

Make a date for the MAW annual lecture

Our annual Remembrance Day Lecture will be held on Sunday, November 13, at the Imperial War Museum, London, starting at 3pm. Prior to the lecture, the MAW AGM will take place, also at the IWM and starting at 11.15am. Everyone welcome – see page 2 of this newsletter for ways to join the MAW committee. We look forward to seeing new friends and old.

Conference focuses on war resistance

You'll find a flyer inside this edition of *Abolish War* for the Peace History Conference which will be held in Leeds (Holy Trinity Church and Leeds City Museum) on October 14 / 15. The theme of the conference is *Conscience & Conscriptio, Resistance to War 1916 - 2016*. Book online via www.abolishwar.org.uk

**Movement FOR THE
Abolition of War**

Welcome to your new-look Abolish War. We have decided to update our newsletter and we also have a new logo for the organisation. Let us know what you think!

For electronic versions of this newsletter email Gillian Hurle, gill.hurle@abolishwar.org.uk



Saying No to Trident: Bruce Kent, our MAW vice-president - a post he also holds at CND - is pictured speaking in London. Write to your MP and let them know what you think. You can find their address here: www.writetothem.com

Calling all young people!

The increasing role of the military in schools will be questioned at a ground-breaking MAW conference in the autumn.

The first MAW Youth Conference, *The Creeping Militarisation of Our Society*, will be held on Saturday, 8 October at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London, 10am-4pm. Journeymen Theatre will perform *Over The Top* which addresses the issue of militarism in schools. Speakers will include Ben Griffin of Veterans for Peace and David Gee, writer, campaigner and researcher into militarism. There will be group discussions which hopefully will generate lots of good ideas for action. The conference is aimed at young people aged roughly 17 to 30 – although other people are also welcome!

Jen Harrison, a member of MAW Youth and one of the organisers, said: "We want to highlight, question and counteract the Government strategy of increasing militarism within schools and universities.

"Since 2011 the Government has spent more than £45 million on promoting educational initiatives with a "military ethos" and earmarked a further £50 million to be spent on expanding the number of cadet forces within state schools.

"We wish to present another point of view and attempt to balance official government policy in this area."

Tickets to the conference are free but should be booked at <http://mawyconference.eventbrite.co.uk>

Can you help publicise the event? Please display the poster enclosed in this edition of *Abolish War* and utilise any contacts you have with sixth forms, universities or youth organisations. We can email you a notice to pass on or send further hard copies of the A5 flyer or A4 notice for you to distribute or display in your locality. Let us know how you can help by emailing youth@abolishwar.org.uk or by phoning 020 8898 4850.

Cash appeal for Berlin

Up to five MAW Youth members hope to attend the International Peace Bureau World Congress: *Disarm! For a Climate of Peace*, in Berlin in September.

They will participate in the Youth Conference first and then stay on for the main conference.

We're trying to raise funds to cover their costs (£300 each for travel, five nights' accommodation and food). Any contributions, however small, would be very gratefully accepted.

Donations can be sent to Bruce Kent, 11 Venetia Road, London N4 1EJ.

Youth or not, registration is open for the conference – take a trip to Berlin if you can! More details can be found here: www.ipb2016.berlin

Don't drone on – take action!

The Drones Week of Action will take place from October 1 - 8 and the organisers are urging people to plan an event. Campaign materials will be available from late September. The theme is *Out of Sight, Out of Mind, Out of Control*.

<https://dronecampaignnetwork.wordpress.com>

Movement for the Abolition of War - Annual General Meeting

Including: chair's report, election of committee members and officers and open discussion forum. Details of those standing in the elections will be available on the MAW website from mid-September
www.abolishwar.org.uk

If you would like to nominate someone to stand for the committee (nominees must be MAW members) or if you cannot attend the AGM but have any suggestions or concerns you would like raised, contact us by Friday, October 16 via our website, or in writing to 11 Venetia Rd, London N4 1EJ.

Reflections on the horror of war



Martin Bell, pictured, former war reporter and a vice-president of MAW, has written a poem describing the horrors of armed conflict which he has seen first hand in his career. The impact of the poem is heightened by its “missile” shape on the page.

The Laptop Bombardier

Were you ever a soldier,
an RPG or machine gun holder,
could you strip a Bren and name its parts,
were you trained in the battlefield's dark arts?
And were you in the gunners' sights,
did you fear the sudden sharp fire fights,
the ghostly dawns and thunderous nights?
And were you, in some trench line, made aware
by the flickering falling light of a parachute flare
or the wind-rush of the shot that parts your hair
of the edge-of-madness human wreckage there?
And did you shake to the Serbian mortars,
knowing
the different sounds of incoming and outgoing?
Did you take the gloomy troop flight to Iraq
and wonder how much of you would come
back?
Did you reflect on the amputees
and the ambushes and the IEDs
and the massacre at Gandamak
and defeats dressed up as victories
and the war of the phantom WMDs
and such mendacities as these?

And if you did not know and were not there,
then how dare you, a laptop bombardier,
add your voice to the Devil's chorus
for another wasteful sacrificial war?



Members of the Haringey First World War Peace Forum - <https://hfwwpf.wordpress.com/> -

put posters with details of local CO's on around 100 streets in the London borough in May – a great activist idea which could be copied across the country. Over to you!

The Taxes for Peace Bill: taking the first step to success

Supporters in the House of Commons on 19 July were delighted that MP Ruth Cadbury's bill passed for a second reading - in December. Probably the only enlightened aspect of the Military Service Act 1916, which introduced compulsory conscription at the height of WW1, was that it allowed for exemption for "men who conscientiously object to combatant service". Yet, a century on, we are still forced into supporting military activity through taxation: financial conscription with no right of refusal. We may have campaigned against the Iraq War and Trident replacement but

we've all funded both. The Taxes for Peace Bill 2016 aims to allow those with a moral, ethical or religious objection to war the right to redirect that portion of their income tax at present destined for military use to go instead to a fund designated for non-military security and non-violent conflict prevention and resolution work. The right to refuse to kill now constitutes an internationally recognised matter of conscience: a human right. The enlightened 1916 legislation with its right of refusal to kill needs updating. More information at www.conscienceonline.org.uk
Hilary Evans

C.O. actions: The First World War Peace Forum, a coalition of peace organisations of which MAW is a member, held a ceremony of remembrance in Tavistock Square, London, to mark International Conscientious Objectors' Day in May.

Nuclear facts

Book review

THE TRUTH ABOUT TRIDENT
Disarming the nuclear argument
Timmon Milne Wallis
Luarth Press 2016 pp253 £12.99
Friends House Bookshop
Euston Road London, NW1 2BE

This substantial but easy to read book has come out at just the right time. The Trident replacement debate has started and here are the facts and figures needed. It's all here - the cost, the treaties, the morality, the illegality and the resulting illusion of security. How does one deter accidents or the suicidal?

The author has worked in many parts of the peace world for years. He says; "Pursuing nuclear disarmament is not Cloud Cuckoo land - it is the real world of the 21st century."
Bruce Kent

■ From our friends at Concord Media: DVD - *The Megaton Bomb: A Guide to Armageddon*
A one-megaton bomb detonated over St Paul's in London...
www.concordmedia.org.uk

Sue for peace: MAW member Sue Gilmurray is a volunteer in Exeter's CND Peace Shop and has formed Peace Voices which meets at the shop to sing songs for peace and justice. Sue hopes to grow the group into a choir to sing at local events starting with Exeter's Green Fair in September. She can be contacted at suegilmurray@icloud.com



Brexit and peace: where do we go from here?

MAW chair Tim Devereux reflects on a difficult few weeks for the UK.

When Sunderland's 61% Brexit result came through in the early hours of 24 June, I knew it was time to turn off the TV and go sorrowfully to bed. The Leavers would win. Suddenly, I felt like an alien in my own country, out of step with the majority. The surge in UK hate crime over the next few weeks took me by surprise – 42% more in the second half of June than in the same period last year. A nastier society then, but what about the big issues – war and peace? With the UK outside the EU, will the peace of Europe be shattered? Prof Paul Rogers writes: “Neoliberalism’s evolving failure is reflected in the populist anger that is affecting so many western countries, with refugees and migrants seen as threats.” (<https://www.opendemocracy.net/paul-rogers/after-brexit-time-for-new-thinking>). He notes two other big threats to our security - global climate change (the migration from the war-ravaged Middle East and Africa would be a tiny trickle compared to what



Members of MAW gathered in picturesque Clun, Shropshire, to thrash out plans for the year ahead. They reviewed MAW’s first ten years and look at ways to spread our message.

would happen if climate change really kicks off), and a “culture of militarism that prescribes military solutions in almost every situation. Even after 15 years of the “war on terror” there is little or no recognition of its manifest failures...” It is Jeremy Corbyn’s Labour which is thinking most constructively about solutions: John McDonnell’s team

is working on economic life after neoliberalism, while Emily Thornberry (Shadow Defence Secretary) is promoting a greater role for prevention, peacekeeping and the UN, aided by the work on understanding security by the Ammerdown initiative and Oxford Research Group. Will such initiatives survive the Labour Leadership election in September? One can but hope and hope sprouts from tiny seeds. From the towpath of the Leeds Liverpool Canal, I saw a boat moored with a sign – “Refugees welcome.” Maybe I am not an alien in the UK after all!

The Movement for the Abolition of War – join us, or renew your membership

We 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. Working through education and dialogue, nationally and locally, we have the tools, skills and laws that we need, but we also need you - ordinary people can help us realise our goal, the abolition of war.

To join MAW or renew your membership, complete this form or download the membership and standing order forms from our website at <http://www.abolishwar.org.uk/join.html>.
Send the completed form (and cheque if applicable) to: Movement for the Abolition of War, 308 Walton Road, KT8 2HY

Membership application / renewal

Name
Address
.....
..... Postcode
Tel no.
Email

Type of membership (please tick):

Life £100 Individual £15 Unwaged £5
Household (2 or more at same address) £20 Group or organisation £25

I enclose: Membership £
Donation £
Total £

Please make cheque payable to Movement for the Abolition of War
OR Please send me a standing order form

Membership subscriptions: If you received this newsletter by post the label on the envelope shows your membership status: the date to which you are paid up, e.g. 2016; ‘Life’, if you are a life member; ‘SO’ if you pay by standing order or ‘Comp’ if you receive a complimentary copy.

To join or renew your membership complete the form in this newsletter or download the forms from our website at <http://www.abolishwar.org.uk/join.html>. If you would like to receive email notification of the newsletter availability, instead of a hard copy, please email gill.hurle@abolishwar.org.uk

Abolish War is published by the Movement for the Abolition of War, 11 Venetia Road, London N4 1EJ