



## ASYLUM SEEKERS STRATEGY IS IT WORKING

Peter Adamis 27 May 2014

Some 25 years ago, Andrew Peacock was briefing the Liberal Party Defence and Foreign Affairs committee of which I was a member, on the strategies, problems and potential solutions being faced by a future generation in the new millennium.

He spoke of a time when all Australians will be faced with and concerned regarding illegal migrations. This he noted may be as a result of ongoing global events whose origins may be in asylum seekers looking for a better quality of life, free from oppression, economic hardship, wars and religious freedom.

Andrew Peacock's words have come back to haunt us and the current crop of political leaders are no closer to finding a permanent solution to an age long problem. Are we as Australians to blame for this scenario? I think not. Illegal migration, marauding tribes, incursions, invasions, wandering pastoralist families always on the move and populations migrating to new pastures seeking a better quality of life are not new and yet mankind has not found a solution other than to seek new worlds where mankind has room to live and breathe in peace.

Every nation has the severing right as to who is to live amongst them and has every right to exclude recalcitrant's, nefarious characters and those seeking an economic revival of their personal status. On the other hand most if not all nations who have signed the United Nations treaties regarding migrant intakes have a duty of care to those attempting to enter the country on a legal basis and according to the treaties signed. These treaties however does not bind a nation into accepting any person or group that arrives on its doorstep unless it can be proved that to be returned or relocated will bring death and destruction to the individual and/o group.

Although Australia cannot afford to repeat its sad past prior to WW2 where a boatload of Jewish refugees arrived in Australia seeking asylum after being sent out by Hitler to find another place to live. Although the public welcomed their arrival and there was room to relocate them in the North of Australia, self interest groups lobbied and won on the day to exclude these genuine refugees from remaining on Australian soil. On reflection, those responsible had a short sighted and narrow view of the world and its fluid movement of peoples seeking a life free from oppression. Sad to say, this same boatload of Jewish refugees returned back to their place of origin and were exterminated by Hitler and his Nazi followers.

Who can remember the thousands of Vietnam refugees who drowned in trying to reach Australia after Saigon had fallen to the North Vietnamese and the country was reunified. Who can remember the difficulties faced by the government of the day and the trials and tribulations of these same Vietnamese refugees seeking a life free of oppression. Today these same Vietnamese people are well embedded within the Australian society and have proven to be worthwhile citizens who have and continue to contribute to the security and well being of this country we call home, Australia.

This is the conundrum that Australia now is faced with. Ironic as it may seem, we as a nation cannot afford to lose control of our destiny and yet we still need more people to develop this country to its full potential. We need manpower for our industries, to mine our natural resources, increase our agricultural potential, secure our borders and creating a nation that is united in all aspects of society. A society where all members within that society contribute to the well being, economic security and stability. Therefore to achieve such lofty objectives Australian migration strategies will need to be looked at again and again until we are able to come to a successful solution that will be of benefit to Australia and its people as a whole.

Potential solutions maybe in the guise of guest visas, holiday visas, economic visa, financial visas, educational visas, temporary visas, skilled visas, freedom from oppression visas, religious freedom visas all designed with one aim. That aim is to use these visas as means of identifying the recalcitrant from the legal and honest individual seeking to make Australia home. If after a period of time spent living, contributing and supporting Australia's interests, these same people may seek Australian citizenship. Citizenship for those not born in this country must be earned and not a right.

Those that meet the above and other criteria are to be located in areas that are undeveloped and require manpower, resources and infrastructure to make it worthwhile and viable. These programmes would have to be on a large scale and the first programme could commence with the Kimberly's, Northern Territory, outback West Australian and far North Queensland where land is plentiful and undeveloped. With intelligent and good planning, new cities can rise out of desert areas and where natural resources can be utilised effectively to sustain those cities.

Does Australia and its law makers have the grit, the foresight, intelligence, courage and the will to undertake such programmes of humungous proportions that will alleviate the problems that face Australia today regarding illegal migrations. These are matters that only our law makers can decide and whether our society is ready and prepared for such huge changes to our society. Whatever the case may be, we in Australia may yet live to see these changes come about at some future time.



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## Manus Island riot Independent report by Robert Cornall details deadly detention centre violence

Latika Bourke, political reporter & staff 26 May 2014

**PHOTO:** An asylum seeker in Delta compound holds aloft a picture of slain asylum seeker Reza Berati. (AAP: Eoin Blackwell, file photo)

**A Salvation Army worker identified as allegedly leading a fatal attack on Iranian asylum seeker Reza Berati on Manus Island in February is expected to be charged in Papua New Guinea.**

The PNG national has been named in an official report into the riots which took place at the Manus Island detention centre between February 16 to 18 this year. Mr Berati, 23, died in what the Government describes as a "disturbance" that saw another 60 asylum seekers injured, some seriously. Immigration Minister Scott Morrison said a worker at the centre, employed by the Salvation Army, was involved in the attack on Mr Berati.

"Mr Berati was struck from behind by a service provider staff member - not G4S, it was actually Salvation Army," he said.

"And that other individuals including a G4S security contractor, it is alleged, were involved in rushing past him and kicking him and then a rock was dropped on Mr Berati's head." The Salvation Army is acknowledging a former staff member is alleged to have led the attack on Mr Berati and says it will cooperate with all inquiries. The report reveals Mr Berati was alive when he was treated by medical officers at an emergency triage centre on a wharf.

"But the medical staff knew from his injuries that he was not going to survive," the report quotes a medical officer as saying in a formal interview. Mr Morrison said the riots represented a "terrible, tragic and distressing series of incidents that involved serious and indeed a fatal act of violence". But he says if the asylum seekers had not started the violent protests, Mr Berati would still be alive.



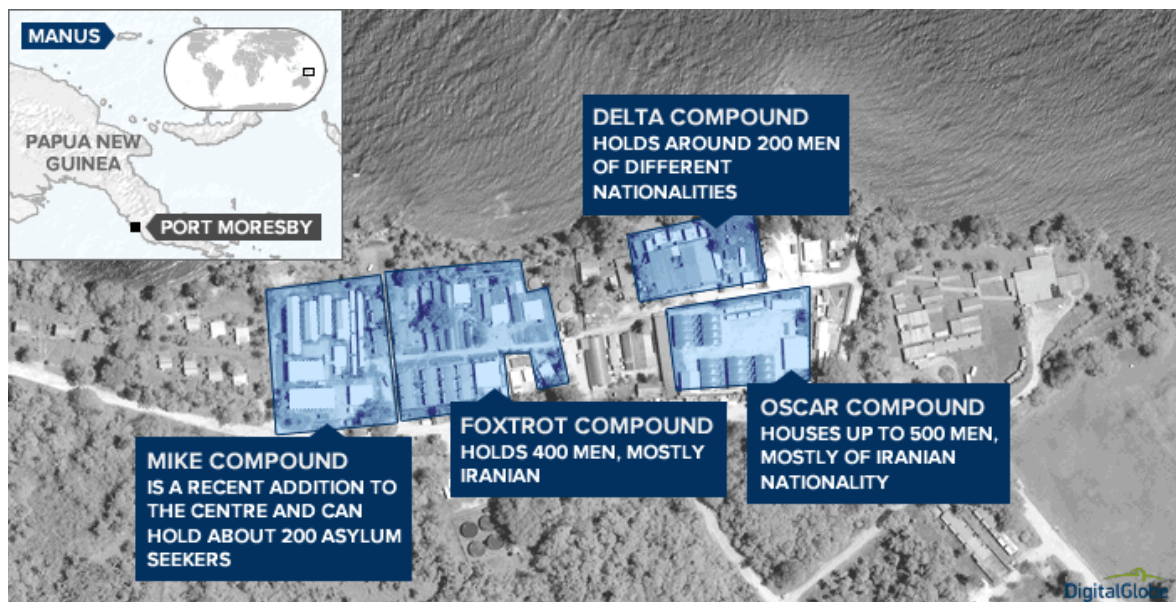
### Immigration Minister Scott Morrison

"There would have been no incident that night had there been no protests, I think that's clear to say, but the protests in no way could ever justify what happened to Mr Berati or the other serious violent acts perpetrated on that night, under no circumstances in my view could that ever justify what happened," he said. He has also rejected suggestions he failed to act when warned about inadequate security at the detention centre.

Report says asylum seekers' 'anger and frustration' led to protests The report by former secretary of the Attorney-General's department, Robert Cornall, says asylum seekers' "anger and frustration" at the former Labor government's permanent resettlement plan, which meant they would never make it to Australia, led to the violent protests. They began on Sunday, February 16 when asylum seekers were given answers to their questions about how soon their claims would be processed, and where they would be resettled if deemed refugees.

"The transferees' frustration and anger following that meeting resulted in disruption and violence in Oscar compound that evening and noisy protests," the report said. That night, about 35 asylum seekers tried to escape from the Oscar compound when the gates were opened for dinner delivery, but were caught by guards. The report says G4S guards entered the detention centre and "attacked transferees, causing physical injuries and some property damage".

The report alleges one asylum seeker "was attacked from behind by an unidentified PNG national G4S guard who slashed his neck, causing a 10 to 12 centimetre horizontal slit across his throat". The asylum seeker has since recovered, but Mr Cornall's report notes he was "very lucky because, although the slash cut clear through the skin on his neck leaving a gaping wound, there was no internal damage".



**IMAGERY:** Aerial view of Manus Island Regional Processing Centre taken on March 2, 2014. (DigitalGlobe)

Eight asylum seekers were arrested and charged by PNG police as a result of the Sunday night protest, according to the report, which does not say whether or not the G4S guard was charged. Three-hundred asylum seekers gave evidence to Mr Cornall, who was charged with finding out "what happened" during the riots which led to asylum seekers being injured and, in the case of Mr Berati, killed.

The violent protests continued on Monday night when both asylum seekers and staff were injured. Asylum seekers damaged property and breached the walls of Compound Mike, after which a mobile PNG police squad pushed over the fence and entered the centre.

The detainees say PNG nationals, expats and police entered the detention centre and dragged them outside to be beaten. Some allege they were able to buy "immunity" from beatings with cigarettes and also claim some were robbed. It was during the riot on Monday that Mr Berati was killed.

The best opportunity to prevent such incidents recurring in future lies in addressing all of the underlying causes to minimise or even remove the factors that contributed to tension in the centre developing to a dangerous level. Robert Cornall report

An eyewitness has told investigators a PNG national employed by the Salvation Army led the attack on Mr Berati. Two other asylum seekers were seriously injured in the same riot - one lost his right eye and another was shot. Mr Cornall says the asylum seekers' frustration and anger at being denied access to Australia, and uncertainty about how or when they might be resettled on PNG were all contributing factors.

"The best opportunity to prevent such incidents recurring in future lies in addressing all of the underlying causes to minimise or even remove the factors that contributed to tension in the centre developing to a dangerous level," the report said. Mr Cornall has made 13 recommendations, many relating to security at the centre. All have been accepted by the Government.



**IMAGERY:** Aerial view of Manus Island Regional Processing Centre taken on March 2, 2014. (DigitalGlobe)

G4S predicted events that led to riots, documents show. Meanwhile, internal G4S documents obtained by the ABC show the company predicted the events that led to the riots, including the dates on which they were likely to occur. "Information from various sources is still being presented that the demonstrations will continue and conclude in a larger event," the document dated 11 February says. "A timeline of two weeks has been identified as possibly significant so the days leading to the 17/18 February 2014 continues to be of particular focus."

A third document dated 17 February, the date of the fatal riot, shows the threat of "external risk to the centre" was rated green instead of amber or the highest rating of red despite "significant disorder" in three of the centre's compounds the night before. Labor's immigration spokesman Richard Marles says Mr Cornall's report shows the Government "dropped the ball". "There were numerous warnings provided to the department but most particularly to the minister himself," he said. "The Manus Island detention facility needs to provide safe accommodation for every asylum seeker in it ... this needs to be a guarantee," Mr Marles said.

But Mr Morrison has told the 7.30 program he authorised security upgrades late last year but was told it would take months for the work to be completed. "Now that project was a four-month project. I was advised by the department. It's a four-month project to do what was required with both the CCTV, the infrastructure of the fence, and the lighting that was also required because this is a remote site.

"We shouldn't ignore that. It's a difficult place to put some of these things in place." He also says Labor left his government an explosive situation. "I think the Government has already learned the lessons ... because we could see it from the first couple of weeks I was Minister that the risks were there and we took every action we could as quickly as we could," he said, "But it is my great regret that some of those actions weren't able to be implemented in time." The Greens say the report shows the detention centre should be shut for good.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-04-28/manus-island-safety-difficult-to-ensure-at-all-times-morrison/5414272>



## REGRET BUT HARDLINE STAYS, SCOTT MORRISON WARNS

May 27, 2014 Sarah Whyte and David Wroe

Scott Morrison warns during Monday's question time he won't soften his approach. *Photo: Andrew Meares.* Manus Island riot report released. Immigration Minister Scott Morrison releases the report into the riots that lead to the death of Reza Barati.

Immigration Minister Scott Morrison has vowed to maintain his hardline approach on asylum seekers despite admitting "great regret" that urgent security upgrades were not made to Manus Island detention camp before the February riots. His comments came as an official report found a local Salvation Army worker led the fatal assault on Iranian asylum-seeker Reza Barati, who was killed by being struck from behind, repeatedly kicked and finally having a large rock dropped on his head. It points the blame at guards employed by security firm G4S, police officers from Papua New Guinea's feared mobile squads and local Manus Island residents.

But the fatal attack on Mr Barati was led by a local Salvation Army worker who hit the asylum seeker with "a large stick", a witness told the report's author Robert Cornall, a former senior public servant. Mr Morrison acknowledged that both G4S and his own border protection point man, Lieutenant-General Angus Campbell, had warned the government in the months before the riots of mid-February that fences needed to be strengthened, CCTV installed and lighting improved. "It is my great regret that some of those actions weren't able to be implemented in time,"

Mr Morrison said. "I'm frustrated that that the lighting and the CCTV and the fencing was not in place at that time. It was in the process of being done. I'd authorised that in late November." Mr Morrison said the violence would not have happened had there been no protest by asylum seekers, although he stressed this did not justify what happened to Mr Barati and other victims. The report contains 13 recommendations, largely around improving relations with detainees, all of which Mr Morrison said he accepted. He added: "One thing I can assure you of, our policies will remain the same."

The report confirms gruesome details about the violence carried out over two nights, including that a detainee had his throat slashed after being attacked from behind by a local G4S guard. Another was beaten so badly he lost an eye and another shot in the buttocks by mobile squad police. The key witness to Mr Barati's killing told Mr Cornall that Mr Barati was in the internet room when the unrest started. He went outside and the Salvation Army worker "hit him twice with a very long stick".

"When he fall down, more than 10 officers passed him and all of them, they kicked him in his head," the witness said. "It was including PNG locals, PNG guards and Australian expats. The last one of the them he put a very big stone at his head." Mr Morrison said the only expatriate guard accused by multiple witnesses was a New Zealander. The report also acknowledges that asylum seekers not taking part in the unrest were dragged from their rooms and beaten. Some of them bribed their way to safety by offering cigarettes to their attackers.

Mr Morrison referred all questions about prosecution of suspects to the PNG police. Last week, Deputy Commissioner Simon Kauba said he believed that arrests would be made "soon" but senior PNG police have made similar assurances before. On Monday, a PNG police spokesman, Dominic Kakas, said he had no new information on the investigation

<http://www.theage.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/regret-but-hardline-stays-scott-morrison-warns-20140526-38zld.html>