

Build back better? A lost opportunity

News that the cap on the number of nuclear warheads will be increased by 40% - announced in the Government's Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy in March - brought widespread shock.

The Prime Minister chose to ignore questions in Parliament about the legality of this increase.

Also alarming is the readiness to abandon a "No first use" policy and the assurance that the armed forces will have cutting-edge capabilities to advance UK interests on Earth and in space.

Additional concerns raised in MAW's submission to the Integrated Review - the need to redefine "security" in terms of human and planetary well-being, to establish an ethical foreign policy with genuine support for the UN, and for effective control of the arms trade - received lip-service in the report but without any meaningful plans of action. Hopeful phrases abound. Britain is to be "a force for
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To receive an electronic version of the newsletter email Gill Hurlle at gill.hurle@abolishwar.org.uk

Abolish War will next be published on September 1. Please like our page and share our posts [facebook.com/abolishwar](https://www.facebook.com/abolishwar)



Celebration of MAW success - here's to the next 20 years!

Nearly 70 friends celebrated MAW's first 20 years at our online birthday party on 27 May - sadly with only a virtual cake!

Our founder Bruce Kent started proceedings by recalling the Hague conference from which MAW was born and then outlined MAW's many achievements since that time.

MAW chair Tim Devereux - pictured above - showed gems from our new website, then led Mererid Hopwood (Professor at Aberystwyth University and pictured above left) and Paul Ingram (independent nuclear disarmament consultant, above right) in a thoughtful and optimistic conversation. There were searching questions from the audience.

Mererid spoke of Henry Richard, whose statue in Tregaron inspired her as a child, and of the recently-launched Welsh Peace Academy. The Welsh Peace Manifesto and the new Curriculum for Wales could help embed values of nonviolence in children. Hope for a peaceful future allows us to see it and gives us the energy to work towards it.

Paul believes the military could be our best allies: they have seen the devastating effects of war. War is not in our nature although deeply embedded in our culture; but culture can and does change. We WILL abolish war eventually, because we have built a sense of possibility about human beings' interaction with each other. A recording can be seen at https://youtu.be/mr9ZjHva_dl

It's time for a rethink say GDAMS activists

MAW Vice President Colin Archer updates us on Global Days of Action on Military Spending (GDAMS)

This year's campaigning season on military spending (April 10 - May 17) came at a significant moment. Just weeks before, the British Government published its Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, announcing a 40% increase in nuclear warheads, major new commitments to hi-tech weaponry and a geo-political shift to the Indo-Pacific, ie heightened hostility to China.

All this on the heels of November's announcement of dramatic increases in military spending, amounting to £24 billion on top of existing budget levels. In round numbers UK military spending reaches nearly £50bn annually. At a time when the country is suffering both a pandemic and an economic crisis these priorities are unacceptable. It has not been an easy time to organise protest events, but a number of webinars have been arranged, as well as various statements and a highly successful Twitterstorm. Recent actions include a conference on Threats of War, a Peace Hustings for the Scottish elections and a protest outside the US spy-base at Menwith Hill (Yorkshire). Do take a look at our striking new website:

<https://demilitarize.org.uk/>

The Global Campaign on Military Spending (GCOMS) UK is supported by 35 organisations representing peace, development and faith communities - including MAW.

Why pilgrims took to the roads to promote the cause of peace

Tim Devereux writes: In 2002 I joined my brother Chris for the last 250 miles of his cycling pilgrimage from Le Puy to Santiago de Compostela. He died from Covid 19 on Good Friday 2020. For some time, he had had Alzheimer's disease, but was living at home. When Pax Christi announced its *Pilgrimage for Peace* fundraiser I signed up, aiming to raise funds for Pax Christi and Alzheimer's Research UK. Rather than the pilgrim hostels of Spain, I planned trips from home.

I started on Saturday, 15 May by riding to Bradford and indulging in some Strava art, "drawing" a CND sign around the city. For the next three days I rode in three stages to RAF Fylingdales in North Yorkshire, part of the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System, via York Minster and Rievaulx Abbey. On the final day I rode to RAF Menwith Hill, the US spy base near Harrogate. What did I learn after 277 miles in five days? People are kind to elderly bike-riders with a 2 foot x 3 foot CND flag strapped to the rear carrier and MOD Police are happy to give a cheery wave. When relying on the Google Maps lady, it is sensible to make absolutely sure beforehand that she is directing you along actual roads, not tracks only suitable for a mountain goat. And, finally, if you keep pedalling, you get there in the end. A lesson for peace



makers, perhaps?

There's still time to donate! Pax Christi - <https://tinyurl.com/PaxDonate>

Alzheimer's Research UK: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tim-devereux>

● **Bruce Kent also took part in the Pilgrimage for Peace, visiting 10 Downing Street and the embassies of the other nuclear weapons states which have refused to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. At each stop he proclaimed part of the treaty and delivered a letter to each ambassador. He is pictured above outside the Chinese Embassy.**

The inspiring couple behind MAW - our President Emeritus Bruce Kent and Dr Valerie Flessati - have been awarded the Lambeth Cross for Ecumenism.

The awards were announced by Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and recognise outstanding contributions to the Church and wider society. The citation for the award reads: "For exceptional, tireless and lifelong dedication to the Christian ecumenical search for peace, both individually and together.

"Peace is one of three pillars of the ecumenical pilgrimage towards a healed world. Valerie Flessati and Bruce Kent chose spiritual warfare on all violence and war."

The award also references Bruce's leadership of CND and Valerie's leadership of Pax Christi.

The couple's tireless campaigning for peace drew criticism from some quarters in the past but, more recently, Pope Francis has said that even the possession of nuclear weapons is a sin.

Tim Devereux, MAW President, said: "We always knew how lucky we were to have Bruce and Valerie on our side and we are very pleased that their huge contribution to the cause of peace has been recognised with this award."

Climate change on MOD agenda

The Ministry of Defence published its "roadmap to becoming more resilient and sustainable in the face of the immense challenge of global climate change" in March. The good news is that the MOD is taking climate change seriously and recognises that war causes climate change and climate change causes war. The review says: "The threats of our modern world, made worse by rising seas, extreme weather conditions and creeping desertification, will almost

MAW couple receive Lambeth Cross for lifelong campaigning



Award: Bruce Kent and Valerie Flessati

- In March, MAW announced our new President, Prof Paul Rogers, who took over the role from our founder, Bruce Kent. Prof Rogers writes: "The current worldwide challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic shows that 'old thinking' on security is simply irrelevant. You can't 'nuke' a virus, the pandemic has killed nearly twice as many people as all the civilians killed in aerial bombardment in the UK throughout the 1939-45 war, and the global death toll is past two and a half million. "Beyond that, we have the greater challenge of preventing climate change where, as with the pandemic, fighting wars is obsolete. We just have to change our thinking and come to terms with the realities of the world. There is work for MAW!" Support us at www.abolishwar.net/new-president-

certainly lead to more conflict. More conflict in itself will damage the planet ... therefore making it less likely that we will reach any of the Paris goals." The report also recognises that it isn't enough only to cut down on 'estates' emissions (by using solar panels on buildings, electric cars at military bases etc) as has been the tendency. So – some good words and worthy aspirations, including the recognition that the military will no doubt be involved with an increasing number of humanitarian rescue missions around the world as the climate crisis worsens.

It would be nice to think that this

increased awareness of military-related greenhouse gas emissions might lead to a reduction in warfare with more thought and investment directed at underlying causes and utilising alternative ways of resolving conflict, but that may still be some way off! At least there should be full accountability for these emissions (including the less obvious ones like carbon-heavy post-conflict reconstruction) and their inclusion in national reduction targets. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/defence-outlines-greener-future>

Hilary Evans

From p1: Build back better good in the world, working to “restore a spirit of greater international cooperation, based on dialogue and compromise” and seeking to “reinforce and renew existing pillars of the international order - such as the UN”. Little detail, though, on implementation. A positive aspect, however, is the recognition that climate change and global health risks count as security issues, threatening global resilience and requiring urgent action. <https://abolishwar.net/build-back-better-a-lost-opportunity/>

• **Musicians for Peace and Disarmament** will host a concert on Friday, June 25 at 7.30pm on Zoom and in collaboration with CND Cymru, featuring Welsh music. See www.mpdconcerts.org to book tickets.

Get involved - and talk to your MP about work of the UNA UK

Linda Mesney describes the work of the United Nations Association UK

The UNA UK is a grass roots organisation with charity status. Like the UN it was also founded in 1945. The UNA UK has a unique mission to support, interpret, promote and comment on the work, and on the original vision of the UN, as set out in the Preamble of the UN's Charter: “We the peoples...”

As well as a small, but active and well-informed UNA UK team based in London, there is a voluntary network of UNA Local and University branches, plus individual members and supporters. Some UNA branches now hold their talks and discussions online:

- See the local UNA's hub page at <https://una.org.uk/>

[get-involved/local-unas-hub-page](https://una.org.uk/get-involved/local-unas-hub-page) and the UNA UK membership policy using links on the Hub page

- See the latest UNA UK magazine at: <https://una.org.uk/magazine>

Guiding the UNA UK is a Board of Directors, with two Trustees directly elected by the branches and members and supported by experienced international advisers and patrons. See <https://una.org.uk/who-we-are/our-people> for details.

For anyone interested international affairs and the UK's Foreign and Defence policies and her role at the UN, we would urge you to take some time to browse through the recent online UNA UK articles listed on the Home page; just keep scrolling down! If unsatisfied, why not share your query with your MP?

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/support-us/join-us/>

Send the completed form (and cheque if applicable) to: Movement for the Abolition of War, 1 Old Mill Place, Haslemere, GU27 1NE

Membership application / renewal

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OR Please send me a standing order form

• **A powerful film about Conscientious Objectors to conscription in Israel** looks valuable as an argument for peaceful creation of security. Read the review here: <http://povmagazine.com/articles/view/objector-review-youth-in-revolt>

• **The International Peace Bureau (IPB)** has launched a draft programme for the World Peace Congress to be held in Barcelona from October 15-17. More details on the website - www.ipb2021.barcelona Registration for the Congress is also open: www.ipb2021.barcelona/register/

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 2020; ‘Life’, if you are a life member; ‘SO’ if you pay by standing order or ‘Comp’ if you receive a complimentary copy.

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