

Sixth-form peace talks - can you help?

For many years, in Bath, local activists have organised a two-hour annual Autumn sixth form conference about peace, justice and co-existence in the world. If you think that you and others might like to replicate this in other parts of the country, follow this link for some "how-to" tips from our vice-president Diana Francis and her team - <https://abolishwar.net/campaigning/campaigning-tools/organising-a-sixth-form-conference/>

Booklet maps out conflict resolution

Lord John Alderdice, founding chair of The Concord Foundation, gave the 2025 MAW Remembrance Lecture to a packed hall in London last November.

Drawing on his experience as a key figure in bringing the Belfast/Good Friday agreement to a successful conclusion and as a former consultant psychiatrist in psychotherapy, John spoke about the qualities needed in today's world if we are to succeed in resolving and preventing conflict.

The speech is available from MAW in a new 32-page booklet entitled *Ending Wars - a Psychological Perspective*, from the Russell Foundation, for £5 plus £1 p&p flat rate. Order via abolisher.net, then go to 'support us' and then 'shop'.



Turn to page 3 to catch up with peace protests around the country. (photo courtesy of Sally Mears of Abingdon Peace Group).

Rowan Williams to address ethics and war at 2026 Remembrance Lecture

The MAW Remembrance Lecture 2026 will take place this year on Sunday, 8 November, and we are delighted to announce that Rowan Williams will be our speaker.

Baron Williams of Oystermouth served as the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury from 2002 to 2012 and is a former Archbishop of Wales and Bishop of Monmouth.

He will speak on **'The Changing Face of War: Thoughts on the Erosion of Ethics.'**

The lecture will take place at 3pm, at Mander Hall, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BD.

MAW's Sue Dowell reflects on the appeal of Rowan Williams

Those familiar with Williams' work will know that although widely hailed as an impressive theologian, he doesn't argue like a theologian but rather appeals to common experience; to an awareness that our/my own welfare is inextricably bound up with and dependent on that of others. Interdependence is more than a desirable "add on" to our understanding of the human condition - it is central to it if we are to remain human in an increasingly troubled and violent world.

Hence a major element of Williams' writing and thinking has focused on the erosion of patterns of thinking and speaking to and of one another and the world, along with those mechanisms

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Book Review

Nuclear Abolition: A Scenario

By Timmon Wallis, Indispensable Press, 2025, 369pp

<https://timmonwallis.com/>

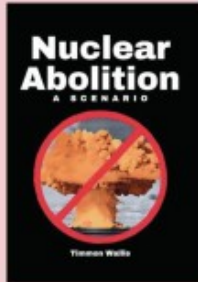
The worse the tensions between the world's big states, the more urgent it is to ensure that nuclear weapons are removed from the mix. Clearly, total elimination is the goal – but how exactly do we get there?

Over the decades, disarmament activists have worked on a variety of strategies to bring our governments to their senses. Since 2021, when it

entered into force, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons has offered a clear and potentially universal instrument to manage the change. But the nuclear possessors are holding out. Tim Wallis's book offers a very readable - and credible - set of connected proposals for how the opposition can be overcome. It is based on a pincer movement: on the one hand, a gradual increase in international pressure; on the other, concerted campaigns within the USA to persuade municipalities and, above all, companies involved in the nuclear industry, to switch to non-nuclear, pro-sustainability policies.

Wallis focuses on the US, not only because of the key role it has played in the development of nuclear weapons and its dominance in world politics, but also for another reason.

As he explains in an intriguing epilogue, there is just a chance that the unpredictable Trump might switch his position, concluding that since these weapons are unusable and costly, he might prefer to go down in history as the man who actually did what all previous Presidents have failed to do...



Colin Archer

Why MAW's opposition to war remains steadfast - and very sadly vindicated

MAW continues to condemn the illegal, reckless and brutal attacks by the US and Israel on Iran – see abolishwar.net

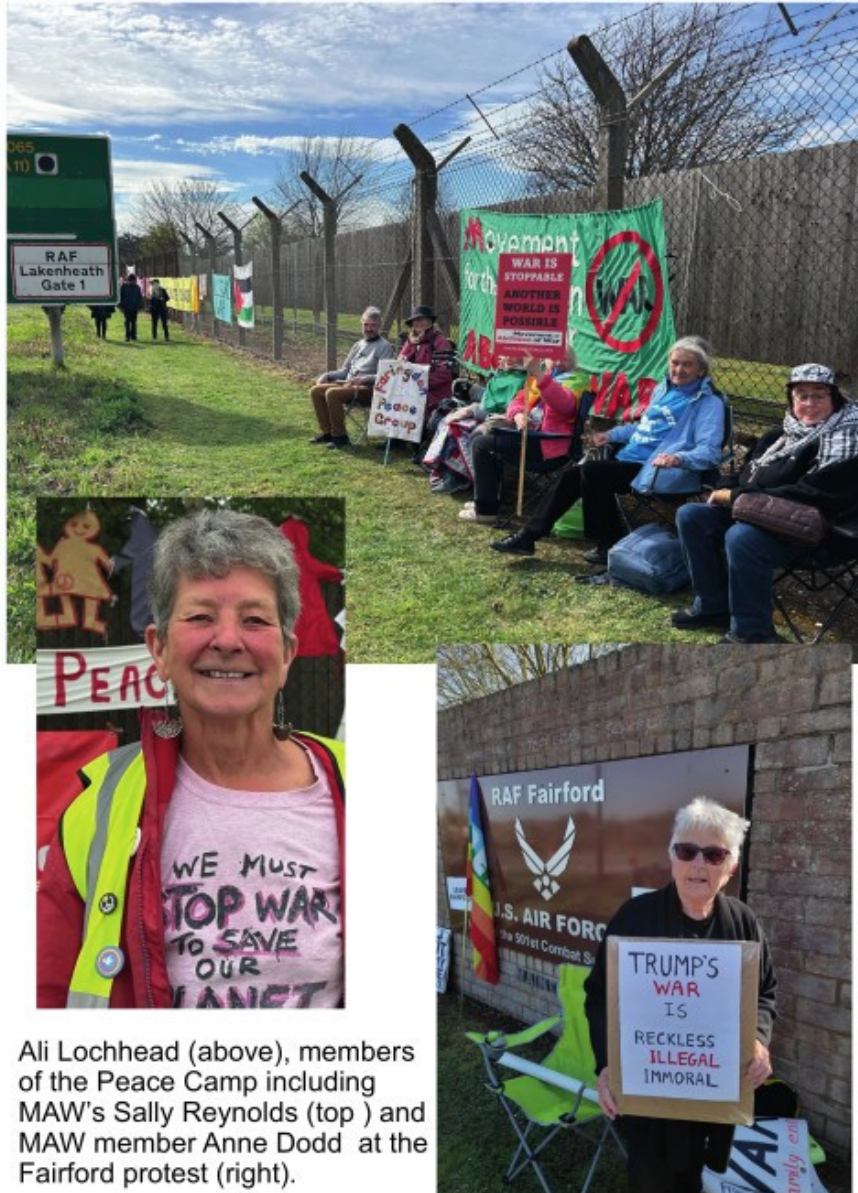
The main reason given by the US now seems to have settled on the issue of Iran's alleged interest in developing nuclear weapons. Yet until these attacks began, Iran continued to participate in the ongoing UN Conference on establishing a Middle-East Zone free from Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction. Israel, on the other hand, refuses to negotiate on its own possession of nuclear weapons – but this is never mentioned. Prime Minister Netanyahu, in working with President Trump, is given a veneer of respectability even as he continues his genocide in Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon.

Our thoughts are with those who have been killed, injured or displaced as a result of this onslaught. As we have frequently said, all war is a humanitarian catastrophe but it is also an environmental catastrophe. (See - www.theguardian.com/world/2026/mar/21/middle-east-iran-conflict-environment-climate)

It is disingenuous of our government to state virtuously that they have refused to participate in this war when British bases are being used including Akrotiri, Cyprus, involved in reconnaissance and intelligence gathering, and Fairford, Gloucestershire, from which huge US bombers have been carrying out twice-daily bombing missions, dropping 2,000lb bombs on Iran. We echo the words of US Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez: **"Violence begets violence. We learned this lesson in Iraq. We learned this lesson in Afghanistan. And we are about to learn it in Iran. Bombs have yet to create enduring democracies in the region and this will be no different. This war is unlawful. It is unnecessary. And it will be catastrophic."**



RAISING OUR VOICES: International Conscientious Objectors' Day took place on May 15 - MAW's Sue Gilmurray is pictured above leading Raised Voices choir at Tavistock Square, London. CO day coincided with the launch of a petition against military conscription in the UK. The petition can be viewed and signed here - [No military conscription | 38 Degrees](#)



Ali Lochhead (above), members of the Peace Camp including MAW's Sally Reynolds (top) and MAW member Anne Dodd at the Fairford protest (right).

From peace camps to rallies and marches - keeping the pressure on

Ali Lochhead, who was previously an executive member of MAW, is one of a core group of Greenham Women who set up Lakenheath Alliance for Peace.

The Alliance highlights the return of US nuclear weapons to the UK there and, more recently, the role of the Suffolk base in the bombing of Iran. April saw the second successful International Peace Camp at Lakenheath. <https://lakenheathallianceforpeace.org.uk/>

Meanwhile MAW members in the Oxfordshire Peace Campaign have collaborated with Drone Wars UK to stage demonstrations outside USAF Fairford in Gloucestershire, including a national CND march in late April.

Heavy bombers have been taking off daily throughout the bombing campaign from both bases, and are being closely monitored by local groups and by Nukewatch.

Debate on climate and defence needed

'Euphoric' was how *The Guardian* described the mood at the Santa Marta conference in Colombia at the end of April: the first **Conference on Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels**, which arose from the frustration of inaction at last year's climate conference COP30.

"After years stuck in endless debates about whether to phase out fossil fuels, we are finally focusing on the **how**", said one delegate.

Deborah Burton of Tipping Point North South (TPNS), attended the conference online, also representing MAW. TPNS submitted a document in advance on the *War Machine and Arms Industry* as part of the civil society consultation.

Deborah said: "It has given a major boost to all of us who have long been advocating that runaway military spending belongs alongside debt cancellation, trade justice and tax justice in climate finance discussions. But this is just the starting point from which we need to move rapidly on to the much wider, much needed global debate on what exactly constitutes 'defence' and why the climate emergency demands we transform our understanding of it."

Deborah's submission to the conference can be seen on MAW's website. (<https://abolishwar.net/santa-marta-conference/>) and the full conference report is available on <https://tippingpointnorthsouth.org/2026/05/03/a-much-needed-boost-for-climate-hope-the-first-conference-on-transitioning-away-from-fossil-fuels/>

MAW will sponsor Deborah to attend in person the pre-COP 31 conference in Bonn as part of a **Disarming the Climate** event, for which she has already prepared material. She also plans to attend COP 31 itself in Turkey in November.

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, but to do this we need *you*.

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.net/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

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Happy anniversary to us! MAW set to celebrate 25 years of campaigning

The Movement for the Abolition of War (MAW) will celebrate its 25th anniversary this year, marking a quarter-century of campaigning for a world beyond war and violence.

Founded in 2001, MAW was inspired by the landmark "Time to Abolish War" gathering held in The Hague in 1999, which brought together thousands of peace campaigners from around the world. Since then, the organisation has worked tirelessly to challenge the idea that war is inevitable and to promote peaceful alternatives to conflict.

MAW's founder chair was of course Bruce Kent (pictured), an internationally respected peace campaigner and former Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament leader, whose lifelong commitment to nuclear



disarmament and international cooperation helped shape the movement's vision and direction. Over the past 25 years, MAW has organised annual remembrance lectures, peace history conferences, educational campaigns and public events, while continuing to advocate for nuclear disarmament, climate justice, strengthened international cooperation and a broader understanding of human security. MAW has brought together campaigners, academics, faith groups, artists and young people in a shared commitment to peace. Guided by the principles of the United Nations Charter, MAW continues to argue that humanity must find ways to resolve disputes without resorting to violence.

As the anniversary year unfolds, "watch this space" for special events and activities to commemorate the milestone.

Ethics and War, Remembrance Lecture

from page 1

- neighbourly networks and neighbourly networks and civic fraternities, which, prior to the modern period, offered a sense of integration, of belonging with an entire social body extending far beyond one's choice or one's affiliations of interest and "natural" loyalty.

To retrieve what has been if not lost then fatally weakened, Williams believes will require more than goodwill. It will require anger; anger at what he named "a recent history of public corruption and barbarity compounded by apathy and narcissism."

MAW's AGM - make a date

The Annual General meeting will be held at 1.30pm on 8 November, before the Remembrance Lecture and at the same venue - Mander Hall, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BD. All are welcome.

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 2025; '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/support-us/join-us/>.

If you would like to receive email notification of the newsletter availability, instead of a hard copy, please email gill.hurle@abolishwar.org.uk

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