

How two soldiers who were former foes have found common ground



David Collins recounts his time hosting a special guest:

I recently hosted Argentinians Ariel Martinelli and his wife Stella. Their home is in Mar del Plata in Argentina. Neither speaks English. He is the author with whom I worked to translate into English his graphic history of his traumatic experiences in the 1982 war over the Falklands Islands or, as they are known in his country, Las Malvinas. During his visit I arranged for a former British soldier of the Welsh Guards, and a survivor of the aerial bombing and sinking of the Sir Galahad (in which over 50 soldiers died), to meet us for dinner at a pub in London. I attach a photo. No words are

needed to describe their immediate connection and friendship. Next day, curators at the Imperial War Museum accepted the Spanish and English version of his book for their library where it will be available for students to read on line or physically. We even spent an hour with the outgoing Argentine Ambassador in London at which I was offered Argentine academic support to complete my own book. The rest of the week was sightseeing - to get up to the Sky Garden, which normally takes

weeks ahead to book, we were all allowed straight to the top after Ariel's wife showed an Argentine Army Veterans Medical Certificate - their instant courtesy towards a one time foe was very moving. I now have a real "Mate" (Argentine tea) cup in wood with a silver tube to start me off in the morning instead of coffee and a Gaucho Cravat to wear once I get in the saddle and roam the plains!

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.

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Anti-nuclear steps

The Lakenheath Alliance for Peace has organised a walk from Norwich from 13 - 16 July and a peace camp from July 13 - 25. Member Ali Lochhead will represent MAW. The Alliance is a coalition of groups dedicated to preventing the return of US nuclear weapons to USAF Lakenheath. <https://lakenheathallianceforpeace.org.uk/>

School peace pack

The Peace Education Network has published a new pack for secondary school students. Download *Teach Peace Secondary* at: <https://www.peace-education.org.uk/>



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Action: Join us for COP29 Zoom

MAW Zoom event Friday, 10 May, 2024, 7pm
From COP28 to COP29 – what we hope for in 2024.

Deborah Burton, pictured, co-founder of *Tipping Point North South: creative campaigning for global justice*, will share her experience of the recent COP28 in Dubai.



This will include specific reference to TPNS events on military emissions and spending, and reflect on the activities

throughout 2024 which will deepen awareness and action on both issues as we move towards COP29 in Azerbaijan.

MAW part-funded Deborah's trip to COP28 and plans to do the same this year for COP29

Book here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/from-cop28-to-cop29-what-we-hope-for-in-2024-tickets-863106433577>

Date for your diaries - the 2024 MAW AGM will be held on Saturday, November 9 at 1pm. More details coming soon.

For an electronic version of this newsletter email Gill Hurle at gill.hurle@abolishwar.org.uk
The next edition of *Abolish War* will be published in August.



Pedal power: Why is Tim Devereux is taking to the road? **See page 3**

Ukraine and the Middle East - bring on the diplomats

Today's world is riven with dangerous conflicts, of which the most immediately perilous for humanity are those in Ukraine and the Middle East.

In both cases, while the priority must be to negotiate on the fundamental causes, this necessary step remains unlikely in the immediate future.

However, pouring in more weapons will not solve either conflict. The US aid package for Ukraine will keep that country in the fight for a further year or two - but there is no appetite in NATO for a full-on collective push to drive Russia from Ukrainian soil. The suffering and massive destruction will go on.

In the Middle East, the twin priorities right now are defusing tensions with Iran and stopping the flood of US arms to Israel. Nothing else will deflect Netanyahu from his crusade to destroy Hamas.

To do so means eradicating Rafah and killing thousands more civilians - yet another war crime. Regardless of **cont on p2**

From p1 - Ukraine and the Middle East - bring on the diplomats

their protestations, arms imports from western allies mean they will be implicated. The EU and UN, along with regional powers, need to urgently insist on serious negotiations: on a ceasefire, the hostages, humanitarian aid and withdrawal of the IDF from Gaza. This could open the way to talks on fundamental solutions to save both peoples from disaster. In our view, the only viable path to sustainable peace is a two-state solution, however unpopular that might be with certain communities. The US veto of a Security Council resolution on April 18, recognising the state of Palestine as a full member of the UN, was unhelpful.

In Ukraine, a form of (con)federal solution might just be made to work, once Russian troops are withdrawn. It could include agreeing a new version of the Minsk agreements, possibly with a pledge to keep Ukraine out of NATO. A humiliated Putin is not a programme for peace - remember post-WW1 Germany. But a victorious Putin could also be a recipe for more threats to former Soviet states.

These two conflicts carry the same urgent top priority - the need at all costs to avoid escalation leading to nuclear war. The clumsy and ill-judged tit for tat attacks between Israel and Iran in the past few weeks show how easy it is to misjudge an opponent's intentions. Amidst the chaos of a now-regional conflict, both sides have ditched the fine calculus of mutual deterrence, sacrificing the chance of a rapprochement for nationalist revenge strikes, thus risking the future of the whole area. Bring on the diplomats.

Colin Archer and Tim Devereux

Events in London and across the country will mark CO Day

May 15 is International Conscientious Objectors' Day, when we honour those who have refused military service in the past, as well as those who still do so today.

Co-sponsored by MAW, the London event, which will be streamed online, will be in Tavistock Square at 1pm. It will include a contribution from a current Israeli CO. Speeches will be followed by a reading of CO names from around the world, flowers will be laid on the memorial stone and there will be a minute's silence. There will also be events in Edinburgh, Manchester, Wokingham, Brighton and elsewhere. See www.co-day.org for the full programme.

Abolishing the Military - BOOK REVIEW

Leonard, Llewellyn and Jackson 160pp, 2023. BWB
Texts: www.bwb.co.nz

This "short book on a big subject" aims to explode several myths about New Zealand's military forces - and makes a full-on case for their abolition. The main arguments will be familiar to peace advocates: ineffectiveness, opportunity costs, counter-productive defence postures, adventurism, better alternatives etc. It is most persuasive when arguing that military defence makes little sense for small states like Aotearoa when threatened by large ones. Civilian-based defence/nonviolent resistance stands a

Music will be provided by the Raised Voices choir, with MAW's Sue Gilmurray who has been taking part every year since 2000. As part of the day the following words will be sung:

"Ask people what are their hopes for the future, likelihood is they will say they want peace, yet pin their faith upon weapons and armies even as damage and danger increase. Look back to those who have dared to be different, over the world let their clear courage flow. Army unarmed, let it swell into millions. Cry 'Yes' to peace with the ones who said No."

better chance of success. But what about larger states with imperialistic neighbours? There the picture is more complicated. Should New Zealand participate in interventions launched by allies, notably the US and UK? These authors say no. But more striking is their critique of their country's involvement in UN peace-keeping or "peace support missions" dating back to the 1950s. This is certainly not a detailed blueprint or strategy for abolition, but it is a useful starting place for anyone not yet exposed to pacifist/nonviolent defence thinking. The ample notes point to a wealth of other sources, both in New Zealand and beyond. One useful complement is Christophe Barbey's paper on the 26 Countries Without Armies. Colin Archer

Search Rethinking Security on Spotify, Soundcloud and Apple to catch its series *Paths out of Polycrisis*.

Tim's pedal power will help Palestinians

MAW's Tim Devereux (see photo on page 1) will raise money for British charity Medical Aid for Palestinians - which is offering medical services during the current crisis in the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon - by cycling 301 miles over five days.



Tim says: "For the past three years I have done a cycle ride over four or five days in the summer, covering about 250 miles. This year, I'm planning to ride the 301 miles from Leeds to Brighton in June. I'll be riding a bike based on an ancient hand-built frame given to me by a club mate in 1963! It now has posh wheels and modern transmission.

"I hadn't intended to do any fundraising this year, but the current crisis in Palestine made me change my plans.

"If you care about the suffering in Gaza please consider sponsoring me. You don't have to wait till the ride is over."

Tim's JustGiving page can be found here - <https://www.justgiving.com/page/tim-devereux-map>. Donations have already hit the £1000 target, but he promises to do the ride anyway!

Conference to seek alternatives to war in a time of global crisis

Our conference for peace activists and scholars to discuss methods and strategies to lead us in a new direction is taking shape. We are lining up high level speakers who will inspire us all to new endeavours.

Please note the date and place for now and we will look forward to seeing you there.

The Conference will take place on Saturday, 14 September and will run from 10.30am to 4pm. It will be held at Sands Film Studio, 82, St Marychurch Street,

Rotherhithe, London SE16 4HZ, a really great venue.

The Conference will also be available to view online.

We do have a great line-up of confirmed speakers already, including Paul Rogers, Diana Francis, John Gittings, Jonathan Cohen, Andrei Gomez-Suarez, Gwen Burnyeat and Tanya Hubbard.

As well as talks and discussions, there will be time for participants to network. We look forward to seeing you in September!

The Campaign Against the Arms Trade has released a documentary with Ded_ucation (Demilitarize Education, <https://ded1.co/>) called *Don't Buy a Bomb*. It follows the six-year judicial battle in which CAAT took the UK government to court over the legality of its arms sales to Saudi Arabia. The film shows the fight against the UK Government's proliferation of deadly weapons being used to bomb Yemen. Watch the film by searching for the YouTube channel [dEDUCATION](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdEDUCATION). If you'd like to put on a screening of the documentary in your local area, get in touch with CAAT (via <https://caat.org.uk/>).

Nobel endeavour - Fredrik S Heffermehl

A growing unease that the persons Alfred Nobel had in mind as deserving winners of his peace prize were losing out - and that the Norwegian Nobel Committee's decisions were often failing to respect Nobel's intentions, led my colleague, the Norwegian lawyer and peace activist Fredrik S. Heffermehl, to start a campaign. His aim was to oblige the Committee to bring its awards more in line with the will, ie to give them to genuine peace and disarmament advocates. Heffermehl, who has died at



his home near Oslo aged 85, was a leading member of the Norwegian peace movement, of the International Association of Lawyers against Nuclear Arms, and of the International Peace Bureau. In his final and highly original, book, *The Real Nobel Peace Prize: A Squandered Opportunity to Abolish War*, he examined every award and all nominations received by the Committee, through his critical lens, making extensive use of the Committee's own archives. Fredrik Stang Heffermehl (11 November 1938 - 21 December 2023) <https://realnobelpeace.org/> Colin Archer