

# ABOLISH WAR

Newsletter No: 4 Winter 2005

## PROFESSOR SIR JOSEPH ROTBLAT

**'War must cease to be an admissible human institution.**

**The abolition of war must be our ultimate goal'**

*Joseph Rotblat, who served as the President of the Movement for the Abolition of War, and was an inspiration to us all, died this year. Bruce Kent remembers: -*

Joseph Rotblat, who died earlier this year at the age of 96, was a good friend, an ongoing inspiration and a giant of history. He was the only scientist to refuse to continue work on the atomic bomb once it was clear it was to be used as a weapon of war.

I only got to know him personally at a gathering organised by Pax Christi, when the issue of the indefinite renewal of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty was being promoted. He was strongly opposed and spoke with clear logic. What was the point of an indefinite extension of a treaty once its aims have been achieved? Of course he smelt a rat. The nuclear powers, led by the United States, wanted indefinite extension because they wanted indefinite possession.

Our paths crossed again when in 2002 he called together, under the Pugwash umbrella, a group of organisations which came to form the Nuclear Awareness Programme. He wanted the elimination of all nuclear weapons, and a new awareness of their dangers, back on the public agenda.

NAP has turned out to be a very effective body. Thanks to the power of a Rotblat invitation both Mikhael Gorbachev and Robert McNamara have, at different times, visited this country to voice their support.

Joseph Rotblat was not only concerned with nuclear weapons. His deep conviction was that war itself **'must cease to be an admissible human institution. The abolition of war must be our ultimate goal'**. No wonder we asked him to become the President of MAW when it started. He took the keenest interest in our progress. When we came to make our educational video 'War No More' he was actually in hospital and I suggested that we should not burden him with a filmed interview.

That was as near as I came to a Rotblat ticking off. Of course he would be filmed. Not everyone who has seen the result will know that Joe was sitting in a hospital wheelchair in a side ward in a dressing gown. His body was running slowly down, but his mind was as clear as a bell.

In the last months of his life a more serious stroke confined him to his north London home, where he was lovingly looked after by his sister in law. I visited more than once and every time there was a smile and the greeting 'What's the news? How are things going?' He never gave up.

*Do not follow where the path may lead  
Go instead where there is no path  
And leave a trail.*

That is just what Joseph Rotblat has done for us all.

## Letter from the Chair

This is my first letter as Chairperson, having taken over from Bruce Kent only a fortnight ago. So it is more about introductions than reports of activities which are covered by others elsewhere in the Newsletter.

I have been Vice-chairperson for some time and would like to say how good it has been working with such a committed Executive and with Bruce who seems able to facilitate just about anything. He said when he retired that he should become quartermaster, but the committee thought Vice-president was more appropriate!

The death of Joe Rotblat, our President, was a sad loss to us. I am pleased to say that Professor Robert Hinde has taken his place and we have two new Vice-presidents, Martin Bell and Susannah York.

MAW has made great strides over the past 5 years and now has a profile based particularly on its work in schools, its teaching aids such as the *War no More* DVD, and its concerts and public lectures notably the annual lecture on Remembrance Sunday (delivered this year in characteristic style by Martin Bell). My particular interest has been the use of music and song as teaching aids and we are now considering how we complement the *Music of Healing* CD with another work. I am also a director of the Peace Museum, Bradford and believe

there are some good opportunities for using museum resources in our education work.

MAW has always had the policy of not duplicating activities already covered by other peace organisations. We seek to liaise closely with them in areas of common interest. This year we have done some valuable work alongside Make Poverty History and the Royal British Legion.

We are an organisation of volunteers and always looking for assistance. If you feel you can contribute ideas, knowledge or skills, even in a limited way please contact us. Even better consider standing for our Executive Committee.

It has become clear that we are in a critical period of international security. The situation in the Middle East, as a focus of violence, remains of grave concern. Multilateral approaches to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are stalled, if not broken; and we now live with the threat that terrorists will one day use a weapon of mass destruction. Then, there is the increasing likelihood of natural disasters exacerbated by global warming, the response to which still seems to elude the international community. All this is bound to increase human conflict and emphasises the importance of our argument that war is not inevitable and that there are better ways of resolving conflict.

We are immensely grateful for the support of our members at this time.

**Tony Kempster**

**Note the new phone number!**

**The Movement for the Abolition of War**

**11 Venetia Road LONDON N4 1EJ Tel: 01908 511948 [www.abolishwar.org.uk](http://www.abolishwar.org.uk)**

# News & Views

## Martin Bell at the Imperial War Museum



On Remembrance Sunday, for the fifth year running, MAW hosted a lecture at the Imperial War Museum. This year Martin Bell, speaking from his great experience as a journalist, gave a fascinating and very informative talk to a packed hall. Looking at the casualties and damage of war, his main message was that we simply cannot afford to

repeat the past; that war doesn't work; that we are now using maximum force and getting minimum results. Quoting from a new book, *The Utility of Force* by General Sir Robert Smith, he said, "War no longer delivers." Casting a brief eye on the Gulf War he said that the real gulf was the gulf between the politicians and the people. While politicians showed a reluctance to resort to war in the 1930's because so many had some experience of WW1, our present politicians have no experience of war, nor even perhaps military action through National Service. And it is the lack of knowledge of war that leads to a readiness to go to war. Once at war, the wagers of war use euphemisms to hide the reality of war from themselves as much as from the public. (Think of the title 'Operation Freedom' to describe the mess of the invasion of Iraq.)

He then looked at the history of war reporting, as for most of us this is our way of informing ourselves about the nature of war. Had we had the kind of immediate reporting complete with pictures via satellite that we have now, people at home during WW1 would have been so shocked by the trench warfare and the loss of life that they would have insisted the fighting stopped. As it was, their main sources of information were the war poets and the survivors. And they only gained that knowledge after it was all over. During the carnage both the war correspondents and the government tidied up the truth. Not for nothing were the main correspondents awarded with titles a few years after the war!

On the other hand, Martin asked us to consider what a major propaganda coup it would have been for the Germans in WW2, had they been able, with our technology, to broadcast live pictures of the fire bombing of Dresden. Just as the technology of warfare has changed so much over the last hundred years, modern communications allow for much more access to facts and information. Unfortunately, this is still 'managed' by the governments and the military, selecting what the cameras see by embedding journalists, or censoring their reports. The images we see on our televisions are never the whole picture, but carefully selected. Selecting the pictures not only hides the realities of war, it sanitises the reality. And that makes it seem acceptable – which it isn't.

*Martin Bell will be exploring these themes in an edition of 30 Minutes for Channel 4 on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2006.*

*If we wish to turn the public mind against the idea of war as an option, the whole truth of its brutality has to be made known. While the general public may not want to know, and may find the knowledge upsetting, it is very much in the public interest that we are all in the picture. Editor*

## What Kind Of Europe Do We Want?

At MAW's 'Europe Day' conference on 1 October in London, we were reminded that the EU began as the six-nation Coal and Steel Community. At that time these commodities were the basic essential for waging war, and common control over them would make it impossible, for instance, for France and Germany to go to war again. And the EU has indeed made war between western European countries next to impossible – a real miracle for those of us who remember school history as an endless succession of wars between various European nation states.

Yet the new EU constitution calls for a *strengthening* of European military capability – when there are already 25 standing armies in today's EU, with some 1.9 million men and women under arms, many still conscripts, with a combined budget of about 200 billion euros. Even, when (unlike Blair's Britain) they do not actually go to war, they must cause a disproportionate amount of our emissions of greenhouse gases and divert valuable resources from education, health and social security.

We can surely do better than this. I suggest, as at least a medium-term objective, that the 25 armies be *replaced* by a European Common Security Organisation (a more neutral term than "force"). This would have three commitments only:

- Defence against an outside, armed attack (highly improbable today) until the episode could be referred to the UN Security Council.
- Providing logistic support for the activities of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.
- Contributing to Security-Council-authorised peacekeeping operations.

Any further activities would be illegal unless agreed by at least a two-thirds majority of member states and a similar vote in the European Parliament.

This organisation would not need large and expensive equipment such as multi-billion pound aircraft carriers, strike aircraft, or battle-tanks. It would replace NATO, and would of course have to be non-nuclear, otherwise several EU countries such as Austria, Finland, Ireland and Sweden would not participate. On a lighter note, visiting dignitaries could be welcomed by children's dancing displays instead of military parades.

Of course, this proposal represents a big loss of national sovereignty. But there would be massive savings – I would guess that not more than a third of present manpower and costs would be needed. Much of the savings could be used to *increase* our security by supporting conflict resolution and appropriate development in less stable parts of the world.

*Douglas Holdstock*

*[Dr Douglas Holdstock is a member of Medact (Medical Action for Global Security). The views expressed in this article are his own.]*  
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**If you had seen one day of war, you would pray to God that you would never see another.**  
*The Duke of Wellington*

# Conference News

## UNDER THE SPREADING CHESTNUKE TREE Brussels 20/21 October 2005

Did you know?

- There are over 700 global US military bases in more than 40 countries.
- 200 insurgency attacks take place every day in Iraq, 83% on the occupying forces. Most are unreported by the 'embedded' journalists.
- 265 Belgian and 280 German Mayors for Peace have signed up for anti-nuclear policies.

Info like this certainly helped to keep the adrenalin flowing at the annual European Network for Peace and Human Rights meeting in Brussels, organised by the Bertrand Russell Foundation. Vijay Mehta and I attended as reps for MAW. When we weren't wandering around looking and feeling totally lost in the mega rabbit warren of the EC Parliament, there was much to learn from the 90 or so peace and human rights colleagues, some of the best witnesses coming from their experience of Guantanamo and the impossibly stretched Iraqi medical services. For most of our 12 hours in the warren, we worked in strangely elongated rooms, which put quite a stretch on reasonable discussion.

Workshops included;

The World Tribunal on Iraq (WTI), led by Ayse Berkta from Turkey.

Civil Liberties, from a pamphlet base provided by Tony Bunyan. Making Europe Nuclear Weapons Free, with Germany's Regina Hagen and UK's Rae Street. (During the final plenary, Conference Chair Michael Barratt Brown identified European De-nuking as the Network's most likely next major cause.)

The role of the UN in Strengthening International Peace (with Vijay Mehta as animator, alongside his background paper).

And last, but not least, US bases around the world (led by redoubtable Jo Gerson of the American Friends' Service Committee).

George Farebrother managed to arrange an additional workshop for Abolition2000 (Europe), from which the German, Belgian and French members present emerged as the leading promoters of the Mayors for Peace campaign.

As always it was the details of the many contributions which stayed in the mind, such as:

The lively debate about support for the Iraqi RESISTANCE, following Ayse's impassioned plea for practical follow-ups to the WTI judgements; the quiet testimony of Bert de Belder and other recent Iraq visitors as to the real state of the hospitals, and the conditions Iraqi doctors and health workers were under; and the ensuing debate about the extent of Depleted Uranium illnesses. And perhaps the most telling question of all, from Finn Hermann

of Denmark who, at the end of the heated session on Resistance, quietly asked, "What I want to know is what's going to happen to the Peace Movement?" He wasn't alone.

Finally, a quote from Robert Hinde's essay, 'Why are people willing to go to war?'

*It will be seen that discouraging people from going to war requires action of many kinds. But the underlying theme that unites them all has seldom been better phrased than in the Russell-Einstein manifesto which led to the formation of the Pugwash movement: 'Remember your humanity, and forget the rest.'*

David Partridge

## BERTHA SUTTNER IDEAS IN PRESENT TIME

Prague 12/13 November 2005

The conference was held in the Czech Senate building with ministers, Members of the European Parliament, and ambassadors, speaking about the remarkable woman, Nobel prize winner, Bertha Von Suttner. A primary school in Prague has been dedicated to her memory, committed to teaching children peace and disarmament issues via books, paintings, arts, music and exhibitions. A parallel conference, hosted by Club of Madrid, was also being held in Prague at the same time. It was attended by ex heads of state from different countries, who met to discuss ways to solve world problems. Former US President, Bill Clinton, was among them.

Speaker after speaker talked about Bertha Von Suttner's ideas about disarmament, ending wars and military trade. A reference to her most celebrated novel, 'Lay down your Arms,' was mentioned many times during the conference.

Among the international speakers, Cora Weiss, from New York, Anne Kjelling from the Nobel Institute from Oslo, Vijay Mehta and Peter Van den Dungen from the United Kingdom gave speeches at the conference.

Vijay Mehta spoke on international peace and security with special reference to two important documents which came in 2005. 1) The UN High-level Panel Report on Threats, Challenges and Change. 2) The 2005 World Summit Outcome. He emphasised that governments and civil society need to work together to ensure the recommendations of the report were implemented to create a just, peaceful and sustainable world. By doing so, we will be carrying forward Bertha Von Suttner's legacy. The delegates to the conference were treated to a reception by the Norwegian and Swedish embassies and a sightseeing tour of Prague by the organisers. It was a great networking opportunity, especially with delegates from East European countries.

Vijay Mehta

You can read Vijay's speech in full on his website [www.vmpeace.org](http://www.vmpeace.org)

### Pause for Peace

In the long, slow march towards a peaceful world, one can sometimes become disheartened, even despairing, when things seem to get no better, despite our efforts.

But every day, if we keep our eyes open and our senses aware, we meet inspiring people, we find reminders that things do change, that there is cause for hope.

I found such a reminder when I came across this poem in my parish magazine.

It is by the Welsh poet,  
R. S. Thomas.

### The Bright Field

I have seen the sun break through  
to illumine a small field  
for a while, and gone my way  
and forgotten it. But that was the pearl  
of great price, the one field that had  
the treasure in it. I realise now  
that I must give all that I have  
to possess it. Life is not hurrying  
on to a receding future, nor hankering after  
an imagined past. It is turning  
aside like Moses to the miracle  
of the lit bush, to a brightness  
that seemed as transitory as your youth  
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

### Musicians Against Nuclear Arms

present

### A CONCERT FOR PEACE

Sunday 29 January 2006  
at 7.30 pm

Hinde Street Methodist  
Church, Thayer St., London  
Music by Mozart  
to celebrate Mozart

Guest Speaker - Bruce Kent  
Tickets £10 (£8 concessions) from  
MANA Administration  
71 Greenfield Gardens  
LONDON NW2 1HU  
Tel: 020 8455 1030

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 19th NOVEMBER

On Saturday November 19th, MAW held its AGM at Vaughn House in London. In the afternoon session we had music, a certain amount of business, and suggestions for future actions, which promoted a lot of debate. The morning session was taken up with two very interesting speakers, Louise Richards, the Secretary General of War on Want, and Stuart Gendell, the Director of Communications for the Royal British Legion. First: -

## Louise Richards

Here are some statistics: - 3 billion people live on less than \$2 a day....860 million adults are illiterate....100 million children have no access to school....A third of the global workforce (1 billion) are unemployed....1.3 billion people have inadequate access to clean water....3 billion people have no sanitation....10,000 die every day from water and sanitation diseases....31 million people have HIV/Aids....800 million people are malnourished. Here are some more: - The world's military bill currently stands at \$1035 billion....For the years 2003-5 the USA spent \$238 billion on the 'War against Terrorism'....On 9/11 when the World Trade Centre was attacked, 36,615 children died needlessly through the effects of poverty....49 of the 100 largest global economies are trans-national corporations.

It was with facts like these that Louise Richards from War on Want demonstrated the links between war, trade injustice and poverty when she spoke at MAW's AGM. The war on poverty is the only war worth fighting, she said. After giving us a brief history of the formation of War on Want in 1951, she took us on a tour of the trouble-spots of the world. Palestine, where over 60% of the population now live in acute poverty; Colombia, where 3% of the population own 70% of the land; Iraq, Afghanistan, the Sudan, the list goes on. She mentioned the Millennium Development Goals which at the present rate won't be achieved for 150 years. She talked about the \$50 billion increase in aid so generously promised at the G8 talks in Gleneagles, \$35 billion of which had already been pledged *before 2005*; the remaining \$15 billion will not be delivered until 2010. She spoke of the damage caused by globalisation and the fact that multinational companies are not accountable. In the UK we have a legal framework which restricts what companies can do. Globally we have no such framework. And she spoke about the work War on Want does across the world.

**"War on Want exists not merely to document the problem. Through our partners, grassroots organisations in Asia, Latin America and Africa, we aim to redress some of the damage which Western behaviour inflicts upon the world. These groups need our solidarity, to confront the actions of corporations and western governments who seek to control their resources and condemn their people to decades of poverty."**



Louise Richards

**Wherever there is poverty we will fight a war against it.  
Please support War on Want - [www.waronwant.org](http://www.waronwant.org) 020 7620 1111**

## Stuart Gendell

On introducing his talk to us, Stuart said "above all, I have come to listen" – and we did listen to each other, both during his presentation, the lively question time that followed, and over lunch, when people took the opportunity of discussing a variety of issues with him.

Stuart said the Legion recognised that the tone of Remembrance ceremonies could be perceived as 'glorifying' war, but had to be sensitive to many veterans' wish to maintain their military 'identity'. This was an enduring link with their war memories.

When white poppies were (inevitably!) raised, he said the Legion believed they said nothing the red poppy didn't already say, but wearing both was not contentious.

His presentation was well received and many were surprised by the scope and depth of the Legion's welfare work. He spoke of the history and aims of the Legion, which began in 1921 when several ex-servicemen's organisations came together. These bodies were from various political affiliations, so the Legion has remained politically neutral. Early on, safeguarding the welfare of ex-servicemen and their families, especially by raising war widow's pensions, and finding employment opportunities, were the main work. Later, lobbying for state pensions and suitable housing were prominent. All this needed funding and the first Poppy Appeal took place on November 11<sup>th</sup> 1921. After 7 days in service, a person is eligible to be both a beneficiary of the Legion, and a member. You don't have to be a member of the Legion to qualify for its welfare. In 2003 the Legion took over responsibility for the National Memorial Arboretum, a 150 acre site in Alrewas, Staffordshire, a living and lasting focus of remembrance, home to over 100 major memorials representing military and civilian organisations. I wonder if MAW could contribute in some way?



Christine Titmus & Stuart Gendell

As a campaigning body, the Legion's work includes issues like Gulf War Related Illnesses, Noise Induced Hearing Loss, and homelessness. Poppies are made at the factory in Richmond and by home workers. The original was designed so that workers with a disability could easily assemble it, and that continues today. More than 70% of poppy factory employees have a disability or chronic illness.

Describing a major change programme titled 'Taking the Legion Forward' to modernise the Legion, they now have 6 external Trustees bringing an outside view and experience. A new single membership will come in next year, enabling non ex-service people to play more part in organisation and day to day activities.

The schools pack – which now has MAW details under 'Search for Peace' - goes out to 40,000 schools each year. They were keen to develop this further, and continued to be open to suggestions.

Towards the conclusion of his talk, Stuart said: "Our activities are underpinned by the motto 'Reflection and Hope'. We aspire to mark the

fallen and their sacrifice, to inspire people of all generations – particularly the young, to consider the horrors of war and to hope for a better future."

At MAW, we suggest that hoping is not enough. We must all **work** for that future, work at alternatives to war, at addressing the causes of war, and above all spreading the belief that these things are achievable! Hope alone will not suffice. It was clear that the Legion does indeed do tremendous work – but I couldn't help feeling angry that it is left to a charity to strive to raise funds, to struggle to meet all those needs, while the governments responsible for sending people to war do so little. I have a copy of the full presentation; contact me for a copy. Stuart asked us to donate his speakers' fee of £50 (for expenses) to the Poppy Appeal. *Christine Titmus*

## The AGM continued.....

After lunch there was a report from Bruce Kent - his last- as he was stepping down as chairman, although he was almost immediately voted to the exalted position of Vice President.

Other changes include: -

Christine Titmus is now Vice Chair, Chris Gregory has taken over from Tim Wallis as the Treasurer, and we gave a warm welcome to a new committee member, Will Pritchard who, at 15, is there to give the younger generation's view (and who will lower the average age of the committee!)

The name change - after all the discussions and suggestions, we are still the Movement for the Abolition of War (MAW for short), but the name of this newsletter will be Abolish War.

Following a suggestion from Joan Ruddock, it was felt that we should make our support for the International Peace Bureau more visible. How to do so will be discussed in committee.

MAW has been remembered in the will of Arthur Hewlett, and in due course, thanks to his generosity, we will receive a boost to our funds.

Two valuable suggestions for the future: -

First, that we should run training days/weekends for members to learn how to put over MAW's ideals and goals, and how to get our message listened to.

Second, a proposal from Ian Flintoff, who is an actor/ director and playwright. Ian was a founding member of MEND - Members of Equity for Nuclear Disarmament. He suggested that MAW should put together some kind of performance, to help us sell our message through drama, music, and other performing arts. This could become an easily learnt and performed travelling roadshow that would be welcome in schools, church halls etc. Perhaps peace groups around the country would be able to host performances. Ian is willing to oversee the project. If you would like to be involved then get in touch with MAW.



Tony Kempster (our new Chair) and Sue Gilmurray, who sang at the Imperial War Museum and the AGM

## Peace Group Action

Dorchester Peace & Justice Group invited Christine Titmus to talk about her dialogue with the RBL. As this was the first time she had done this outside MAW, it was a good opportunity to create a 'programme' for future talks, as well as working out the best wording for advertising. Sadly, although great efforts were made to invite local branches of the RBL to come and take part in the debate, no one from the Legion came. What it taught us was that the best approach will be not towards branch chairmen or secretaries, but through personal acquaintance with individual members. But peace group members enjoyed Christine's visit very much, and they are looking ahead as to what they may be able to do next year for Remembrance.

Bridport Peace Group took part in the Remembrance Day Parade (as they did last year), walking with the UN flag.

Devizes Peace Group - from their newsletter: *At the last meeting on September 23rd it was decided to make contact with our local British Legion organisers who would be involved in the Devizes Procession. It was hoped we might be allowed to walk under the auspices of the UN flag. Some of the other suggestions were that one of our number might read a poem in remembrance of all victims of War including civilians. We also plan a press release and letter to the Gazette and Herald. Margaret Farnon has undertaken to contact the British Legion, and they are referring it back to their London Headquarters, so things are moving, albeit rather slowly. Margaret's father was the Commander who led the British Fleet at Dunkirk, and who later was invalided out of the*

## Sunday January 29th 11 am

Hinde Street Church  
Thayer Street London

### Donald Soper Birthday Service

Guest Speaker - Bruce Kent

## Tuesday April 11th 6 pm

### Dr Peter Van den Dungen

(Bradford University) will be speaking about Henry Richard (see next page) and the 19th Century Peace Movement.

Venue to be announced.

Phone MAW for details

## Saturday December 31st, 12 noon

### Peace Vigil at Imber Church

Imber, the village in the centre of the Army Training Land on Salisbury Plain, was emptied of its inhabitants during WW2. They have never been allowed to go back.

## Saturday January 14th 9.30 am - 5 pm

### The Spirituality of Non-Violence

A Study Day at Capel y Groes Boddyfryd, Wrexham

Tickets £3.50 (£3 booked in advance) from

Owen Hardwicke, Peace & Justice Centre, 35 Kings Mills Rd, Wrexham, LL13 8NH

## Warfare or Welfare?

This much needed new A4 book, written by Colin Archer, Secretary General of the International Peace Bureau, is essential and easy reading for all who want to show how direct are the links between poverty and militarism.

Single copies £5 plus £1 postage.

You can order your copy from:

MAW(WW), 11 Venetia Road, London N4 1EJ

Please make cheques payable to IPB

*Navy. She was able to refer to this when she approached the local officers of the British Legion. We still await their deliberations and may not be able to be involved this year, but at least it is a start to find common ground.*

Latest report from Devizes: Some progress was made with our local British Legion. I think they need to get to know us before they will let us near their procession, but they are friendly and listening.

Red and White Poppies Last year and this I sold white poppies. But this year many more people wanted to buy and wear them. and not many knew just how long white poppies have been in existence. Last year I had a few 'comments' in the street about selling and wearing a white poppy. This year *no one* commented on the fact that I was wearing both red and white poppies, not even the person selling red poppies, from whom I bought a new one to replace the rather bedraggled one I was wearing with the white. Attitudes are changing. *Lesley Docksey*

White Poppy Story A woman went to the House of Commons, intent on being in the public gallery to hear Parliament debate the 'Terror' bill. Having gone through all the security checks she was suddenly stopped with "You'll have to take that off if you want to go in!" To her surprise the security officer was pointing at the white poppy she was wearing. "Would I be allowed in if I had a red poppy on?" she asked. The answer - "Yes."

*Query - is a white poppy a weapon of mass destruction?*

## Henry Richard – the Apostle of Peace

My near neighbour is Henry Richard. He died in 1888 and is buried with his family in Abney Park, Stoke Newington, not far from our north London flat. He has been forgotten for far too long by too many. Now the Welsh United Nations Association is to hold an annual event in his memory. Not long ago school children from his birthplace, Tregaron, came to Abney Park to clean up his memorial. His work must be remembered. If we are to build a culture of peace we all need to know about the peace workers, internationalists and conscientious objectors who have gone before us. We build on their work.

A congregational minister, Henry became the secretary of the British Peace Society in 1848 and held that position, as well as becoming an MP, almost to the time of his death. in 1888. His genius was to be able to hold the different wings of the peace world together despite the tensions between absolute pacifists, as he was, and peace makers like Richard Cobden who were not absolutists. He wrote with great clarity, and was an organiser of genius. No e mail, fax or phone in those days, yet he helped to organise the great peace conferences of Brussels in 1848 and Paris in 1849.

In 1868 he became an MP for Merthyr Tydfil and was known popularly as both the Member for Wales and the Apostle of Peace. In 1871 he launched a petition calling for a permanent system of international arbitration and raised over a million signatures, many from the churches. In 1873 he had a majority of 10 in Parliament for this proposal. He then travelled all over Europe campaigning in other countries for support. Such a proposal was made again by Czar Nicholas II at the Hague Peace conference of 1899 and I have no doubt that our International Court of Justice today owes much to the ideas which Henry promoted over 130 years ago.

In 1886 he went further and moved a resolution calling for parliamentary approval before any decision to go to war. It was a proposal that lost by only 6 votes. Claire Short's 2005 proposal, which was talked out of parliamentary time, followed exactly Henry's proposal.

The Welsh have every reason to be proud, not only of their own peaceful traditions, but of this particular very practical and tireless witness to world peace. His statue stands in the centre of Tregaron, a few miles from Aberystwyth. In his hand is a roll of paper with the word PEACE clearly written on it.

*Bruce Kent 2005*

**Three human beings** are left alive after a nuclear holocaust. Two are from America, one is Chinese, or Korean, or Iranian ... One of the Americans gleefully announces, **"We won !!"**

**Some people look at the world as it is and ask: Why?  
Others look at the world as it could be and ask: Why not?  
George Bernard Shaw**

## The Prime Minister and International Law

The peace movement has always known that the invasion and occupation of Iraq was illegal. Now, with leaks of memos, legal advice etc. no one can be in doubt. But why should the military be made wholly responsible for this illegal action? Surely, the accountability lies with our government, particularly the Prime Minister. Putting Tony Blair in prison would serve no purpose; being seen to be accountable through a court process would, and there have been several efforts to achieve this.

This country is not only party to the International Criminal Court (ICC) Act, but has incorporated it into domestic law. So why not make use of it? In November 2003 Peacerights organised a Legal Inquiry into aspects of the invasion and occupation of Iraq, and the panel of international lawyers then put together a full report on the evidence from eye and expert witnesses, together with their legal opinion that war crimes had been committed in Iraq. This was presented to Parliament, and then submitted to the Chief Prosecutor of the ICC in The Hague.

If you think a person has committed a crime you have an obligation as a citizen of this country to report that person to the police. Legal Action Against War (LAAW) used this to request the Metropolitan Police to investigate Blair et al. At the end of September 2003, during an anti-war protest at the Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth, I delivered a letter to the Chief Constable of Dorset, requesting that Dorset Police investigate Mr Blair and members of his government for war crimes with a view to prosecuting them under the ICC Act 2001, and citing the relevant part of the Act. I later received a letter from the Chief Constable saying that the matter was under consideration. However, despite the efforts of the Dorset police, the Crown Prosecution Service turned down my request, as they had LAAW's. The ICC cannot prosecute anyone on our behalf unless efforts to prosecute in this country have failed. While the Met simply told LAAW that nothing would be done, Dorset went further. They were forbidden to show me the letter from the CPS, detailing their reasons for refusing to act, but gave me enough information to allow us to prove we could not go further in this country. (One of the CPS's reasons for refusal was that "the ICC Act was not detailed enough to allow for prosecution"! I later tried and failed to get a copy of their letter through the Freedom of Information Act.) I informed Nick Grief, one of the lawyers from the Legal Inquiry, and Phil Shiner from Public Interest Lawyers arranged for me to do a witness statement which was sent to The Hague. Things move slowly but – in mid-December 2004 news reached us that the ICC Chief Prosecutor had instructed his officers to start gathering evidence about our claims, and that at some point our Government would be asked to 'explain' its' military strategy in Iraq. I recently heard from Nick Grief that the pot is still gently bubbling in The Hague. Meanwhile I and Joe Letts (who campaigns with his double-decker bus), with Nick's advice to help us, are going to try a new approach to the Dorset Police. Watch this space! *Lesley Docksey*

**MAW TO BUY**

BOOKLETS	The Hague Appeal '99. 50 Steps on the Way to the Abolition of War	50p
	The Final Surrender -Time to Abolish war. Quotations from around the world.	50p
	A World Without War - Professor Rotblat's Imperial War Museum speech, 2002	30p
POSTCARDS	'I dream of giving birth to a child who will ask - 'Mother, what was war?'	15p
	Girl with flower facing soldiers with bayonets	15p
A4 CARD	The Preamble to the UN Charter	15p
VIDEO (14 mins)	War No More - with teacher's booklet (Still some available.)	£8*
MAW CD	Sing the Music of Healing (new stock!)	£8*
BOOK	War No More (paperback) Rotblat/Hinde	£10*
MAW Flyers and Posters	Green information leaflet and matching poster	Free
BADGES Metal	Red with a 'No Entry' sign across war	15p
Postage: -	Items marked * postage included. Single sample copies of the others, send SAE. Multiple orders, please add 10% to the total price. Please send order to: Movement for the Abolition of War, 11 Venetia Road, LONDON N4 1EJ	

# LETTERS

## Contributions from people who care about peace

### TERRORISM

The word 'terrorism' now haunts all political debate. What exactly does it mean?

Let us be clear. All organised violence generates terror. And the supreme manifestation of terror is war.

Dressed in their little brief authority, our leaders have lied and cheated us into war with Iraq. They will be condemned by history, even as the Nazi leaders were condemned at Nuremberg for their aggression.

We ourselves plan and wage aggressive war. We are prepared to use nuclear weapons, the ultimate in terror. Yet we have chosen to see the suicide bomber as uniquely evil. His crude devices seem a challenge, almost an insult, to our traditional concept of militarism – that is, the massive clash of professional armies, and the contest of costly and barbarously sophisticated weapons.

Powerful nations naturally fight their wars in foreign lands. No doubt the suicide bomber hopes to shift some of war's horror back to the aggressor's homeland. As in all modern conflicts, those who suffer most are civilians. We rightly deplore the London bombings and mourn our loss. We should likewise mourn the (sadly uncounted) victims of our disastrous invasion of Iraq.

To understand the nature of terrorism we must consider 'state' as well as 'individual' terror. The two are connected. The latter is usually a response to the former.

Can we break the cycle of violence? There is, after all, another great human tradition. It offers a gentler, more patient and thoughtful way. And it leads to peace and brotherhood.

Two hundred years ago, dismayed by man's inhumanity to man, the poet Shelley was writing that man has no right to kill his brother; and it was no excuse that he did so in uniform.

Our world is more savage than Shelley's. Violence today has become a habit, the sickness and scourge of our age. Though the roots go deep, it is a habit we shall have to break soon if we are to survive.

*Harry Holmes, (South East Hants Peace Council)*

### DISABILITY AND WAR.

I am severely disabled with Cerebral Palsy, and have been since birth. Most of my care at home is provided by Community Service Volunteers, who stay for anything from four months to a year. I have had three German and eight Japanese Community Service Volunteers in my twenty-five years of using the service. I haven't felt able to discuss the war with my German girls, but with the more mature Japanese, I asked, as gently as I could, how they felt about the Americans dropping Atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They were mostly philosophical, because it was long before they were born, and none of their families had been directly involved! But in other families the effect of being a P.O.W. under the Japanese is still having its scary results. How the British soldiers forced to work on the Burma railway with minimal food and clothing changed their characters as men. But each day new atrocities occur in places like Iraq, where one group targets another because they can't agree on who should rule Iraq! Whenever I hear news of yet another car-bomb or suicide-bomber, it makes my stomach churn painfully, and reminds me of John Donne's lines: "No man is an island, entire of itself...so do not seek to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." I live in a very chaotic and disorderly body, and I am angered when human beings destroy and disable each other by war and conflict.

So the disorder and chaos of war must somehow be stopped, so that mankind may go about the business of re-establishing a right relationship between himself and Nature. As I travel round this country I am encouraged by signs of hope - forests being planted, birds encouraged to return, and wild flowers allowed to colonise our motorway verges. These make modern Britain somehow more bearable! And the nature reserves and national parks now usually have good access for disabled people like me!

I believe, as a Christian, that God gave us this planet, and it is our duty, as Stewards of that gift, to look after it. We haven't been good Stewards so far. We have bickered amongst ourselves for bits and pieces of land, forgetting the whole planet and its best interests. Now we must act to save it, lest God judges us and finds us wanting. Can we once again become faithful Stewards? As a disabled person, my only way of helping is by writing; all I can do physically is urge governments to act, and add my prayers for peace to the thousands of voices all over the world.

*Jo Austen*

## Updates

**The nuclear bomb is still on show at the Yeovilton Fleet Air Arm Museum in Somerset.** However, on Hiroshima Day, two local campaigners took a wreath of white flowers to the museum, with a card dedicating it to the memory of the dead of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and all those who have since died in war. They were allowed to place it with the bomb, where it remained on display for all the summer visitors to see.

### Peace Gardens are becoming fashionable!

The latest one to open (with the encouragement of Bruce Kent), is at the church of S. Mellitus, Finsbury Park. At the opening on Remembrance Sunday, adults and children read out a commitment to peace: -

"We will not hate, we will not seek to get even, we will not act violently against whole peoples because of the action of a few, we will love our enemies and do good to those who hate us."

Yes, I'd like to join MAW

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

TOWN.....

COUNTY.....POST CODE.....

TEL:.....

E MAIL.....

I enclose a cheque for £..... (Suggested amounts - please tick)

Ordinary £15 ..... Unwaged £5 ..... Household £20 ..... Group £25 .....

Please make your cheque payable to:

Movement for the Abolition of War and send to:

Movement for the Abolition of War

11 Venetia Road

LONDON N4 1EJ

Or join online: - [www.abolishwar.org.uk](http://www.abolishwar.org.uk)

## WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN MAW!

**Our aim: to create a world where war is no longer seen as a way to solve a problem; where it has ceased to be an option; where conflict resolution means resolution, not more conflict. We have the tools, the skills and the laws that we need. We also need you. We work through education and dialogue, both nationally and in our own local communities; ordinary people taking action to realise our goal -**

**THE ABOLITION OF WAR.**

# Events Diary

**Saturday 14 January LONDON.** Nonviolent Communication Introductory day with Gina Lawrie, central London Birkbeck College, Continuing Education Dept. Booking: Chris Hatfield 0207 631 6666 or [www.bbk.ac.uk](http://www.bbk.ac.uk)

**27 – 29 January COUNTRYWIDE.** Swords into Ploughshares – Now. WDC Weekend of Services for Peace and Disarmament. Key themes: Countries engaged in Conflict and Peace Processes; Peacemaking Role of Churches and Faith Groups; Tackling the Poverty and Injustices causing Despair and Violence; Building Reconciliation between Divided Communities; The Role of the United Nations and its Agencies. Information from Peace Services, WDC, PO Box 28209, Edinburgh EH9 1ZR

**Sunday 29 January LONDON.** Mozart 250 Anniversary Concert for Peace. Hinde Street Methodist Church, W1. Organised by Musicians Against Nuclear Arms. Tickets - MANA Administration, 71 Greenfield Gardens, London NW2 1HU. 020 8455 1030.

**30 January LONDON.** Gandhi Foundation: MultiFaith Meeting at Kingsley Hall, Bromley-by-Bow, early evening. Full details from the Secretary, 21 Fleetwood Court, Madeira Road, West Byfleet, Surrey KT14 6BE, tel: 01932 343614 e-mail: [dmoll\\_gandhifndn@onetel.com](mailto:dmoll_gandhifndn@onetel.com)

**Saturday 4 February LEICESTER.** In preparation: A Conference making the links between the push for Trident replacement & nuclear power. Carol Naughton, West Midlands CND will tackle Trident. More later. At Friends Meeting House, Queen's Road, Leicester. Contact Leicester CND on 0116 2705604 [acheetham@beeb.net](mailto:acheetham@beeb.net)

**25 - 26 February LONDON.** 2-day foundation trainings in Nonviolent Communication (NVC). NVC is a simple, profound, learnable process that helps us to stay connected to the humanity in ourselves even in difficult circumstances, so that compassion emerges and people choose actions that are in harmony with everyone's needs. It has been used successfully in conflicts ranging from inner and interpersonal to international. NVC is currently taught to approx. For further details or to book: Web: [www.nvc-resolutions.co.uk](http://www.nvc-resolutions.co.uk) Email: Tel: 020 8506 9793. [info@nvc-resolutions.co.uk](mailto:info@nvc-resolutions.co.uk)

**Saturday 18 March LONDON.** Disarmament - What is Possible Now? World Disarmament Campaign AGM and Spring Conference. Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC1, 10.30am - 4.30pm. WDC, PO Box 28209, Edinburgh EH9 1ZR.

**11 March LONDON.** Peace Education Network Conference. Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1. More details later. To register contact Pax Christi on 020 8203 4884 [paxchristi@gn.apc.org](mailto:paxchristi@gn.apc.org)  
PEN website: [www.peaceeducation.org.uk](http://www.peaceeducation.org.uk)

**Sunday 12 March LONDON.** Film showing and discussion: *Wall (Mur)*. A prize-winning film on the apartheid wall dividing Israelis and Palestinians. Discussions afterwards. 10.30am. Renoir Cinema, Brunswick Square, London WC1. £6/£4. Organised by London Socialist film Co-op. Info: LSFC, 13 Foundling Court, Brunswick Centre, London WC1N 1QE.

**23 March LONDON.** Chernobyl 20 Years On. 8th UK and Irish Local Authorities Conference on Nuclear Hazards. City Hall – London. Organised by Nuclear Free Local Authorities Secretariat, Room 6005, Manchester City Council, Town Hall, Manchester, M60 3NY. Tel.: +44 (0)161 234 3244 Fax.: +44 (0)161 234 3379. E-mail: [c.frisby@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:c.frisby@manchester.gov.uk) Website: [www.nuclearpolicy.info](http://www.nuclearpolicy.info)

**29 – 31 March SARAJEVO, Bosnia and Herzegovina.** Peace-Based Development - A Seminar Presented by The International Education for Peace Institute (EFP-International) and Education for Peace Balkans (EFP-Balkans). Registration Information: Fee: €200 (€100 Students). Registration Closing Date: 17 February 2006 [www.efpinternational.org](http://www.efpinternational.org)  
Contact: [academic@efpinternational.org](mailto:academic@efpinternational.org) for information.

**6 – 9 April ATHENS.** European Social Forum.

**Thursday 4 May LONDON.** BAE Systems AGM. CAAT will be protesting at the annual general meeting of the UK's largest arms company. Campaign Against Arms Trade, 11 Goodwin St, Finsbury Park, London N4 3HQ Tel: +44-(0)20 7281 0297 | Fax: +44-(0)20 7281 4369. [enquiries@caat.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@caat.org.uk) [www.caat.org.uk](http://www.caat.org.uk)

**Sunday 14 May LONDON.** Cinema of Protest. A programme of independent political films and discussion on future prospects for oppositional film making. Including *Shots on the Docks*, *Squatters* and *The Tobin Tax*. Discussions afterwards. 10.30am. Renoir Cinema, Brunswick Square, London WC1. £6/£4. Organised by London Socialist film Co-op. Info: LSFC, 13 Foundling Court, Brunswick Centre, London WC1N 1QE.

**Walk in Peace - LONDON** An hour's silent walk in peace for peace, 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month. Meet at the café - Ices/Honest Sausage just south of Speakers Corner in Hyde Park (Marble Arch tube) at 10.55am to start walking at 11.00am. Info: Clare on 020 8755 0353 or [beatricemillar@freeuk.com](mailto:beatricemillar@freeuk.com)

**AND START SAVING NOW! June 23 - 28 2006 - VANCOUVER, CANADA - WORLD PEACE FORUM** [www.worldpeaceforum.ca](http://www.worldpeaceforum.ca)  
Cities and Communities: Working together to End War and Build a Peaceful, Just and Sustainable World  
End War and Build a Peaceful, Just and Sustainable World"

The following is a transcript of a radio conversation in October 1995, between a US Navy ship and the British Authorities, near the coast of England. The transcript was released by the MOD on 10/10/95

BRITISH: Please divert your course 15 degrees to the South, to avoid a collision.

U.S.NAVY: Recommend you divert YOUR course 15 degrees to the North, to avoid a collision.

BRITISH: Negative. You will have to divert your course 15 degrees to the South to avoid a collision.

U.S. NAVY: This is the Captain of US Navy ship. I say again, divert YOUR course.

BRITISH: Negative. I say again. You will have to divert your course. Turn South immediately.

U.S.NAVY: THIS IS THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER USS LINCOLN, THE SECOND LARGEST SHIP IN THE UNITED STATES' ATLANTIC FLEET. WE ARE ACCOMPANIED BY THREE DESTROYERS, THREE CRUISERS AND NUMEROUS SUPPORT VESSELS. I DEMAND THAT YOU CHANGE YOUR COURSE 15 DEGREES NORTH, THAT'S 15 DEGREES NORTH, OR COUNTER MEASURES WILL BE UNDERTAKEN TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THIS SHIP.

BRITISH: We are a lighthouse off the coast of Sussex.

## Get involved in the No to Trident Renewal Campaign.

Get the petition from CND ([www.cnduk.org](http://www.cnduk.org)) and get 10 signatures. Get your local groups (peace, green, environmental, union) involved. Write to your MP, to the press, get on local radio.

Wherever there's an opening, take it! At a meeting of the Sedgemoor Peace Group Bruce Kent said, "If we all get involved, I truly believe this is a campaign we can win!" So let's get out there and win it.

**Maw News, please!** We want to hear from members around the country, and we want your actions to inspire others. So if you have organised events/actions, or are planning some, and would like to have them reported in the newsletter, then send the details to the editor: - Lesley Docksey, 1 Court Farm Cottages, Buckland Newton, Dorset DT2 7BT. E-mail: [Lesley.Docksey@abolishwar.org.uk](mailto:Lesley.Docksey@abolishwar.org.uk)