

Nobel prize: an end to nuclear hypocrisy

MAW is one of the partners of the International Campaign To Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), so we were especially pleased when ICAN won the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for its decade-long campaign to rid the world of the atomic bomb. As Rebecca Sharkey put it in her *New Statesman* article (12/10/17) "ICAN's strategy of highlighting the 'humanitarian impacts' of nuclear weapons created an urgency around calls for an end to hypocrisy. Either you think nuclear weapons are great and everyone should have them, or you think they are unacceptable and must be eliminated. There is no middle ground when the stakes are high."

Tim Devereux

■ **MAW has opened a Twitter account! Head over to @abolishwarUK and join the debate. #peace**

Make a date for 2018

Housmans Peace Diary and Directory 2018 is now available from Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road London N1 9DX. The price is £8.95 (or £10.45 which includes UK postage if you can't make it to the shop).

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

The next edition of *Abolish War* will be out on February 1, 2018.



FLYING THE FLAG FOR PEACE: MAW committee member Hilary Evans with the MAW banner which was displayed during protests against the DSEI Arms Fair in London. See page three for the full story.

Quotes on war and peace are an 'inspiration for action'

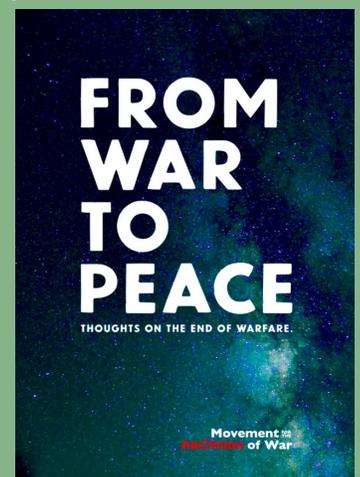
MAW has published a new booklet, *From War to Peace - Thoughts on the end of Warfare*, a collection of quotations and illustrations which updates and builds on an earlier publication.

There are quotations from a variety of sources. Some of the most moving are from the military - General Eisenhower, Lord Mountbatten and Harry Patch, last surviving soldier of World War I.

Our President Elect, Bruce Kent, hopes the booklet "will encourage many to realise that getting rid of war has long been a human hope. In our nuclear age, it has become a survival necessity. This collection is not a reason for nostalgia but an inspiration for action for us all."

This is one for the Christmas stocking! Copies of the booklet can be ordered at

abolishwar.org.uk/shop.html for £1 each plus a contribution to postage. A downloadable version is also available.



Vatican gathering can inspire more

One of the first states to sign the International Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapons was the Holy See in Rome, whose UN diplomats have over many decades persistently appealed for nuclear disarmament. Now the Vatican is hosting an international conference in Rome from 10-11 November on 'A world free from Nuclear Weapons'. Local churches - although it needn't be a church event - could use this opportunity to hold stalls, vigils or meetings to support and publicise the treaty. Up to now there has been almost no public attention paid to the new treaty, although of course the NGO primarily behind it, ICAN, has the Nobel Peace Prize. There is still time to organise an event in your area and to raise awareness.

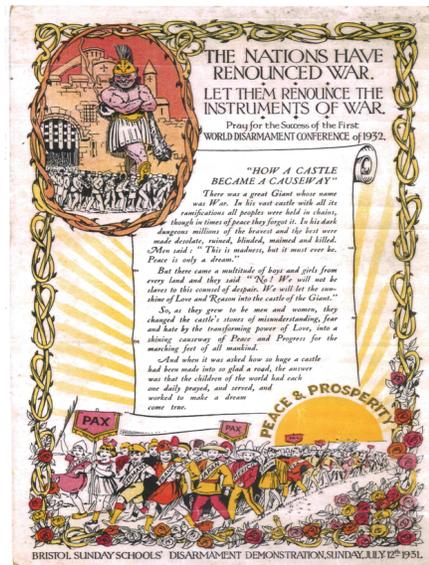
Peace hero honoured

Joseph Rotblat was the first President of MAW and its inspiration. The Embassy of the Republic of Poland supported by Pugwash – the global scientists' peace organisation of which Rotblat was a leader – is to unveil a plaque in his honour on the Pugwash office opposite the British Museum in London. This will take place on 6 November, at 11.30am on the corner of Bury Place and Great Russell Street, WC1B 3BJ. All are welcome.

Highs and lows down the years, now Treaty offers hope

Bruce Kent writes about the UN and nuclear disarmament

In work for global justice and peace there are highs and lows. My earliest 'high' comes in the form of a League of Nations colour poster issued before the 1932 Geneva Disarmament Conference. It shows children marching hopefully towards peace. This poster has powerful words: "The Nations have renounced war. Let them renounce the instruments of war." But partly because Britain



When Ron Alpern emailed to ask if the Richmond Virginia Peace Education Center could secure first World Disarmament Conference posters and use them as auction items for a Fall (autumn to us!) Fundraiser, we were delighted - and a high-res image has made it across the pond ready for printing. We hope the original artists for the Bristol Sunday Schools Disarmament Demonstration on July 12, 1931 would be tickled pink to know that their artwork is still in print and still raising awareness, now in the USA too!



Bruce Kent and Rebecca Sharkey, former ICAN UK co-ordinator

would not allow any reduction in Royal Navy numbers, there was no such renunciation. The world moved into World War II. Nevertheless, the seeds of international cooperation were sown. At the end of a terrible war came the formation of the United Nations in 1945.

Moving forward, on 7 July this year a Treaty was issued by the UN General Assembly, signed by 122 different countries, renouncing nuclear weapons.

It is a landmark treaty. It repudiates nuclear weaponry here and now, unlike the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which called for negotiations on nuclear weapon abolition to be conducted "in good faith". It is time we urged Britain to take firm steps in the direction of global nuclear weapon abolition. Robert McNamara, senior United States official, said towards the end of his life that we have not been saved by our good judgment but by "good luck". Surely it is now time to put the billions spent on illusions and pretensions into the real needs - food, medical care, education, housing and much more - of our people? That is a challenge to be put now to all, especially our parliamentarians.

See a fuller version of the article: <http://www.abolishwar.org.uk/blog>

Weird, wonderful - and serious. Protesters at the arms fair

War, poverty and repression around the world: promoted and subsidised by the British government. MAW members were among thousands of protesters from all over the country actively and effectively opposing this shocking reality outside London's ExCeL Centre, venue for the latest DSEI arms fair, one of the biggest in the world. Daily blockades of the entrance roads took place during the week preceding the fair in September, holding up deliveries for hours at a time, successfully hampering the setting-up of the exhibition.

Contrasting markedly with the grim preparations inside the centre were the vibrant and colourful, sometimes weird and wonderful, costumes, banners and activities so imaginatively organised outside: Donald Trump mingled with a Trident missile transformed into a wind turbine, a pop-up poet and street theatre. Another day a Dalek was arrested. I reminded a police officer who referred to it all as "fun" of the underlying deadly serious nature of the gathering. "Locked-on" protesters lying in the road, arms joined by suitcases of concrete or metal tubes, kept delivery vehicles waiting and police



cutting teams overstretched - a lock-on at the east gate took more than two hours to clear for example.

A silent candlelit vigil marked the eve of opening. I had been at the same place, protesting about the same thing exactly 16 years earlier - 11 September 2001.

See CAAT's films of the events at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TycoeujnCs>

Hilary Evans



Tuneful protest: above, MAW member Sue Gilmurray leads the singing; top, protest artwork

■ Cor Gobaith (Welsh for *Hope Choir*) sang MAW member Sue Gilmurray's song, *The Ones Who Said No*, on the seafront in Aberystwyth in 2014. Since then, the choir has contributed it to a collection of anti-war songs put together by a Belgian Choir and available online as 'bricks'. Every brick in the "wall" is a different recording of a choir.

Cor Gobaith's brick is illustrated by a shot of Aberystwyth Pier. The choir not only sings the song, one member, Nest Howells, has translated a verse into Welsh, a first for Sue!

As they say in Aberystwyth - "heddwch yw'n dymuniad ni - peace is our wish." See Cor Gobaith and other wonderful songs here - <http://www.sayno.be>

Deterrence is self-defeating

Robert Green, Commander, Royal Navy (Ret'd) of the Disarmament & Security Centre in New Zealand wrote a letter to Theresa May entitled *UK Trident, Nuremberg, the 1996 World Court Judgment, and now the Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons*.

He concludes: "The crisis between the US and North Korea has exposed the reality that nuclear deterrence is not only unlawful and immoral: it provokes insecurity and irrational recklessness on both sides, and stimulates hostility, nuclear arms racing and proliferation. It is self-defeating."

For the full letter see <http://abolishwar.org.uk>

■ **The Peace History Conference and the Working Class Movement Library will focus on the Russian Revolution. Saturday, 4 November, in Salford.** www.peacehistoryconference2017.eventbrite.co.uk

Religious unity

A World Religions for Peace conference by Uniting for Peace will be held on Saturday, 25 November, at Wesley's Chapel, 49 City Road London EC1Y 1AU. For more information contact Vijay Mehta - vijay@vmpeace.org

Walk will remember World War objectors

First World War conscientious objectors will be remembered on a history walk which will take place on Sunday, 19 November from 1.30-3pm in London and led by historian John Hinshelwood. The walk will bring to life a fascinating

and important time in our history. It will start outside Finsbury Park Station (by the Bus Information Point) and take approximately one and a half hours to end at the Salisbury Hotel, Grand Parade, Haringay, from where there are buses back to the start. The walk is free of charge but a place must be booked - <https://beinghumanfestival.org/event/a-walk-remembering-first-world-war-conscientious-objectors/>

Congratulations to Dave Webb, Chair of CND and now also a UK vice-president of the International Peace Bureau. MAW is a partner organisation to the IPB.



Lesson for us all: George speaks out for peace

War Veteran George Evans has read a memorial poem at the annual Remembrance Day event organised by the Royal British Legion in Wellington, Shropshire, for 25 years. In 2014 he read one of his own poems, *The Lesson*, recalling the dead on both sides of WWII. The following year, the Legion 'disinvited' him. Now aged 94, George, who took part in the Normandy Landings and was present at the liberation of Belsen, marked the UN International Day of Peace with a vigil in the village where he has lived all his life. He is planning a further vigil on Remembrance Sunday, saying: "With the international and national news at the moment somebody needs to shout Peace at the top of their voice."

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

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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 £
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 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, eg 2017; '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

Reminder: MAW lecture and AGM

Philip Jennings, General Secretary of UNI Global Union - the global trade union for the service sectors - representing 20 million workers, will give the annual MAW Remembrance Lecture. His talk, *Freedom from Fear: Unions for Peace*, will take place at the Imperial War Museum, London, at **3pm** on Sunday, November 12. All welcome for this free lecture.

Also, the Movement for the Abolition of War's Annual General Meeting, will take place at **12 noon**, the same day and venue. Join us.