

Japanese for Peace concert

Sunday 8 August 2010 - OPENING REMARKS:

Hello and Konnichiwa. My name is Dimity Hawkins and I am pleased to welcome you to the 2010 Hiroshima & Nagasaki Memorial Peace Concert. We are here to mark, as people around the world are doing this weekend, events that happened 65 years ago. The bombs that were dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki announced the **dawn of the nuclear age**, and a new and frightening understanding of the devastating power of the atom. But it also triggered a new **global movement** that continues to this day, and of which we should all be proud to be a part.

Will you please thank the **students of the National Theatre** once again who have opened the afternoon so beautifully for us.

As we begin our afternoon we would like to acknowledge the **Kulin Nations**, Traditional Owners of this land, specifically the **Wurundjeri** People. We thank them for their care of country.

We would to also like acknowledge that we have a special honored guest in the audience today - Mr **Yasufumi Kotake**, Deputy Consul General from Consulate-General of Japan.

This concert is brought to you by **Japanese for Peace** and is supported by the Australian Conservation Foundation (**ACF**), Friends of the Earth (**FoE**) and the Victoria Multicultural Commission (**VMC**), represented here today by the VMC Commissioner Ms Jenny Taing. The concert is also endorsed by a

wide number of other organisations, including the Cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan.

We have a wonderful program for you this afternoon, which has been put together by the hard work of many good people involved with Japanese for Peace. We will have **two short film** pieces to share with you, as well as **speakers** and **musical tributes** from local artists bringing their talents to this important memorial. I will remind you all to please turn off your **mobile phones**, and to also seek out the **cds and books being sold** by the artists and Japanese for Peace up the back – please support the good artists who have loaned their support to this wonderful concert.

I am honored to share the MC role this afternoon with Ms **Shizuko Kandori**, a third generation Hibakusha, the granddaughter of survivors of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima on the 6 August 1945. She is a teacher here in Melbourne and an active member of the Japanese for Peace.

But before we hear from her, I will first invite Ms **Kazuyo Preston** to the podium to read out a **special message** sent to this concert from a long time friend of peace from the United States.

(Kaz gives the message from Yoko Ono)

Comments from ICAN Australia: 3.22pm (after millionpleas video)

Please thank again **Anne Norman** for her music before that short film.

This is a **sad** and **momentous** anniversary. Sad because of the memory of those dreadful days 65 years ago. And sad too because all these years later, all these generations later, we still have around **22,600** nukes in the world today.

But **momentous** too – momentous because there is a wind of change blowing again now, a real possibility of action for a nuclear free world. But it will take work to get there, and we need all of you to help make that happen.

I work with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear weapons (**ICAN**). We are proud to work closely with Japanese for Peace and a large number of other non-government organisations around Australia in the work for a world free of nuclear weapons.

Stop and consider for a moment what really happened 65 years ago. It was the dying days of a monstrous war in which, by some estimates, **60 million** people died on all sides. On the 6 August 1945, just weeks after the first successful test of a nuclear weapon in the United States, the Enola Gay flew above the city of Hiroshima on a bright clear morning, and dropped the bomb, named **Little Boy**. Estimates say **70,000** people died that day, many of them immediately, obliterated by the effects of the nuclear reaction, but by the end of 1945, that figure had grown to **140,000**. That was no little boy.

Just three days later, the United States dropped a second atomic weapon, titled **Fat Man**, on the city of Nagasaki. Immediately around **40,000** people were killed and by the end of 1945, the death toll was around **80,000**. The effects of these two weapons live on today in the generations since those bombings.

No people should ever have had to suffer again what happened to the people of Japan over those three days. Unfortunately, although no other nuclear weapon has been used as a direct act of war, over **2,000 other** nuclear weapons have been used around the world since then in tests, including numerous tests here in Australia.

As I said before, today, in just nine countries around the world there are an estimated **22,600 nuclear weapons** by the latest estimates. The USA and Russia hold over 96% of these alone, but are joined in the bizarre nuclear club by France, the UK, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea. Most modern nuclear weapons are **many hundreds of times more powerful** than those horrific bombs dropped on Japanese cities decades ago. But all of them cause global insecurity and divert vital resources away from addressing **real human needs** like poverty, water shortages, hunger, or addressing the problems of climate change.

As you have seen, ICAN has just launched a new campaign called **MillionPleas**. Since the launch of this campaign just 2 days ago, we have already in excess of 1,700 voices joining the plea for a world free of nuclear weapons. The children you saw in the video are all attending public schools in Hiroshima, just a few kilometres from the site of the bombing. The film ends with the words of a

Hibakusha, a survivor of the atomic bomb, who says "Please free the world from nuclear weapons."

It is a **polite request** from someone who has seen something more horrific than most in this room should ever experience.

The pleas that have joined his and the school children from Hiroshima, coming in thick and fast from around the world now via YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, are **testimony** to the fact that people **have not** forgotten, **have not** switched off, and still care deeply about the fact that their world can be ended in an afternoon at the hand of a few faceless men.

We have heard a lot in recent days through the current Federal Election campaign about "faceless men". Our new campaign is about **giving face** to the issue of nuclear disarmament, showing the **genuine concerns** of the people on this issue, and **giving voice** to the calls for a better future, one free of the horrors of nuclear weapons.

So I urge you all, **please**, to go to see this film again online and add your voice to the pleas. You can do so by visiting the website **MillionPleas.com** and following the prompts.

But, before this, **just 2 months ago**, ICAN released another short film, made here in Melbourne, as part of a celebration for a global day of action for nuclear abolition. Around Australia and in around **25** other countries, individuals and organisations took action to call for nuclear abolition following an important United Nations conference to discuss nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

That conference was disappointing in some respects, but there were **some important calls** made at the end of it, including a call for the worlds governments to start negotiations on a **Nuclear Weapons Convention**. The proposed convention would, in brief, ban the bomb.

The film we are about to show you, **Who by Fire**, is a retelling of an ancient story, but with a very local focus. It features **Dave Sweeney**, our next speaker, and Nuclear Free campaigner for the Australian Conservation Foundation. The script and concept were developed especially for ICAN by a wonderful local artist, **Kathleen McCann**, and the filming was expertly done by local filmmaker, **Dale Lynch**. I hope you enjoy it.

(show Who By Fire video)

INTRODUCTION: Liz Frencham (D Bass), Myles White (Aco Guitar): **4pm:**

Please thank Lee Morgan again for his wonderful performance.

Our next performance is from two very talented musicians, Liz Frencham and Myles White.