Justin Norman

Justice Detained

Members of an interfaith delegation to Cuba—including Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, and atheists—hold a drawing of Shaker Aamer, a Muslim British resident detained at Guantanamo Bay without a trial from 2002 until his release in October 2015. "My identity as a Muslim obliges me to pursue justice," said Maha Hilal, who traveled with the delegation, "while my identity as American demands that I challenge the U.S. government's role in the dehumanization and torture of Muslim prisoners."

By Geoff Broughton

Guns N' Aussies

How Australians decided that gun ownership should become marginal, not mainstream.

THE LAST GUN-MURDER massacre in Australia happened in April 1996.

I remember it clearly. My wife and I were preparing to move from our home in Sydney to California, where I'd been accepted to study at Fuller Theological Seminary. After 13 years of a Labor government in Australia, Conservative John Howard had just been elected prime minister. My wife and I joked that it was a good time to leave the country. Then the Port Arthur massacre occurred—35 people were killed, 23 were wounded.

What happened next was astounding. The senior leaders of both major political parties, at both the federal and state levels, faced down opponents and enacted far-reaching and effective new gun laws.

What came to be called the National Firearms Agreement banned the importation, sale, and possession of all automatic and semi-automatic rifles and shotguns (most handguns were already illegal) and enacted a compulsory gun buy-back scheme allowed guns to the military, police, and those employed to shoot feral animals. The new federal laws were enacted unilaterally across state rights. Controversially in light of Second Amendment rights in the U.S., the act specifically stated "that personal protection not be regarded as a genuine reason for owning, possessing, or using a firearm." However, genuine reasons included "sporting shooters" with valid club memberships, hunters with proof of permission, and "bona fide collectors of lawful firearms."

The new gun laws were passed quickly, accompanied by an amnesty for any unlicensed firearms.

As we packed our bags to move to the United States, images filled the nightly television news of police stations across Australia full of firearms of varying shapes, sizes, and states of legality. These were guns that were voluntarily surrendered, in addition to those gathered through the formal buy-back program. It was more than poli-

Somehow, without political coercion or public commentary, Australians decided that gun ownership should become marginal, not mainstream. The legislation merely reflected the national mood: Only soldiers, cops, and farmers needed to own guns. The mythos of the historical outlaw-hero, like bushranger Ned Kelly, remained. However, like Kelly, gun ownership was now part of Australia's past, not our future.

Shortly before boarding our flight to the California, I suggested to my father that an old shotgun the family possessed—passed down through three generations, but rarely fired in more than 50 years—might be surrendered during the amnesty. I was too late. He had already handed it in a month earlier, without consultation—even though the gun really belonged to me as the firstborn son! My momentary indignation passed and I've thought rarely about my forfeited birthright since.

Since my wife and I [illegible] Australia

in Sydney's inner-city neighborhoods. Alternatives to violence, I've learned, are often more popular with street-involved people than with my educated, middle-class peers. From the streets I've gained perspective about the justice of Jesus Christ: a justice that reconciles, a justice that renounces retaliation, a justice with repentance, and a justice with repair.

The Port Arthur massacre changed Australia. My teenage children are spared the horrific gun violence experienced in the U.S. "I feel free because we are not always in lockdown, worried about people coming into the school," Nick, age 14, told me. Anna, age 12, said the freedom to go unafraid to the local park with friends was an important difference between growing up in Australia vs. the U.S.

In Australia, we will continue to pray for you in America: for courageous politics, for a "national moment," for Americans to decide that gun ownership should be marginal, not mainstream. ■

Geoff Broughton, *author of* Restorative Christ: Jesus, Justice, and Discipleship, *is a lecturer in practical theology for Charles Sturt University and rector of Paddington Anglican Church in Sydney.*

By Polly Jones

MegaTrade vs. People Who Make Things

New megaregional trade deals are lighting up the global economy—and justice movements for labor rights are mirroring them.

IN MID-DECEMBER, trade talks involving almost every country in the world closed in Nairobi. Did anyone hear the door slam?

Previous negotiations of the World Trade Organization (WTO) have been sites of furious protest and resistance by tens of thousands of people, including small farmers, trade unionists, anti-globalization activists, and faith and development organizations. (The 1999 negotiations were called the "battle in Seattle" for good reason.)

While the Nairobi meetings held some similarities to previous WTO negotiations—fears that no agreement would be reached and entrenched positions by the global North and South—other aspects were entirely different, including the way civil society is organized for engagement.

In the last two years, we have witnessed the rise of megaregional trade deals. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP) between the U.S. and the European Union is one example, but there are many others under negotiation. The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada and the E.U. has been finalized and the text is awaiting parliamentary agreements some time in 2016. The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) between the U.S. and many Pacific Rim The Trade In Services Agreement is in its 15th round of negotiations involving more than 50 countries.

These deals have many similarities. They are designed to open up new markets for global corporations and create the conditions for them to be as lucrative as possible. Perceived "barriers" to trade, such as fair labor standards, food safety regulations, and publicly provided services, are to be reduced or removed.

Additional legal protections to safeguard corporate profits from the effects of national government policies (such as raising the minimum wage or introducing plain-packaging on tobacco products) will be introduced. And, of course, the negotiations are held in secret, away from democratic scrutiny.

The rise of these megaregional trade deals is a direct response by neoliberal or "free market" capitalist governments that have become frustrated with the impasse in negotiations at the WTO. For more than 15 years, the WTO has failed to make progress on the 2001 Doha Round negotiations. Unable to secure agreement of the 162 countries that make up the WTO, the European Union, the U.S., Australia, and others decided to set their own agenda. They began negotiating the sort

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