Building a Culture of Peace
Annual MAW Remembrance Lecture, given by Caroline Lucas MEP
at the Imperial War Museum, London, 14 November 2004

Introduction
I'm very honoured to have been asked to give this Annual Lecture here today.
I've been asked to speak about Building a Culture of Peace, and today,
Remembrance Sunday, it seems like a very appropriate subject. But not only
appropriate – it's also a hugely urgent one. Because on this Remembrance
Sunday, unfortunately like so many other Remembrance Sundays, there are still
many wars being fought, still many people being killed and injured. Sometimes
it seems like we've learned very little from history, and from the past
Since I'm a Member of the European Parliament, you probably won't be
surprised if I talk particularly about the role of the European Union, and make the
case that a reformed EU, alongside a reformed UN, could have a very significant
part to play.
I'll also make the case that building a culture of peace is not only about our
foreign policies, it's about our economic policies too. A world of vast and
increasing inequalities is never going to be a peaceful one, and so challenging
the current damaging patterns of economic globalization us a critical part of
building this new culture.
I'll argue, too, about the importance or redefining security, so that we're referring
not just to military security, but to broader concepts like environmental security.
If George Bush had invested just a fraction of the energy and resources he's put
into the illegal war on Iraq instead into tackling climate change, then the world
might have a chance of being genuinely more secure.
And finally, I'll say a few words about the importance of reforming and revitalizing
the United Nations, and about celebrating and harnessing the growing civil
society movements that are campaigning for peace.

1. Iraq
But forgive me, before I start on what I planned to say, I'd like to say a few words
first about the scale of the atrocities that I believe are taking place in Falluja even
as we sit here. I don't know about you, but every time I listen to the news and
here about the "rebel city", and every time I open the newspaper and read about
"the foreign insurgents", I feel so angry. Because nowhere in all of this do we
hear anything about the civilians and ordinary people of that terrorized city –
there are no western journalists embedded with them, and no voice speaking for
that agonies that they must be going through, with no food, no clean water, no
electricity, no hospitals, no links to the outside world.
The response from Sergeant Sam Mortimer of the US Marines, quoted on Channel 4
News last week, on the eve of the lastest assault, is chilling. "We'll unleash the dogs of
hell. They don't even know what's coming – hell is coming. If there are civilians in there,
they're in the wrong place at the wrong time."
And so even as, on Remembrance Day, we pay our respects to the military casualties of
the wards of the last century – including the military casualties of the current war on Iraq
– we also remember the innocent civilians – in Iraq, perhaps as many as 100,000 of
them, according to a respected study published last week who have paid the ultimate
price of this war – a war that has raised MAW far more questions than it has answered.
· Do you remember this war was supposed to be about making the world
more secure? Yet **the world is now infinitely less secure**, as the tragic

events in Madrid and Bali and elsewhere have shown.

· This war was **supposed to be about getting rid of tyrants – so why are we still propping them up in other countries when it suits us, like Uzbekistan?** And when Ambassador Craig Murray has the audacity to speak out against government torture there, our government's response is not to condemn the Uzbek government, but to sack the outspoken ambassador.

· This war was supposed **to be about democracy – so why are occupation forces crushing the Iraqi people's democratic rights?**
Instead of an elected constitutional assembly, we have **a CIA-appointed puppet government, trade union leaders detained, their offices destroyed, new laws brought in to ban strikes, and the gagging of independent Iraqi media?**

· This war **was supposed to be about human rights** – so how do we explain away the obscene abuses at Abu Ghraib prison and elsewhere?

· This war was supposed to be about getting rid of WMD **– so why are we still selling weapons indiscriminately to countries like Syria –** apparently one of the greatest threats to world peace – at giant arms fairs in London?

· And **what moral authority do we think we have anyway**, when we are expanding our own WMD capabilities? – **at Fairford, at Aldermaston, at Faslane?**

2. American Dream v. European Dream
So first, in looking at the EU as a potential partner for peace, let's examine a bit more carefully the proposition that the EU is somehow inherently more peaceloving than the US. American writer Jeremy Rifkin, in his new book, *The European Dream: How Europe's Vision of the Future is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream,* describes what he sees as the major divergence in European and US values in almost mythological terms:
"*The American Dream was based on economic growth, personal wealth and independence. It was synonymous with love of country and patriotism, frontier mentality and the unbridled exercise of power. Yet what were once considered prime virtues – cherished and idealised not only in America but throughout the world – are increasingly seen by many as drawbacks and even impediments. But while the American Dream tires and languishes in the past, a new European Dream is being born. Today we see a new set of values emerging which are focused on sustainable development, quality of life and multilateralism. More cosmopolitan and less concerned with the brute exercise of power, the European Dream is better positioned to accommodate the many forces that are propelling us into a more interconnected and interdependent world.*"
Now that's a very attractive image, but how true is it? Ostensibly, there appears to be plenty of evidence to support it.

Let's look at the militarism first. A recent poll, *Transatlantic Trends 2004*, (carried out by the German Marshall Fund of the US and Italy's Compagnia di San Paolo), reveals a significant gulf between the US and Europe on issues such as the use of force and America's role in the world. Based on responses from 11,000 people in the US and in 10 European countries, **it appears that 76% of Europeans disapprove of current US foreign policy – an increase of 20% over 2 years.**
At the time the poll was conducted, in June of this year, **over half of all Europeans, 58%, found strong US leadership undesirable.** Only 41% of Europeans said that war could achieve just ends, compared with 82% of Americans. And while 54% of Americans think military strength is the best way

to ensure peace, only 28% of Europeans agree *(source: FT, 9.9.04)*.
On multilateralism, again it is clear that the vast majority of Europeans have viewed with horror the Bush administration's aggressive dismissal of multilateral treaties. Its highhanded withdrawal from the **Kyoto Protocol** negotiations, its abandonment of the **AntiBallistic Missile Treaty**, its disinterest in **the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty**, and its positively destructive response to the **International Criminal Court** have all led to rising European anger**, and prompted New York Times columnist Tom Friedman to describe how "America is referred to as a 'rogue state' in Europe now as often as Iraq."**
And on **sustainable development**, it is certainly Europe, rather than the US, that is taking a lead on issues from developing a safer chemicals policy to tackling climate change.
But how deep are these differences? And how secure?
I'd make the case that the values which Rifkin associated with the European Dream – the "new history" which he claims it represents, based on what he calls "an attention to quality of life, sustainability, and peace and harmony" – **is still deeply contested within Europe. It is not yet a widely shared dream – it's a glimpse into the possible, made by a few.** And there are plenty of forces ranged up against it.

Militarizing the EU
When it comes to the use of military force, for example, **there are loud voices which, far from celebrating the EU's lack of military might as a successful demonstration of postmodernist strategy, are calling for an increasing militarisation of the EU.** Remember that the EU is already planning to set up its own Rapid Reaction Force of up to 60,000 soldiers, warships and combat aircraft. They don't like you to call it an "army" – it offends their sensibilities but make no mistake, that's what it is. As outgoing Commission President Romano Prodi candidly admitted, *"If you don't want to call it a European army, don't call it a European army. You can call it 'Margaret', you can call it 'MaryAnne', you can find any name; but, for the first time, you have a joint, not bilateral, effort at European level."*
A major increase in arms spending in Europe is also foreseen. Indeed, the new constitution actually **obliges** member states to increase arms capacities.
Let me read you one article in particular of the draft Treaty. Article 40 states:
Member States shall undertake progressively to improve their military capabilities.
The constitution also establishes a European Armaments, Research and Military Capabilities Agency, and extends the tasks of "common defence" to include, and I quote, "contributions to the fight against terrorism, including support for third countries in combatting terrorism in their territories." For many, that last phrase is deeply worrying, potentially giving the green light to all kinds of military options – even preemptive strikes – in the name of the socalled "war on terrorism".
The draft treaty also introduces a "mutual defence clause", giving the EU an equivalent mandate to Article 5 of the NATO Treaty**, and opening the door for the EU to be transformed into a full military alliance.** The constitution goes on to state that all operations in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy should be undertaken 'in accordance with the principles of the United Nations charter'. **So, not even a specific resolution of the UN Security Council will be deemed necessary for the EU to undertake military action.**
And nowhere in the draft text there is any reference to the issue of nuclear, biological, chemical or conventional disarmament and the need to promote

multilateral disarmament and arms control treaties. The treaty does not spend a word, either, on the need to stem arms exports and to counter the global proliferation of weapons and explosives.

So the Constitution envisages a vastly more militarised EU than the one we have today. (It also, by the way, envisages a Europe where economic growth is given far more priority than sustainable development, and in which neoliberal free trade is instituted as a constitutional principle). So not surprisingly, a growing number of people are, rightly I believe, expressing concern about this new direction. **Certainly there is a question as to the extent to which the EU of this constitution is compatible with the vision and values in Rifkin's European Dream.**

Now of course there are those who would claim, very eloquently, **that there is no incompatibility here.** Indeed, leading US writer and commentator Robert Kagan argues that, ironically, Europe's rejection of power politics and its devaluing of military force as a tool of international relations **have only been possible precisely because of the presence of US military forces on European soil.** As he puts it in his recent book, *Paradise and Power,* Europe's new Kantian order could flourish **only under the umbrella of American power exercised according to the rules of the old Hobbesian order.** According to Kagan, **it is American power that has made it possible for Europeans to believe that power was no longer important.** Because Europe has neither the will nor the ability to guard its own paradise and keep it from being overrun by world that has yet to accept the rule of "moral consciousness", it has become dependent on US willingness to use its military might to deter or defeat those around the world who still believe in power politics.

Robert Cooper, a former adviser to Tony Blair, and now Director General for External and Political and Military Affairs at the Council of the EU, is very clear both about the risks and about the solution: If the postmodern world does not protect itself, it can be destroyed. **But how does Europe protect itself without discarding the very ideals and principles that undergird its pacific system?** Cooper's answer is a surprisingly candid one. **"The challenge to the postmodern world is to get used to the idea of double standards",** he says. Among themselves, Europeans may "operate on the basis of laws and open cooperative security." But when dealing with the world outside Europe, according to Cooper, "we need to revert to the rougher methods for an earlier era – force, preemptive attack, deception, whatever is necessary." And Cooper's principle for safeguarding society is that, and I quote, **"Among ourselves, we keep the law, but when we are operating in the jungle, we must also use the laws of the jungle."**

This argument, however, presupposes that it is possible to keep these two different value sets and modes of operation separate and distinct. I'd argue that experience to date suggests that **if you use the law of the jungle in foreign policy, it's not long before you discover the law of the jungle beginning to invade domestic policy as well** – jungles don't generally respect boundaries. You need look no further than the major infringement of human rights that has accompanied the so-called "war on terror", including the illegal detainment of prisoners at Belmarsh and Guantanamo ; the UK's optout from the European Convention on Human Rights to enable it to adopt a law that permits indefinite detention without trial and a denial in some cases of the right to seek asylum ; and new antiterrorism legislation which, according to Human Rights Watch, marks another step in the U.K.'s retreat from human rights and refugee protection

obligations.

Potential for EU
So the case I would make is that if the EU is genuinely to challenge US hegemony and be a force for peace in the world, it has to do so not by creating its own hegemony, or by attempting to emulate the US, but by offering a credible and effective alternative to it. A world of two imperialist and aggressive military and economic superpowers is not necessarily any better than a unipolar world with only one such superpower.
And certainly if we want the EU to play a genuinely constructive part in building a culture of peace, if we want to explore alternatives to ever greater economic globalization, if we want to **develop broader definitions of security**, then we'll need **a very different EU to the one we have today, or indeed the one envisaged in the new constitution.**

Practical Action
One of the frustrating aspects of this debate is that it's not as if we don't know what we need to do to make the world a safer place. I'd refer you to agendas like the Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice, which is a brilliant and rigorous analysis of the problems, and – more importantly – elaboration of the practical steps we can take to make the world a safer place.
Those steps aren't only the ones most obviously linked to militarism – although there is a whole architecture that has been painstakingly constructed to make the world safer things like the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, expanding and strengthening the AntiBallistic Missile Treaty, dealerting, no first use, extension of nuclear-free zones, transparency of nuclear arsenals and facilities, and a ban on fissile materials and subcritical tests, regulating and hopefully ending the arms trade – essential as all of those are.

They also include the promotion of peace education, because until we have systematic education for peace, we won't learn the skills of conflict resolution, mediation, and nonviolent social change. They include promoting the United Nations, and putting UN reform at the top of the political agenda. They include addressing global injustices, canceling debt, promoting human rights, making international institutions like the World Bank and the WTO fairer and more democratic. They include fundamentally rethinking our economic system which persists in putting profit before people.
But if we know all that, what stops us from acting on it? Why is there such a huge absence of political will? I think part of the answer is that we need to educate people to understand security in a broader sense.
I remember a very grim allegory that was told by Nicholas Humphrey in his 1981 Bronowski Memorial lecture:
He explained that when he was a child, he had an old pet tortoise called Ajax. One autumn, Ajax went looking for a winter home, and crawled unnoticed into the pile of wood and bracken which was to be used for the Guy Fawkes day bonfire. As days passed, more and more pieces of wood were added to the pile, and Ajax must have felt more and more secure. **Then on Guy Fawkes Day, bonfire and tortoise were reduced to ashes.** *And there are still many people who still believe that the piling up of weapon upon weapon adds to our security – and that the dangers are nothing compared to the reassurance they provide.*
And that means that we need to understand how so many people today still act like Ajax – they're persuaded that the best way to ensure security is to go on

spending more and more on arms.

We need to change the discourse, and help people to understand that there are many other, more effective ways, of building security.

Think, for example, of energy resources. One of the reasons for this illegal and monstrously counterproductive war on Iraq was, I believe, that Iraq has oil, and the West is addicted to more and more oil to run its economy. If the EU were to invest as many resources in renewables as it currently does in oil, imagine the revolution which would take place. We would no longer be dependent on volatile areas of the world for our economy. We would be independent of US policy. We would make a huge contribution to reducing global warming – which even the Pentagon has admitted is a bigger threat to the world than WMD – we'd create more jobs, we'd get rid of fuel poverty. It's a win/win policy, and would do far more to create a safer world than any amount of extra weapons.

Causes of conflict

Because rather than militarising the EU, I'd rather put my faith in an analysis which tries to address the causes of conflict, which are rooted in inequality, injustice, and environmental degradation.

· Because we cannot hope to build a more peaceful world when over 1 billion people today live in utter and grinding poverty, on less than a dollar a day

· And we can't meaningfully talk about peace when 20% of the world's population consumes 80% of the world's resources.

That means that in order to reduce the risks of conflict, one of the most urgent priorities is **to propose an alternative to the current damaging patterns of economic globalisation,** which is driving much of this poverty, inequality, and environmental damage.

That perhaps is not a surprising position for a Green to take. But how widely is it shared?

Well, in fact it has some quite surprising allies – in theory, anyway. Early in 2003, the government's Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Patricia Hewitt, agreed – in principle at least that:

"If we in the West don't create a system of world trade that is fair as well as free…we will pay a price in increased terrorism and increased insecurity."

But we will find allies in more surprising places than that – on paper anyway. Take the words of Michel Camdessus – who, as retiring head of the International Monetary Fund – hardly an institution which one associates with radical thinking on poverty and insecurity made a similar case:

"The widening gaps between rich and poor within nations, and the gulf between the affluent and the most impoverished nations…will undermine the fabric of our societies through confrontation, violence and civil disorder."

But my favourite is from a CIA report, "Global Trends 2015":

"The rising tide of the global economy will create many economic winners, but it will not lift all boats. [It will] spawn conflicts at home and abroad, ensuring an even wider gap between …winners and losers than exists today…[Globalisation's] evolution will be rocky, marked by chronic financial volatility and a widening economic divide…Regions, countries, and groups feeling left behind will face deepening economic stagnation, political instability, and cultural alienation. They will foster political, ethnic, ideological, and religious extremism, along with the violence that often accompanies it."

But, given there's such widespread agreement that globalisation is driving poverty and inequality, it is – on one reading at least – pretty extraordinary that the solution that is advocated is precisely more of the same globalisation that caused the problems in the first place.

Take the decision to launch a new round of international trade negotiations at the WTO: the smoke had not yet cleared from the ruins of the World Trade Centre in New York before US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick and EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy seized on the tragedy to press for even greater trade liberalization via the WTO**, asserting that free trade was one of the best ways of countering terrorism.** Developing country delegations at Doha spoke of how they were bullied into accepting this new round, on the grounds that they would be "opposing efforts to counter terrorism" if they didn't.

So why is there such a gap between the rhetoric about understanding the problem, and the reality of proposing more of the same solution? It's partly due to vested interests of the transnational corporations, I'm sure. But I think it's also because of a failure of vision, a failure of imagination, a failure to be able to envisage alternatives to the current agenda of neoliberal economic globalization. And in truth, the task we face is an extremely ambitious one – it is nothing less than to challenge and overturn the system of neoliberal economic globalisation which absolutely depends on ruthless competition, on the destruction of resources, on creating winners and losers, and on heightening the vulnerability of countries and their peoples to external shocks.

Take the example of Argentina, which has been the poster-boy of globalisation. It brought down its trade barriers faster than almost any other country in Latin America. It liberalised its capital account more radically, and privatised everything that wasn't nailed down. And it voluntarily gave up any meaningful control over the domestic impact of a volatile global economy by pegging the peso to the dollar – and, as a result, the nation was meant to enter the nirvana of permanent prosperity.

The results, as we have seen, were rather different. Argentina has spiralled into debt and chaos, throwing millions into poverty.

Rather than solving the problems of equity, globalisation has widened the gaps between rich and poor within and among countries, while concentrating the power and growth of global corporations, the only true beneficiaries of the process. We are now at the point where, of the one hundred largest economies in the world, 53 are now global corporations, larger than countries like Sweden and Norway, S.Africa and Mexico, Belgium and Egypt. Many CEOs earn nearly 500 times the wage of the average worker. So much for the rising tide that lifts all boats.

Moreover, while the fruits of the global economy are far from equitably distributed, the images of its supposed benefits increasingly are. TV images celebrating the heights of western consumerism can be found in some of the poorest countries in the world yet for the great majority, the gulf between their daily reality and the riches so tauntingly revealed is unimaginably vast.

The reality of the tension this is storing up is dimly recognised even by the World Bank. James Wolfensohn, WB Director, has commented:
"The idea that a rich world and a poor world can coexist without dramatic implications collapsed along with the twin towers on September 11th"

And a certain innocence also collapsed after 11thSeptember. In Bush's quest for oil, we can see more blatantly than ever before how the need for the resources to fuel globalisation leads to conflict.

Many of us have organized before to oppose other significant grabs of global resources – the world's ever dwindling forests, minerals, fresh water, biodiversity. But these were not normally threatened by direct military intervention. That job till now has been done just as well by the rules of global corporate institutions like the WTO, the IMF, the World Bank. But now the stakes are higher.

Because the bottom line is that the survival of the neoliberal globalised economy can only be assured through a never-ending, always-expanding supply of inexpensive resources, new markets, and cheap labour. **But it's a process that cannot go on forever on a finite planet.**

From global to local economies

So what about the alternatives? At the heart of the globalisation model is the idea that by removing economic and political power from nation states, communities, and regions and putting that power into absentee authorities that operate globally via giant corporations and unaccountable institutions, everyone somehow mysteriously benefits. So where countries could once feed themselves, security has been traded in for dependency on global corporations and markets. This has left many poor nations vulnerable to the vagaries of a distant global commodity pricing system they cannot control, and has brought increased landlessness and poverty to millions.

Lack of power and loss of control breeds helplessness, frustrations and anger. People want to have a say in the direction of their lives. They know that freedom is about much more than the right to vote, once every few years, for one of a few increasingly identical groups of politicians. Freedom is also about the right to decide your economic destiny – and that is precisely what globalisation – the global spread of neoliberal capitalism – is taking away from people the world over, impoverishing them in the process.

The political operating principal for reversing this is the concept of subsidiarity – a deliberate bias in all local, national, and international rulemaking to favour local self-reliance where such a choice is possible. Power should not move outward to the global, but inward, closer to the people most affected by decisions.

In economic terms, what this means is that, over a period of time, there would be a gradual transition away from dependence on international export markets, towards the provision of as many goods and services as feasible and appropriate nationally and locally. Long distance trade is then reduced to its original purpose supplying what cannot easily come from within one country or geographical grouping of countries.

Such a shift won't be easy, as global corporations will fight it every step of the way. Any nation that can grow its own food and eat it, or share it in local markets, is anathema to an economic design that depends on largescale centralised economic processes over long distances to sustain its bloated growth. But Greens and others have developed a whole raft of policy proposals to achieve this, including energy taxes, the reintroduction of protective tariffs and quotas, regulations to control the speed and kind of investment, and the movement of capital in and out of communities or nations, and policies to reduce the power of corporations. These policies are all designed to give people back their sense of security, their control over their own economies.

Role of UN

And finally, I'd also like to put some faith, at least, in a reformed and revitalised United Nations system.

I'm conscious that, to some, **this will sound wildly optimistic.** I also take the point that the celebrations we might have had about the refusal of the 6 noncommitted countries on the Security Council to be bullied by the US into sanctioning war are inevitably overshadowed by the Council's endorsement of the puppet authority installed by the Americans in Baghdad.

But I don't believe it has to be that way, and I do believe there's room for some hope. Take, for example, the fact that **the UN is much more active today than it ever was during the Cold War**. Between 1946 and 1990 there were 683 Security Council Resolutions; in the thirteen years since then, the number has more than doubled.

Add to that the EU's increasing willingness to use the UN as a greater ally.

Perhaps the clearest indication of a new mood came in May 2001, when western European nations orchestrated a vote to force the US off the Human Rights Commission. That same day, Washington also lost its seat on the international Narcotics Control Board that it had held for two terms.

That willingness of most of Europe to stand up to the US on the human rights commission gave some additional hope to the idea that the United Nations could serve as a venue of European challenge.

When French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin took up civil society's warning against Washington's abuse of the United Nations, diplomats across the Council chamber greeted his statement that the UN **"should be an instrument of peace, and not a tool for war"** with an unprecedented thunderous ovation.

The following day saw the largest, most unified global protest in history, when in cities around the world, ten to 13 million protestors took to the streets to voice opposition to war. And in all of those demonstrations, **speaker after speaker called on the UN to stand firm, and urged the Security Council to resist US pressure.**

Earlier that morning, a small group led by South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu, went to meet with Secretary General Kofi Annan. Bishop Tutu began with the words, "we are here on behalf of the people marching in 665 cities around the world. And we are here to tell you that those people marching in 665 cities claim the United Nations as our own, **we claim it as part of our global mobilisation for peace."**

And it was in response to those massive demonstrations that the New York Times published its now frequently quoted reference to global civil society as the world's "second superpower". And it was clear which of the two claimed the United Nations.

As US writer Phyllis Bennis has observed, when the Security Council serves as **a venue of European challenge to US unilateral power**, it can provide protection to its permanent and non-permanent member governments, it can gain strength by building links between the UN and global civil society, it can defend the very centrality of the UN so threatened by US unilateralism.

I accept it's an optimistic vision – but forgive me right now I think we badly need one.