

# ABOLISH WAR

Newsletter No: 9 Autumn 2007 Price per Issue £1

## Remembrance Day - What will you be doing?

Whether you wear red poppies, white poppies or both, whether you take part in a Remembrance service or not, or you organise an event to question the fact of war, the day we remember those who have died in war is the day when MAW's message should be loud and clear - war must end if we are not to add yet more names to our memorials.



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## The MAW AGM

Saturday 10th November

11 am - 3 pm

Wesley's Chapel 49 City Road  
London EC1Y 1AU

(nearest tube station Old Street)

### Speaker: Craig Murray

Craig is well known as the UK Ambassador to Uzbekistan who highlighted the human rights abuses he found there, embarrassing the proponents of the 'War on Terror' with the result he is no longer in the Diplomatic Corps. He is a fascinating, informative and funny speaker, with a wealth of experience to draw on. "*Craig Murray has been a deep embarrassment to the entire Foreign Office.*" Jack Straw

The AGM is open to all and is free. If you can get to London, then get to the AGM. And bring your friends. For more info: phone MAW.

### After the AGM

### MAW will be outside the Albert Hall

leafleting those attending the Festival of Remembrance - join us!

If you can't attend the AGM then come to Wesley's Chapel at 3 pm. There will be time to have tea/coffee and a chat about tactics before going to the Albert Hall. For more info. on the leafleting, please phone Christine Titmus on 01767 651136 or email Christine.Titmus @abolishwar.org.uk

## The MAW Lecture

Sunday 11th November

2 pm

Imperial War Museum  
Lambeth Road London SE1

**LAW NOT WAR**

Speaker:

**Baroness Helena Kennedy QC**



### Animals in War

Among the innocents we should remember in November are the millions of animals that took part in and died for our political failures. In 2004 a new monument appeared in London - the Animals in War Memorial, inspired by Jilly Cooper's book of the same name. It '*honours the millions of conscripted animals that served, suffered and died alongside British, Commonwealth and American forces during 20th century wars and conflicts*'. That doesn't say the half of it.

They died in their millions. Like little children they had no understanding of war, they only knew the terror and pain of it. It's believed that in WWI around 8 million horses alone died '*from exposure, starvation and disease while performing their duties*'. What of all the mules that were used? What of those who were shot, blown up, gassed? Millions of carrier pigeons were used (and died) because of their homing instinct. They are born to fly home, not to serve in war.

As a nation of so-called animal lovers, we talk a lot about the loyalty of these animals, and their willingness to serve us. But we so often abuse that loyalty, and as the inscription on the memorial says:

### They had no choice

The memorial can be found at Brook Gate, Park Lane, on the edge of Hyde Park. Next time you pass that way spare a thought for these casualties of war.

## 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)

# Lest We Forget the Memories of War



**Robert Hinde, President**

In the last Newsletter I echoed Martin Bell's earlier remarks in wishing that veterans would speak out about the horrors of war. This would be a really important way of persuading the younger generations that war is not a sensible way to settle disputes. My brother, an RAMC Medical Officer, was posted as Missing for many months before my father learned (from a paragraph in a Liverpool newspaper) that he had died of wounds and exposure, slowly and in great pain, in a ship's lifeboat after his troopship had been torpedoed. Below is an extract from a letter that my parents received later from a survivor. Imagine the nature of his death. Imagine the effect on my parents – exacerbated later in the war when the Air Ministry temporarily refused to disconfirm that I was missing.

Perhaps others will come forward with accounts that could be printed in the Newsletter, and later incorporated in a book. We are not looking for literary marvels! Veterans and relatives, do please help by contributing. Send your memories to MAW.

'Thank you very much for your letter which kind of brought memories, they will never die for me.

Yes, Sir, I was in the same life boat with Capt. Hinde. I will now try and endeavour to give you some of the ordeals we had to encounter after the 'Shareston' was hit. To begin with, we had retired to our hammocks for the night and at about 10.30 pm the ship shuddered which threw us out of the hammock. After collecting ourselves together we went to the life boat allotted to our squad. Well then we clambered down the ladder into the boat, by now some of the boats had got away but ours unfortunately took in a few waves that made the boat half full of water. There was quite a number in at the time including some crew (lascars) but once again a huge wave pushed our little craft against the side of the now burning ship and the suddenness of the tip threw us out into the furious seas. I shall never forget the sensation of being under water for maybe seconds but it seemed like hours, the wanting to breathe but couldn't. My life belt brought me to the surface and I saw the lads clambering back into the life boat now practically full of water.

Your son I must admit saved my life I have always said that so I am not just writing for the bluff. Yes Sir, I threw my arms out and caught the MO around the neck and he said 'Don't struggle you will be alright' We swam to the life boat and he tugged me in. There was 16 of us in this boat and only 9 of us finished up. We saw terrific waves which swamped the boat and we sat in this water logged boat for four days. We never saw the other boats the waves must have scattered us about and all we could see was mountains of waves. The fifth day brought us a much calmer day and we saw a raft. This raft floated towards us and soon we had it tied to our lifeboat where some of the lads got out and we took the job of baling out. It took a while but we did it and now we could get to the biscuits the water and the condensed milk also the Horlicks tablets. This sounds a lot but believe me it isn't when we had to last for 19½ days before being picked up. The MO worked the food out and we had a drop of water mixed with milk three times a day and a Horlicks tablet. Each day a man would die because of wounds and the hot sun during the day.

The thought of just lying and waiting to be picked up was mental agony. Miles and miles of water with us just a dot like a cork riding up and down the waves. Days passed, we grew weaker and myself had to bathe my eyes to open them each morning. The sun I suppose made my eyes mattery and you may guess what it was like to open them the next day. Sir, those were the longest days and nights I ever knew. 'Meals' at sunrise, overhead and sunset so you can just imagine how boring it was with nothing to do but lie and wait. Your Son, Sir, was very badly wounded for his body, legs and arms was in a mess and the exposure tended to aggravate them for we had little clothes on. He suffered with several others, terrific pain I should say. We went thin and our faces was thick with beard. The Captain of the Ship, the Chief Engineer and Your Son I am sorry to say died near enough together.....

Sir I think two more days and we all would have died since the water was only sufficient for another day. I must think myself lucky to have seen my Wife and infant daughter again. It was sad, very sad but we must expect sacrifices I suppose in these wicked times.....

I think this is all Sir for now and so again I thank you for communicating with me.

Cheerio Sir.'

**Editor's note:** since WW2 we have created many more veterans of war and all of them have memories that need to be shared. I was contacted by MAW member Peter Campbell who, having served in Cyprus and North Africa when there was still conscription, had like many before him, become anti-war. Peter, in response to my article Should We be Sorry for Soldiers?, wrote this:

*Prophets are not those who speak of piety and duty from the pulpits, although they should be. The prophets are the battered wrecks of men and women who return from Iraq, or some other place of service, and find the courage to speak the halting words we do not want to hear, words that we must hear and digest in order to know ourselves. These veterans, the ones who dare to tell the truth, have seen and tasted how war plunges us into barbarity, perversion, pain and an unchecked orgy of death. And it is their testimonies, if we take the time to listen, which alone can save us. The trouble is that when they do come home they are usually silent and feel totally alienated. Their experiences can be shared with no one, as they are far too abominable for a 'civilian' mind to comprehend.*

Somehow we need to make a space for people like Peter to share their memories before they are gone, because if we don't we will go on creating new wars for people to experience and remember.



## Letter from the Chair

This has been a summer of conferences, most of them religious, so I have been out there promoting the abolition of war and challenging the notion of just wars. The Churches are tending towards a 'functional pacifism', but are still clinging to the belief that some wars can be justified even in this fragile world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, when any major conflict might lead to the use of weapons of mass destruction.

At the end of May I was at a World Council of Churches meeting in Volos, Greece talking on 'The role of religion in war and conflict'; and in July here at the annual conference of the Modern Churchpeoples' Union (MCU) where I talked on 'The ethics of pacifism and just war in the age of terrorist violence'. The next - at the beginning of September - is the international conference of the Council on Christian Approaches to Defence and Disarmament in Birmingham which has the optimistic title 'In a dark time the eye begins to see'. Let us hope this is true because the world seems to be arming for war (see article on page 7) rather than getting to grips with global warming and poverty which might lead to war.

If anyone would like copies of these papers, please let me know. They will also be placed on the website.

MAW is now researching the relationship between war and the environment and is planning to hold a conference early next year on this topic. We have joined the Stop Climate Chaos coalition, a diverse group of UK organisations campaigning for a change of government policy on climate change. A simple leaflet has also been produced for meetings and demonstrations.

Following the successful Peace History Conference at the Imperial War Museum in April, we are planning a second event next year. So, put the 28/29<sup>th</sup> March 2008 in your diary.

Progress continues on our major projects – the peace map of

the UK and the second MAW CD. The map project is growing into something much larger than envisaged and will probably need professional input. We aim to have the CD ready for Christmas. It was good to hear Sue Gilmurray (and Bruce Kent of course) on the BBC2 programme about protest song, 'Power to the people', broadcast on 7<sup>th</sup> August. Sue is a key performer on the new CD and talked on the programme about her personal journey to involvement with MAW and the peace movement in general.

On several occasions during the year, I have met up with the 'Footprints for peace' walkers from Australia and elsewhere who have undertaken an 86-day pilgrimage from Dublin to London, including Faslane, Sellafield and Aldermaston on the way and ending in London on Hiroshima Day. I spent days with them in Belfast and Milton Keynes and assisted with their journey on to Aldermaston. It was a privilege to be with such committed people.

Members of the Nipponzan Myoji took part in part of the walk as they have done consistently in many marches and demonstrations, and it was with great sadness that I attended the funeral on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> August of The Revd Gyosei Handa, the order's chief monk at the Buddhist Temple in Milton Keynes who died in a tragic accident. He was a friend and I shall miss him.

Finally may I say we are looking for more support, particularly for people with time/skills to join our executive committee. If you feel you can help, please call us, or at least come along to our AGM on 10<sup>th</sup> November (see Front Page). Craig Murray, who as Ambassador to Uzbekistan made public the human rights abuses there, is the speaker at the event. And we shall be performing some of the songs from the new CD. Then, of course, on the next day (Remembrance Sunday) we have our annual lecture at the Imperial War Museum, this year given by Helena Kennedy QC. So make a MAW weekend of it!

**Tony Kempster**

## New Tools for Remembrance and Peace

### Remembrance for Today remembering war, making peace

*readings, reflections, prayers and other resources*

Every year we remember those who have died as a result of war. But the way we remember often fails to engage with the need to work for peace, reconciliation and alternatives to war. Remembrance for Today is a new publication which seeks to address this, offering a wide selection of readings, reflections, prayers, liturgies, poems, hymns and songs. For the first time there is now a valuable collection of resources for all who seek to bring remembrance and peacemaking together.

Edited by Christine Titmus  
Foreword by General Sir Hugh Beach

*'It will inspire everyone who uses it to turn ceremonies for Remembrance Sunday into events which point towards the elimination of future wars.'* Bruce Kent

To order, send a cheque for £3 (+50p p&p) payable to the Movement for the Abolition of War to: Publications Office, 1 Thesiger Road, Abingdon, Oxford OX14 2DY

### The Royal British Legion schools' pack for 2007/8

Each year the Royal British Legion issues an information pack to schools. The latest pack has for the first time broken the boundaries in two ways:

As well as covering information on past wars and the experiences of veterans, *for the first time*, students are invited to consider what they should do to actually stop war happening. They are then asked to explain their thoughts and ideas. This comes under follow-up activities in the 'Remembrance' section in the main foldout part of the new pack.

Also in the pack is a large poster about the work of the United Nations, highlighting the need to improve international relations to prevent war. This too is a first - the UN has never before been mentioned in the schools' packs. MAW vice chair Christine Titmus, who began dialogue with the Legion in 2002, is delighted to see suggestions from those talks coming to fruition in the new pack.

From little acorns.....?

To obtain a free pack, contact the Royal British Legion at 48 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JY or look on [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk) to order online



'Aren't there a lot!'

# Depleted Uranium - an Environmental Disaster

There has been news almost on a daily basis from Iraq about suicide bombings, killings and the failure of the occupying forces to achieve stability. However, the environmental and health consequences of the invasion seem to be overlooked issues. Because of the complicated security situation, it is very difficult to conduct extended research in the region. One of the many devastating consequences of war of which we have heard reports, at least to some extent, is the use of depleted uranium (DU). This kind of ammunition has been fired both by the US and British troops. Even if the consequences have been terrible for the population the occupying powers have refused to acknowledge the negative effects. This is in spite of testimony, even from veteran soldiers. In my view the armed forces of the US, the UK and their allies should immediately halt their usage of inhumane ammunition and start the clean up process. Further research into the consequences must also be a priority.

Depleted uranium comes from the highly radioactive types (isotopes) of uranium which are removed for use as nuclear fuel or nuclear weapons. It's a type of by-product of the uranium-enrichment process. The ammunition is used because its structure has the ability to pierce a tank by making the tip of an armour-piercing shell extra-hard. It also leaves behind radioactive dust with a half-life of 4.5 billion years. The US has about 1.5 billion pounds of it, which means not only that it is cheap but there is also plenty of DU for future conflicts (Hastings, 2007).

During the first Gulf War in 1991, the United States and Great Britain fired about 350 tonnes of DU (Graham-Rowe et al, 2003). This means that today, because its long lasting effects, there are several contaminated areas. Veterans from the first conflict have been suffering from health problems called the Gulf War syndrome. This is also something that both the US and the British governments refuse to acknowledge. Studies have been carried out on the Gulf War Syndrome and DU. For example research sponsored by the US Government was deeply flawed. The experiment only used 32 participants which was a small fraction of the hundreds of thousands of troops involved in the first Gulf War (Hastings, 2007). In addition critics also point out that the study did not report a soldier who developed cancer and another who developed bone tumour (Hastings, 2007). Other independent and more valid studies have been carried out. For instance, in 1991 a group of more than 100 troops were accidentally involved in friendly fire and many inhaled uranium oxide. The negative effects were demonstrated in the results from a test published by the Bremen Institute for Prevention Research, Social Medicine and Epidemiology in 2003 (Graham-Rowe et al, 2003). The results established that there has been an increase in cancer amongst the soldiers because of the incident.

Furthermore, in regard to the current occupation, there are reports that the Depleted Uranium was used extensively in the so called "Shock and Awe" campaign in 2003 by the coalition troops. Soldiers in the US have reported negative health effects from the campaign and they are requesting their status to be recognized as war-related casualties covered by the Veterans Administration (Stuart, 2007). The US Department of Defence has been forced to submit a report to Congress in October 2007 on the health effects of DU ammunition. Currently, according to some war veterans, cancer amongst the personnel is viewed as a "disease and not a war wound" (Stuart, 2007).

While the soldiers have some interest groups assisting them, we can ask ourselves what about the Iraqi civilians? It has been recorded that the population in Iraq has noticed an increase in cancer and birth defects due to contamination from DU from the first Gulf War. This has probably not improved with all the ammunition fired since 2003. Since 1991, according to Iraqi doctors, birth defects rates, have increased by 2-6 times (Denver, 2005). In addition, the incidence of cancer and leukaemia among children has increased by 3-12 times (Denver, 2005).

According to the WHO, the usage of depleted uranium in conflict incurs a risk that levels of contamination in food and drinking water could increase even after a few years (World Health Organization, 2001). Children also risk to receiving greater exposure to radiation if they play near impact sites.

Exact data on the amount of DU used by occupying forces and information on the contamination are very difficult to obtain. If the allied forces or the Iraqi Environment Ministry were to start a removal process they would face difficulties mainly because the lack of protection and possibilities of attacks by different groups. In addition, with the vast amount of ammunition fired, any cleaning is going to be extremely costly. At a US army proving ground the decontamination has cost \$4-5bn for just 200 hectares. (Dixon et al, 2003). The nations responsible for the contamination should support and pay for a clean up. One important step would be for the allies to recognize the consequences from depleted uranium. It took more than 25 years for the Pentagon to acknowledge the effects from Agent Orange, which was extensively used during the Vietnam War (Hastings, 2007). How long will it take this time?

Our governments cannot ignore that DU will be hazardous for Iraqis for generations to come. There is some pressure for the United Nations to increase their presence in Iraq, but any changes should be according to the UN policy and not dictated or pressured by the belligerent powers in the name of the United Nations. The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and relevant NGO's must be given free access and support to carry out research. For instance, the ICBUW (International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons) is working on the Iraqi Children's Tooth Project. The study compares the DU contamination by analysing children's teeth for uranium before and after the first Gulf War (ICBUW, 2006). The various initiatives should be supported along with wider clean-up plans and assistance for the suffering civilians.

## Robert Lastman

**Sources:** Denver, James "Horror of USA's Depleted Uranium in Iraq Threatens the World" (Truthout); Dixon, Michelle, Fitz-Gibbon S., et al "The Environmental Consequences of the War on Iraq" (Green Party); Goodhead, Dudley T., et al: "The health hazards of depleted uranium" (Royal Society); Graham-Rowe D, Edwards R., "Depleted Uranium casts shadow over peace in Iraq" (New Scientist); Hastings, Deborah "Sickened Iraq Vets Cite Depleted Uranium" (Associated Press); International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons - "The Iraqi Children's Tooth Project"; Stuart, RB "Veterans' Rare Cancers Raise Fears of Toxic Battlefields" (New York Sun); "Depleted uranium: Sources, exposure and health effects" (World Health Organisation).

**The most graphic pictures showing the effects of DU are those showing children born with birth defects. These are too revolting and distressing to publish here (although it is easy to find them on the web - just look under Depleted Uranium Birth Defects). They include children born with one central eye, with grossly distorted limbs or born with vital organs outside the body. If this is what DU does to the human body, what does it do to all other forms of life?**

**Every war, when viewed from the undistorted perspective of life's sanctity, is a "civil war" waged by humanity against itself.** *Daisaku Ikeda*

## DAISAKU IKEDA

By the time you read this the county of Gloucester will have experienced its first Festival of Peace. Running between 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> September the festival was centred on the exhibition ‘Gandhi, King, Ikeda - Peacebuilders’. This is about the lives of three ordinary men who through non violent means have stood up and brought about tremendous change.

The week started with an official launch, and then the exhibition was taken to schools, two in Gloucester, one in Bourton on the Water and one in Cirencester. Each school had its own mini peace festival for one day, giving pupils the chance to explore the issues of tolerance, respecting differences and resolving conflict through non-violent means.

The Festival ended with a celebration of World Peace Day in Cheltenham Town Hall, with the exhibition being open to the public in the afternoon followed by an evening of drama, song and speakers. The exhibition then went to the Royal Forest of Dean College at Coleford for 2 days, with related activities for the students there.



**PeaceJam**  
a charity that works to bring Nobel Peace Prize winners and young people together to inspire them to stand up and take action in their communities.  
Joseph Rotblat was one of the first Nobel Peace Prize Laureates to work with PeaceJam  
[www.PeaceJam.org](http://www.PeaceJam.org)  
(I phoned my County Council to see if Dorset had an 'equalities team'. It seems not. What we have is a 'Diversification Officer'! Check out your Councils. Gloucester can't be the only one who could be persuaded into backing such an event.)

The Festival was sponsored by Gloucester County Council; other counties please take note!. How were they persuaded to do this?

The core group organising the Festival were members of Soka Gakkai International - a lay Buddhist society dedicated to working for peace. An inspiration to all peace groups in the country, they formed *peace2gether* with the aim of bringing people from other faiths and cultures together to become a part of the Festival. They involved PeaceJam and then approached the equalities team at the County Council, who were particularly interested in the involvement with the schools and in working together with PeaceJam.

with the aim of bringing people from other faiths and cultures together to become a part of the Festival. They involved PeaceJam and then approached the equalities team at the County Council, who were particularly interested in the involvement with the schools and in working together with PeaceJam.

The inspiration behind this event was the desire to make Ikeda better known. We've all heard of Gandhi and Martin Luther King, but Ikeda? Who is Daisaku Ikeda, and why should MAW members be particularly interested?

For a start, Ikeda, the only one of the three who is still alive, was, along with our former President Joseph Rotblat, a founder member of the Pugwash Conference in 1957. Move half a century forward and last year a book by Ikeda and Rotblat, *A Quest for Global Peace*, was published (see below).

Daisaku Ikeda is a Buddhist philosopher, an educator and a prolific writer and poet. As president of Soka Gakkai International, he has devoted himself to wide-ranging efforts for peace and individual empowerment, and has founded cultural, educational and peace research institutions around the world. Born in Tokyo in 1928, Ikeda experienced firsthand the tragic reality of war and militarism. In the chaos of post-war Japan, he came to embrace Buddhism through an encounter with the educator and pacifist Josei Toda, then head of Soka Gakkai, who had been imprisoned for his beliefs during World War II.

These experiences shaped Ikeda's commitment to peace. Over the years, Daisaku Ikeda has engaged in dialogue with many of the world's leading thinkers and leaders in search of viable responses to global problems, and written extensively on a wide range of issues relating to peace and the human condition.

Among the many honorary degrees and awards he has received for his untiring work for peace, in 1984 Ikeda received the United Nations Peace Prize. He does indeed deserve to be better known, both inside and outside the peace movement.



MAW members will be sad to hear of the death of the Venerable Gyosei Handa, senior monk at the Milton Keynes Peace Pagoda. The tragic accident which took his life happened when he was checking the Pagoda's large lawn mower.

For many years Gyosei Handa and his fellow monk Sister Yoshida Maruta attended all kinds of war protests and vigils around the country, always in their Buddhist dress and always playing their 'om' prayer drums. One of

the things I always noted about them was how they blended into the crowd despite their distinctive appearance. As we think of Yoshida and the future of the Peace Pagoda after their great loss, we give thanks for the life and the witness of a great peace person. His testament to the work of interfaith and peace making was truly venerable.

The last time I saw them was on the day of the Parliamentary vote on Trident. The three of us sat with Brian Haw on the pavement opposite the entrance to the Commons. I have never felt their simple and repetitive praying so powerfully. We lost the vote, but their prayer goes on.

**David Partridge**



Mourners at Gyosei Handa's funeral

### A Quest for Global Peace - Rotblat and Ikeda on War, Ethics and the Nuclear Threat -

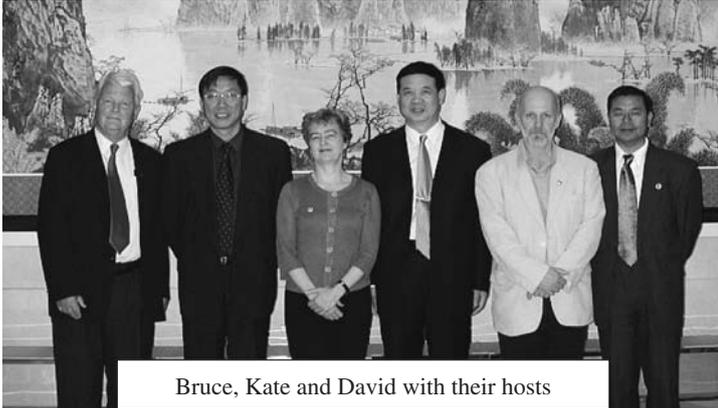
This series of dialogues between two leading ethical thinkers brings together the courage and humanity of Rotblat with the spiritual wisdom and global visionary outlook of Daisaku Ikeda, the leader of the world's largest and most influential lay Buddhist organisation. Together they reflect on fundamental issues of war and peace, the ethics of nuclear deterrence and the trajectory of Joseph Rotblat's career, from the Manhattan Project to the Pugwash Conference and his Nobel Prize.

Published by IBTauris in 2006 (ISBN 9781845112783 )

# From Our Foreign Correspondent!

## CHINA

I thought my continent hopping days were over until I was invited to join a CND delegation to China in May of this year. There were three of us, Kate Hudson Chair of CND, Professor David Webb of Yorkshire CND and myself. We were the guests of CPAPD - the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament, a coalition of some 25 Chinese NGOs. Perhaps the British Council, with its strong Government links, would be a British equivalent.



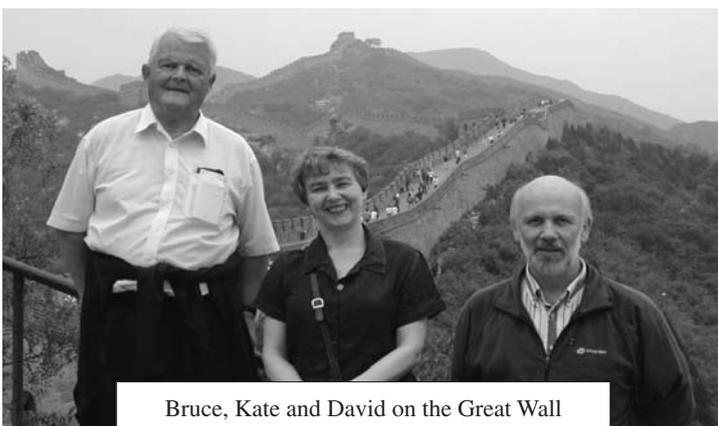
Bruce, Kate and David with their hosts

We were VIPs the moment we got off the plane after a long ten hours. Hotel, hospitality, transport, translation could not have been improved on. All very different from our normal non -VIP lives at home.

In the four days we were there we met a long succession of CPAPD members, government officials, and academics from research bodies. There were some straightforward conversations and a lot of curiosity about NGO activity in Europe. My own contribution to the nuclear weapon discussions was to suggest that a Chinese 'No First Use' declaration is not a significant step forward. We hoped that, at the coming NPT review conference in 2010, the Chinese will demand the start of genuine nuclear weapon abolition negotiations.

Such negotiation will be a major issue at the CND 50th anniversary meeting next February in London. We invited CPAPD representatives to come and they were delighted to accept.

My overall impression is that our hosts were well aware that China would be, in economic terms, the world's major superpower soon. China has no intention of following the earlier bankrupting Soviet attempt to match the United States in military expenditure. Development was a word often used with pride.



Bruce, Kate and David on the Great Wall

Their country is moving out of poverty. However if Beijing-haze and cars is what development means then there are questions to be asked.

We were taken to the usual tourist spots - the Wall and the Opera. The first is amazing. The latter beautiful. I made my own little independent expedition to a Catholic church and found myself involved in a Chinese wedding.

The nicest moment? Going into a park and finding groups of people having informal sing-songs amongst the trees. London parks please copy.

MAW? I wore my badge and gave out our flyers but perhaps MAW ideas are a bridge too far for CPAPD at the moment.

Now read on.....

## PAKISTAN

For about a year I have been in correspondence with the Organisation for Peace and Development in Lahore, Pakistan. They are also, like MAW, members of the International Peace Bureau.

The Executive Director, Jahangir Piara, had hoped that I might get someone to come out to Pakistan this October for an International youth training conference but that did not turn out to be possible.

Not to leave him empty handed I sent him a copy of our War No More DVD. The response was immediate and enthusiastic. His group liked it very much and wanted to get it dubbed into Urdu.

So our MAW committee agreed to send some more copies of the DVD and to make a small grant to help with the dubbing process.

But what is OPD whose logo has the words 'May Peace Prevail on Earth' around it?

It turns out to be a small local peace group, full of enthusiasm. Some members are Christian and some Muslim. They have an excellent web site so you can have look for yourself. Check out [www.odp.org](http://www.odp.org)

Youth training events, interfaith days, work for women's rights and health training are all grist to their mill. They make a special day of the 21st September, World Peace Day.

The OPG founding declaration says that they exist 'to disseminate in Pakistan innovative programs to promote a culture of peace, harmony, social justice and development by providing information and resources to marginalized groups.....'

How easy all this can be for us in relative social and political calm. How difficult for them.

Perhaps in the future we, centrally or locally, can build bigger and better bridges in their direction.

**Bruce Kent, Vice-president**

### Clergy Against Nuclear Arms (CANA)

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October at 7 pm

S John & S Stephen Church, Reading

## NUCLEAR WEAPONS: A CLASH OF SPIRITUALITIES

Speaker - Stephen Cottell, Bishop of Reading

(Bishop Stephen was at Faslane in March)

This event follows CANA's AGM at 6pm

Info: David Partridge 01243 373611 or  
[dp\\_peace@hotmail.com](mailto:dp_peace@hotmail.com)

## Recent developments in military spending and the arms trade; a bleak picture

The world seems to be entering a dangerous phase of militarism as nations respond to the threats they believe exist around them by increasing military expenditure. General Dannatt, the head of the British Army, in a speech given in April and recently released under a Freedom of Information request, has called on his staff to prepare for a 'generation of conflict'. He argues for more resources as Tony Blair did earlier this year in his much-publicised speech to the armed forces on HMS Albion.

Linked to this we hear from Scientists for Global Responsibility that government thinking is driving an expansion in the military influence over science and technology. US government spending on military R&D is soaring (up nearly 60% since 2001) while in the UK, the government has rolled out two new military technology strategies in the last two years.

Recent statistics on military expenditure and the arms trade point to this as a general trend. The publication of the Annual Yearbook of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute in June states that world military expenditure in 2006 reached a new high of \$1204 billion. This represents an increase of 3.5% over the 2005 figure and 37% more than a decade ago. The US accounted for nearly half the total and it is disturbing that both Barack Obama and Mitt Romney (Democrat candidate and Republican candidate respectively) for the Presidential Nomination argue for an increase in military expenditure in their proposed foreign policy.

These above amounts constitute a vast resource that could be re-directed to the fight against poverty and climate change. Remember that the UN's Millennium Project (2005) has estimated that the annual costs of meeting the Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015 are of the order of \$135 billion per year, little more than 10% of the money currently allocated to the military sector.

And then, there is increased rhetoric about the nuclear threat. This includes talk of nuclear blackmail – and not just the American neo-cons who believe that Iran will use nuclear weapons to impose sharia law upon them. Nuclear blackmail is invoked in East Asia, where North Korea and the US have accused each other of using or threatening to use it; in the Middle East where it justifies both Israel's actual bomb against Iran and Iran's potential bomb against Israel; in Poland and the Czech Republic where a missile defence system is being installed by the US to protect Europe, it is said, from – again – Iranian 'threats and blackmail'. And the response of Russia is the threat to resume the production of strategic nuclear bombers. Nuclear blackmail is also used to justify Britain's Trident replacement.

The SIPRI Yearbook also indicates a big increase in international arms transfers. There has been a 50 per cent increase in the volume of major conventional arms transfers over the past four years reversing a downward trend after 1997. The US and Russia were the largest suppliers in the five-year period 2002 to 2006 and the UK continues to be a major player. China and India remain the largest arms importers. And now we hear that the Bush administration is to sell \$20 billion of arms to Middle Eastern allies to counter the influence of Iran in the region.



Tanks for sale at an arms fair

One cannot help but think that the world is arming itself for war.

Tony Kempster



### Back to the Middle Ages with Mercenary Armies

In Iraq today there are about 50,000 armed employees of private security firms, American and British. Some of these units have not just modern weapons, but even helicopter gunships of their own. The men can earn up to £320 a day, far more than those serving in national military forces. There is no accountability or oversight by the Iraqi government, and there have been no prosecutions outside of Iraq for violations of military law. Only two cases have reached a US court -

one about child pornographic literature and the other a case of assault between two employees.

These firms have an international trade group promoting their interests, charmingly named the 'International Peace Operations Association'. In the US firms like Blackwater, DynCorp and Triple Canopy have more and more political clout, which represents a danger to democracy all of its own. The abolition of war must also mean the abolition of these private armies.

(From 'A Very Private War', the Guardian 1/08/07)

Also from the Guardian (18/06/07), we find that men aren't the only mercenaries -

In June the Pentagon confirmed it has considered developing a 'gay bomb', an aphrodisiac pheromone designed to make the enemy forces so attracted to each other that the US could just march in and take over. What happens to the GIs if the wind is in the wrong direction? Also under consideration under 'non-lethal' technologies) is low frequency infrasound which causes vomiting, diarrhoea, organ damage and death.

The Pentagon's definition of 'non-lethal' is odd, unless they mean non-lethal to American Forces. Lastly, a special pheromone that 'can be used to target individuals and then release bees to attack them'. Mercenary bees?

**Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter**  
**Martin Luther King**



## When Will It End?

There has been much in the press just lately about the lack of care for returning servicemen and women, damaged by Iraq and Afghanistan, and the last issue of Abolish War looked at that. But the problem is an old one.

Many of the homeless beggars wandering the roads in the early 1800s were veterans of the Peninsula War and Waterloo. Every battle we fought in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century produced its crop of the homeless, the disabled, the destitute. How many made it back from the Crusades only to die of starvation in a ditch? It was quite a problem, all over mediaeval Europe, the detritus of the Crusades. Of course, all of the people I am talking about were already at the bottom of the heap, even when they were fighting. They were expendable, the spear-carriers and cannon-fodder. But think on this: -

In times gone by, if you were disabled by war, an amputee for instance, it was accepted (but not liked) that you begged for food and money. But what of those who had no physical scars, but were driven mad by war? Even in our own era, we are not that sympathetic towards mental illness. It is still something that is shunned. In the 18<sup>th</sup> Century going to watch the lunatics locked up in Bedlam was a popular entertainment. Before that the mentally ill who had no family to provide protection, or who had been disowned by their families, were fair game, driven out like lepers. We'll never know how many of these poor souls were ex-soldiers, just as we'll never know how many committed suicide. All we can be sure of is that war has damaged generation after generation.

Since the Vietnam War, the western world has started to 'seriously' look at suicide rates among the military after a conflict. The recent Falklands War anniversary brought into the news, and hopefully into people's consciousness, the fact that more have committed suicide since the Falklands War than fell in combat. What will happen to those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan? Official figures say that since 2003 over 10,000 have gone AWOL. Officially, this is mostly put down to 'personal' or 'family' problems. But officials don't look for what lies behind those personal problems. Yes, many go back to their regiments, but there are probably over 1000 on the run from the Army right now.

One soldier, speaking on the Panorama programme last March said, *'Lads come back from Iraq traumatised with no idea how to deal with it. Asking for help with mental health issues in the Army is something you don't do. It's looked down upon. When I came back from Iraq, my behaviour was different. I found it difficult to relate to people. I became withdrawn. On leave, I just sat in my room all day drinking.'*

In July I had the privilege of hearing Dani Williams (from Military Families Against War) speak about her soldier son. The whole family is affected by his mental state and his inability to deal with his experiences in Iraq. He was on leave, terrified of being sent back to Iraq on another tour of duty, unable to buy himself out because he is not yet 22. Feeling trapped and desperate, he was becoming violent. Luckily for him (I hope), he has now been posted to the Falklands, but before that happened he lost control. Dani says, *'Things have calmed down since James left. He's on his way to the Falklands - it takes 20 hours to get there. During his last week at home he had another outbreak. It was the worst I've ever seen him. I had to call the police as he started smashing up the house! I held my own though and stood up to him, which took a lot of doing. Next day it was all forgotten - he really needs help as he said that he can't remember what he did and has blacked it out.'*

Regardless of the officers who say 'the men can come to me with their problems', the culture of the Forces is that admitting to fear, to nightmares, to mental problems is seen as weakness. And the answer to that is to send them back to duty. No wonder so many resort to drink or drugs. No wonder so many go on the run. No wonder so many, aware of the damage they are doing to others, walk out on their families. No wonder so many end up on the streets - latest figures suggest that one in four homeless are ex-military. These people need help. We should not be sending them to war. We should not be waging war. And we should not be voting into power those who think war is an answer to anything.

Pondering on all of this, all I ended up with was a series of questions to which I don't know the answers, nor do I know who does. Did anybody register what happened in the past? What are the forgotten figures? How many committed suicide after WWII? What about WWI? For the sights and sounds and scents of war were felt by all those in the trenches - did the survivors ever feel the glorious fallen were the lucky ones? In more religious times, suicide was a sin, not something to be understood and mourned over. Buried in unmarked graves, how many war related suicides went unrecorded? Are there any incidences of it being written that a man committed suicide because of the despair he brought back home with him? And then I wondered, are the suicide figures the same, proportionately speaking, for the losing side as well as the victors? Or does 'winning' bring its own brand of guilt? Is it that the victors have the dubious luxury of time to think, while the losers are too busy surviving, rebuilding their lives, their communities, their country? And is the common man's despair the price of victory for the leaders?

Through the years good people have tried to care and provide for the flotsam and jetsam of war, but never quite enough it seems, have questioned the need to go to war in the first place.

One final question - Can we now turn that 'never quite enough' into 'Enough!'

**Lesley Docksey, Editor**

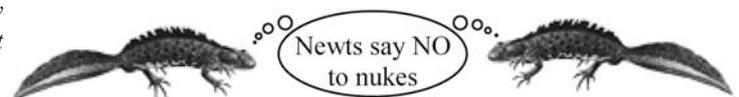
The editor found this news in the current issue of Heddwch, the Welsh CND newsletter (and if you live in Wales and don't belong to *end cymru*, then you should, if only to receive this excellent source of news with its suggestions for action).

## Improve Your War with the Open University

A vast new military academy is going to be built at St Athan in the Vale of Glamorgan, and the Welsh Assembly is celebrating. The academy will be privately owned and run by a consortium called Metrix. Metrix includes arms manufacturers Raytheon and - wait for it - the Open University! Raytheon produces cluster bombs and DU munitions, sells arms to dodgy regimes and also supplies the electronic guidance systems for our very own Trident. As a company their reputation is so bad that many countries have banned investment in them, but here not one politician has raised a voice against this scheme.

It also appears that the Royal Navy's Maritime Engineering School (which includes the Nuclear Systems Group) is likely to move here in 2017. But you may rest easy - Metrix, recognising the environmental sensitivities of today's young people, has expressed a wish to run the academy in an environmentally friendly way, and will take pains to 'safely relocate a colony of Great Crested newts that has been nesting in the St Athan site before they begin construction'.

When you've stopped laughing, think about joining the campaign against this monstrous plan. Phone James Maiden on 029 20 22 8549 or visit [www.cynefynywerin.org](http://www.cynefynywerin.org)



## Images of War

Top: Carrying the wounded in the Battle of the Somme - 1916

Middle: Some of the My Lai victims - 1968

Bottom: Three children killed in the bombing of Lebanon - 2006



You would think that ninety years would make a difference to the damage we inflict on each other, and so, I suppose, it has.

In WWI the casualties were mostly military. By 1968 all the victims of the My Lai massacre were civilian and mostly women and children at that. Forty years on and in Lebanon, still the children die.

This is why we campaign to abolish war. It is why we want to remember *all* the dead in Remembrance services and ceremonies. It is why we want to change the image of war from glory, courage and sacrifice to the horror, the terror and the pitiable waste of life that it truly is. Dead bodies, whether those of men, women or children, should mean more than statistics.

## Independent Diplomat An Up-date



The radical views of Carne Ross, who spoke at our AGM last year, are gaining an ever-higher public and media profile, with several TV and radio appearances, the latest being a prime slot on Channel 4 news with a 'memo to the new prime minister'.

Carne is convinced that diplomacy as we know it must be reworked from scratch, with the chief aim always being the reduction of suffering..

You may remember that Carne formed the world's first and only non-profit diplomatic advisory group, Independent Diplomat (ID), and we are delighted to hear that ID grows apace, now with representatives in Brussels, New York and London. By the time you read this, their newest office, in New York City, should be open.

The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is ID's newest client, and ID is in discussion with a number of other potential clients in Europe and the Americas; announcements were expected as we went to press.

More good news is that The United Nations Foundation has decided to become a core funder of ID, joining the Open Society Institute, the Oak Foundation and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust as principal donors. The Network for Social Change, a group of private philanthropists, has also given ID a grant for its work with Somaliland.

Carne's book, *Independent Diplomat: Dispatches from an Unaccountable Elite*, was launched in February, published by Hurst & Co in the UK and by Cornell University Press in the US in April.

The latest ID update says *'we have been stunned by the demand for our services from small or transitional states, marginalised political groups and even established governments, UN bodies and NGOs. It's clear that a great many people feel excluded from the world's diplomatic system and value impartial advice on how best to penetrate it.'*

For full info: [www.independentdiplomat.com](http://www.independentdiplomat.com)

**Christine Titmus**

## 'We the Peoples' Film Festival London 29 November - 2 December

Taking place at various venues in central London, and well worth putting in your diary. Five sessions at the National Film Theatre 3 (Southbank) will address the UN Millennium Development Goals priorities - health, education, gender, the environment and economic justice.

The Frontline Club in Paddington will screen a session titled *Reporting the UN in Crisis*.

The session called Towards a Culture of Peace will feature films using real life, education and drama to show how conflict can be prevented or resolved. Probably Britain's first Peace Film Festival (unless you know different! If you do let the editor know), it will ask 'What makes a good peace film and what can we learn from it?' The venue has yet to be announced.

Also a DVD of the best films from the festival will be launched during the festival, for use by schools and NGOs (perhaps MAW should stock some).

The Festival is being organised by the Westminster branch of the UNA.

For more info on the Festival go to: [www.wethepeoples.org.uk](http://www.wethepeoples.org.uk) where you can register for regular updates, or write to *We the Peoples Film Festival*, 61, Sedlescombe Road, London SW6 1RE

# 2007 World Conference Against Atomic & Hydrogen Bombs

*'No more Hiroshima's, No more Nagasaki's, No more Hibakusha, No More Nuclear Weapons'*

This was the common and repeated message during the 2007 World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen bombs conference in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It has been 62 years since the US Air force dropped Little Boy and Fat Man over the Japanese cities. Still the conference is as important because of the threat by nuclear weapons states. There are current alarming signs by the US pushing forward with its missile defence system. When the belligerent nation is going in the wrong direction, other nations might follow, but for the resistance against military build up by the civil society and their ambitions for nuclear free zones.



Robert campaigning at the Conference

Along with thousands of Japanese peace workers there were overseas delegates from 22 countries. In addition there were government representatives from Cuba, Mexico, Egypt, League of Arab States and Malaysia, all stressing the urgency about the abolition of nuclear weapons. For example Mohd Arshad Mazoor Hussain, Ambassador of Malaysia to the UN in Vienna pointed out that there is a need of a universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) by all countries, which would contribute towards the process of nuclear disarmament. According to the Ambassador, what is missing today is not ideas but the lack of political will by the nuclear states.

There were also discussions and presentations on Article 9\* of the Japanese constitution. The article prevents Japan participating in active combat or engaging in arms export. It is a vital corner stone in the work towards peace. But the US is pressuring Japan for a revision. A change would result in the development of a closer military cooperation with the US and eventually a

creation of something resembling a Great Britain of the Pacific. The civil society along with other nations must support the resistance for change and the temptation for Japanese Prime Minister Abe to give in to US pressure. There is a need to prevent a future arms race in the Pacific. NGO's and civil groups are working on campaigns in form of petitions, art-work and conferences to preserve and protect Article 9.

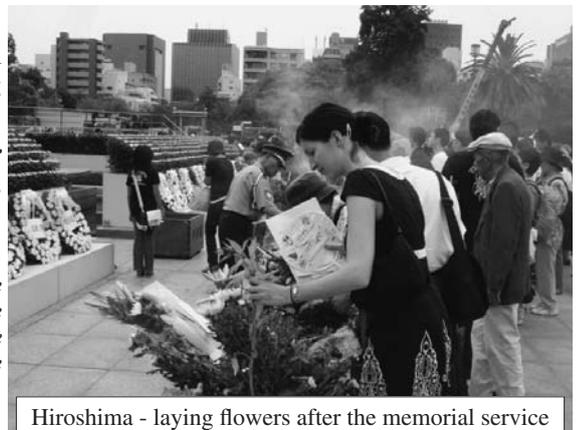
The Hibakushas, Atomic bomb survivors reminded the audience about article 9 and also why the fight for nuclear disarmament is so important. Japan is the only country that suffered a nuclear war and the scars are still there today. Thousands of Hibakushas and their families are still suffering from cancer and other illnesses caused by radiation. Never again do they want anybody to experience their nightmares with so much pain and still suffering 62 years later.

However, there was hope and inspiration presented during the annual conference in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Hibakushas are winning law suits and recognition for their suffering. There are many movements campaigning against military escalation and for nuclear free zones. One of the final outcomes was the determination to working towards elimination of nuclear weapons in the run up to the 2010 NPT Review Conference including involvement during the 2008 NPT Preparatory Committee meeting.

The Declaration of the International Meeting emphasized that: ***"A nuclear weapon-free, peaceful and just world is possible. Let us rise to action now, together with the young generation who bears our future"***.

## Robert Lastman

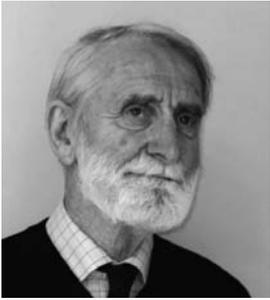
\*Article 9 - *Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. 2) In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.*



Hiroshima - laying flowers after the memorial service

MAW TO BUY	BOOKLETS	Remembrance for Today	£3.00
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		A World Without War - Professor Rotblat's Imperial War Museum speech, 2002	30p
		A Peace Trail Through London - places associated with peace-making , by Valerie Flessati	50p
		The Life of Bertha von Suttner - the first woman to win the Nobel Peace prize	£2.00
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	A4 CARD	The Preamble to the UN Charter	15p
	DVD(14 mins)	War No More - with teacher's booklet (Still some videos available £8*)	£10.00
	MAW CD	Sing the Music of Healing	£8.00
	BOOKS	War No More (paperback) Rotblat/Hinde	£11.00
		Warfare or Welfare - Colin Archer IPB Sec. General	£5.00
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## A LETTER FROM CUMBRIA



Over to the other side of Cumbria from where I live, is Barrow where the shipyard is. Over the years Barrow has furnished vessels for many navies other than our own. People who work there take great pride in the ships they produce.

Barrow used to be in Lancashire until 1973 but I am not singling out Barrow from either a Lancashire or Cumbrian perspective. Many other parts of the UK are also involved in the arms trade. People who work in the shipyards at Barrow do so because that is the way they make a living and they are proud of what they do. Those of us who have Christian or other moral and ethical beliefs have to consider the implications of working in the arms trade in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

I have just been reading a paper by Robert Straughton, a Quaker, maritime writer, historian and Cumbrian who has researched 100 years of Barrow's shipyard history and the fate of the vessels launched. He begins and ends with a battleship, **MIKASA**, which became the flagship of the Japanese navy. **MIKASA** was one of many ships which fought against Britain in WW2. A Barrow man may well have been killed by a ship built by his grandfather. The manufacture of that ship would not have been sanctioned by him who built it but by the Government and politics of the day. The **MIKASA** symbolises the sale of arms as a measure of Government strategy. In 1913 Barrow produced the **KONGO**, a battle cruiser of the Imperial Japanese Navy, which fought in two world wars and was sunk in 1944 by an American submarine. The navies of India and Pakistan were to get British arms as did Chile, Peru, Brazil, Venezuela and Argentina. They acquired modern cruisers and escort ships. In course of time submarines and destroyers followed, all made in UK yards including Barrow.

When Argentina invaded the Falklands in 1982 it did so with ships, missiles and aircraft from UK, US and France. The **VEINTICINO DE MAYO** was built at Birkenhead. The **GENERAL BELGRANO** came from the US navy. Argentina's two principal destroyers, British designed Type 42's included the **SANCTISSIMA TRINIDAD**, built at Barrow. The second was built in Argentina under Barrow's supervision. **HMS SHEFFIELD** was Barrow built and was sunk by a French missile. The **BELGRANO** was sunk by **HMS CONQUEROR**, a nuclear submarine built at Barrow.

The UK has long been a supplier of arms to the Middle East. Saddam Hussein's regime obtained from the West and elsewhere arms and systems which cost hundreds of thousands of lives. Our supply of arms to the Middle East (including Cumbrian made equipment) has neither brought peace nor stability to the region and its people. Indeed it has fuelled hatred and terrorism from New York to London, from Bali to Madrid.

The Barrow shipyard now focuses on producing nuclear submarines. The cost of their development and their connections internationally make Barrow less of an arms trade player, more a supplier of the components which the UK needs for the international market. Barrow has seen thousands of losses of workers at the shipyards but the 3000 plus workers today form a large proportion of the County's precision engineering force. The shrinking manufacturing sector makes it difficult to question the ethics and logic of production at Barrow because of this. It is ironic that the Government allows industry for peaceful purposes which produces steel, railways, buses etc. to collapse unsupported while heavily subsidising arms exports and arms industries.

This letter began as a 'Letter from Cumbria', showing that arms made here have been used against ourselves. Yes, we sold and sell arms which kill our mates, our relations and our friends. Today it is non-combatants who mostly suffer because this is the nature of modern warfare. Isn't it morally and ethically wrong to make and sell weapons knowing that they will be used against our fellow human beings? Our Government should act and make decisions based on moral and ethical judgements. There is no excuse for ignorance. The lessons of history should assist us. The **MIKASA**, the ship which began this piece should come back to haunt us as an example of the arms trade.



The 12" forward guns of the MIKASA

**Derek Longmire**

*I have to acknowledge the fine paper on this subject written by Robert Straughton in April 2004. He is a Quaker, maritime historian and Cumbrian, Manager of Rookhow Quaker Centre at Rusland, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 8LA*

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## WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN MAW!

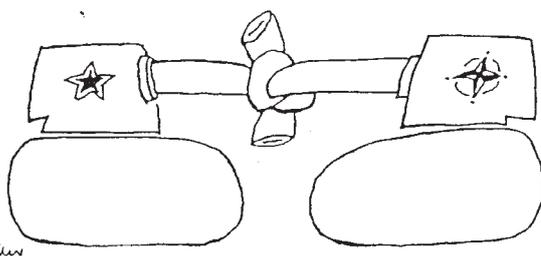
**Our aim: to create a world where war is no longer seen as a way to solve a problem; where it has ceased to be an option; where conflict resolution means resolution, not more conflict. We have the tools, the skills and the laws that we need. We also need you. We work through education and dialogue,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

## THE ABOLITION OF WAR.

# Events Diary

- 12 October LONDON** Musicians Against Nuclear Arms Concert for Peace with the MANA Chamber Orchestra conducted by Diego Masson. Contact MANA Administration, 71 Greenfield Gardens, London NW2 1HU
- 13-14 October LONDON** CND Annual Conference. City Hall. 020 7700 2393, [www.cnduk.org](http://www.cnduk.org)
- 21 - 28 October EVERYWHERE** One World Week. Theme: 'All Together Now'. 0118 939 4933 [www.oneworldweek.org](http://www.oneworldweek.org)
- 24 October WORLDWIDE** United Nations Day.
- 24 - 30 October EVERYWHERE** Disarmament Week.
- 26 - 28 October DERBYSHIRE** Transforming Conflict: Peace by Peace, Called to be Peacemakers Conference 2007. Contact Martha Beale at: Fellowship of Reconciliation, St. James Church Centre, Beauchamp Lane, Oxford, OX4 3LF. Tel: 01865 748 796
- 2 - 4 November PEAK DISTRICT** Peace Brigades International Orientation Weekend. The first step in the preparation and training of potential PBI volunteers. [outreach@peacebrigades.org.uk](mailto:outreach@peacebrigades.org.uk)
- 10 November BANGOR** 'Detention without Trial' Moazzam Begg Public Meeting. Focussing on continuing detentions of inmates by US in Guantanamo Bay. 2-5pm University Arts Block Lecture Room4 Tel: Linda Rogers 01248 490 715
- 10 November LONDON** MAW AGM (see advert)
- Sunday 11 November**
- COUNTRYWIDE** Remembrance Day.
- LONDON** MAW Annual Lecture at the Imperial War Museum. 'Law not War' with Helena Kennedy QC. Contact MAW, 11 Venetia Road, N4 1EJ. 01908 511948. [www.abolishwar.org](http://www.abolishwar.org) (see advert)
- 6 - 18 November SHEFFIELD** People & Planet, Shared Planet conference 2007, at Sheffield University. Shared Planet - UK's largest student conference on world poverty, human rights, and the environment. <http://peopleandplanet.org/events/sharedplanet>
- 24 November**
- COUNTRYWIDE** Buy Nothing Day
- LONDON** CAAT National Gathering 2007. 10am - 6pm. South Camden Community College, Charrington Street, London, NW1 1RG. To book your place contact Anna Jones [anna@caat.org.uk](mailto:anna@caat.org.uk) 020 7281 02907
- MILTON KEYNES** Feast for Peace, The Guildhall, Christ the Cornerstone, Central Milton Keynes. 7.00pm Guest Speaker Indian Meal included - £12.00 ticket. Jazz, Fairtrade Wine and Stalls and campaigning information. 01908-561365.
- 25 November WORLDWIDE** International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.
- 28 November LONDON** The Enough! coalition is organising a mass lobby of Parliament on Palestine. [www.enoughoccupation.org](http://www.enoughoccupation.org)
- 29 November WORLDWIDE** International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.
- 30 November - 2 December BATH** A Voice In The Wilderness: A Justice And Peace Retreat at the Ammerdown Centre. For info: contact 01761 433709 or [centre@ammerdown.org](mailto:centre@ammerdown.org)
- 1 December**
- EVERYWHERE** Prisoners for Peace Day
- LONDON** World Against War International Conference - with delegates and representatives from Iraq, the movements in Lebanon, Palestine, Pakistan, Venezuela and Cuba, and from anti war organisations from across Europe and the USA. Central Hall Westminster Storey's Gate, London SW1H 9NH. Stop the War Coalition 0207 278 6694 [www.stopwar.org.uk](http://www.stopwar.org.uk)
- 2 December WORLDWIDE** International Day for the Abolition of Slavery
- 4 - 5 December LEICESTER** Climate change: Your Council, Your Climate, Your Action. Climate change is one of the biggest topics of public debate in 2007 and councils are at the heart of finding solutions to it. This cornerstone LGA conference will present key findings from the LGA's Climate Change Commission. Info: The LGA Conference Department, Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ. [info@lga.gov.uk](mailto:info@lga.gov.uk)
- 8 December LONDON** International Day of Climate Protest including National Climate March, London. This Saturday is midway through the UN Climate Talks in Bali, Indonesia. [www.campaigncc.org](http://www.campaigncc.org) Campaign against Climate Change, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX. 020 7833 8311.
- 10 December WORLDWIDE** Human Rights Day.

## DESO and the ethics of the international arms trade



And a little good news. After more than 40 years of promoting British weapons makers, the government's controversial arms sales division, the Defence Export Services Organisation is up for disbanding after a Treasury review concluded that taxpayers should no longer subsidise an 'anachronistic' department with too much influence in Whitehall. So it seems on the surface that pressure to extract value for taxpayers' money can prove a more powerful argument than ethically inspired opposition. But one imagines that all the campaigning by CAAT and the embarrassment of the Serious Fraud Office's probe into the al-Yamamah deal had an indirect affect on the decision - DESO's head, Alan Garwood was questioned by SFO before its probe into the al-Yamamah deal was abandoned. But this is a continuing story and we will have to see just how disbanded DESO is.

## MAW NEWS PLEASE!

**You want to read about events that are not all London-based. 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)**