivor in the world of a production run of 50. It was thought to have been displayed at the 1924 Melbourne Motor Show, most likely as an example of the work of Waring Bros Coachbuilders. People have recalled it in the 1930's being the daily transport of a nurse who drove it along Brighton Road on her way to work at the Anzac Hostel in North Road, Brighton.

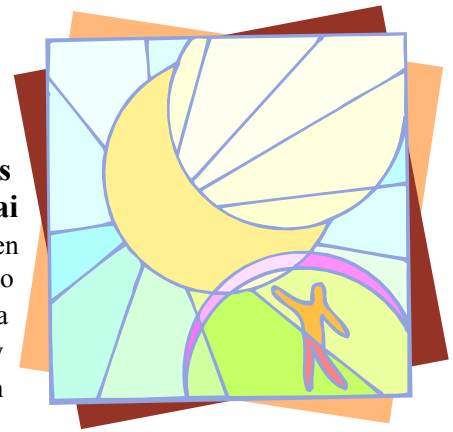
Credit: Grant Cowie, owner, Campbell's Creek, Victoria.





The Quiet Corner

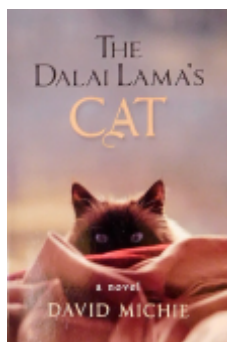
David Michie has a quest, and that is to introduce folk to the teachings of the Buddha, and to bring the messages and blessings of the Dalai Lama into every household on this planet. But this quest could not have been accomplished by writing technical books about human relationships, attitude, or how to steer one's life — no, this quest could only be accomplished with David creating a creature who, with all her failings and errors of judgement, is someone who is very close to the Dalai Lama. A cat! But not just any cat, a Himalayan of cream and brown features with dazzling blue eyes, but somewhat wiggly of gait. Imperfect of body.



Thus began the first book of, so far, a series of four: *The Dalai Lama's Cat*. Even if you have no special association with the ways of cats and perhaps even regard them as a necessary evil, surely you would recognise that their strange presence does bring calm to numerous humans — humans who regard their cats as almost gods in their own right. For cats are exceedingly mysterious — and have been that way since the days of the ancient Pharaohs — always close to us and observing us with their penetrating green or blue eyes. Sometimes they remind us of things we would otherwise put behind us, perhaps the dark side of our nature — for all humans have this defect, undoubtedly a hangover from our ancient Neanderthal days — and the modern so far developed brain that has not yet quite managed to reach a peaceful status by its own initiative.

Perhaps a cat can help. Especially one who is so close and favoured with the Dalai Lama? A cat that is conscious of its own failings, but is eager to learn. And so, dear friends, this little being is sometimes within these novels called His Holiness' Cat, sometimes called Rinpoche which means in Tibetan Lama's terms, teacher, or *precious one*, or even bodhicatva, similar to the Sanskrit term in Buddhism that means an *enlightened being*. HHC has many names, for HHC is complicated and at the same time attuned to the universe.

So, from the very first book *The Dalai Lama's Cat* to the latest of four, *The Four Paws of Spiritual Success*, this spiritual feline novice, HHC, leads us to the age old quest for peace and relaxation in the face of an unstable world. The message that these four books reveal is that awareness begins with oneself and no one else, which means leaving the Self behind and attaining a relaxing peace of mind that accepts all happenings — so-called good or bad — as part of living and learning. From there comes complete acceptance, which is what Victor Frankl writing in *Man's Search For Meaning*, certainly discovered. •



The Council to Homeless Persons

Established in 1972, the Council to Homeless Persons is the peak Victorian body representing individuals and organisations with a stake or interest in homelessness. Our mission is to work towards ending homelessness through leadership in policy, advocacy and sector development.

<http://www.chp.org.au/>

See our Consumer Participation Resource Kit at:

http://www.chp.org.au/public_library/cpkit/index.shtml