



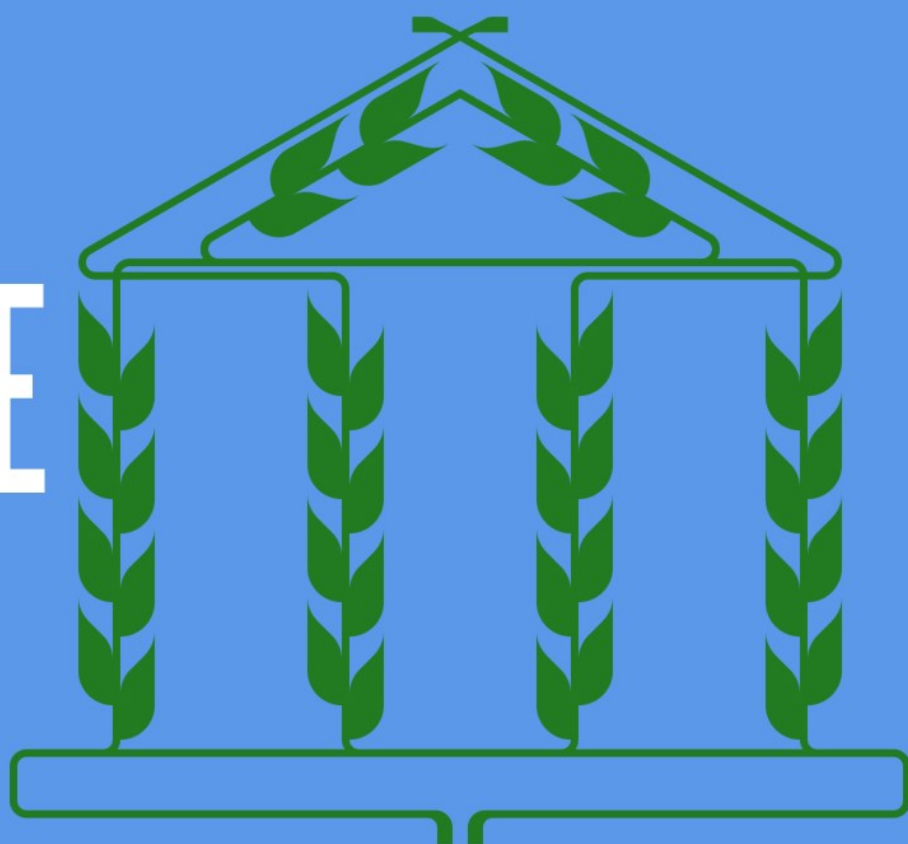
MAKING THE LINKS,
WAGING PEACE



PEACE & JUSTICE NEWS

OCTOBER 2013

A CULTURE OF PEACE



IN THIS ISSUE:

Why a White Poppy

Alternatives to Violence Project

Non-violent Communication

Review: Holding Faith

Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre

Non-Violence □ Conflict Resolution □ Alternatives to War

Human Rights □ Environmental Responsibility

Providing analysis of the causes of war and advocating peace & disarmament..

Networking in Edinburgh & across Scotland.

Organisational affiliation open to groups which share our values.

Leaflet and poster display space

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Speaker series, Peace and Justice News

Opening hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10.00am – 4.00pm.

Peace and Justice News is the monthly publication of the Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre. While individual contributions do not necessarily reflect the views of the Centre, we encourage contributions which support and explore our aims and values relative to contemporary events. Submissions by email to news@peaceandjustice.org.uk by 5pm on the 22nd of the month for inclusion in the next issue. We may need to edit for length.

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Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre is run by volunteers and relies upon the support of its members. Membership is £20 (£12 concession). all members receive P&J News.

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Editor's Introduction

In this Issue of Peace and Justice News we feature a number of writers inspired by last month's issue 'Be the Change'. This month we take for our theme 'A Culture of Peace'. Many of our readers have been involved in the Peace movement for many years and are well used to anti-war demonstrations, and well versed in the arguments against nuclear weapons; but in this issue we demonstrate that a culture of peace is about far more than the absence of war. Indeed, the absence of war is merely the starting point.

Thus in this issue, in addition to our regular features, Centre News, News from Around the Movements and Unsung Heroes, we hear from writers making their own contribution to a culture of peace. Jeroen van Herk writes about the dismal nature of much care for the elderly, Jake Lawy and Isabelle Wolf introduce us to non-violent communication, a means of practicing non violence in our everyday lives, and Martin Mansell writes about the Alternatives to Violence Project now expanding across Scotland.

We also feature a review of David Gee's *Holding Faith* and a Reflection by our Coordinator Brian Larkin on Gandhi and the necessity of nonviolent civil resistance in our struggles for justice and peace, while Anne Scott explains why we should all be wearing a white poppy this november.

Next month we look at the theme of Remembrance and War. Please email submissions and ideas to contact@peaceandjustice.org.uk whether this be your own remembrances or comments on the upcoming remembrance celebrations.

Helen Harris

Appeal

This is an interesting moment in history: the ruling elite in the West has wanted to see military intervention of some kind against the Assad regime in Syria, but opinion polls, and that remarkable vote in the House of Commons shows that the population at large – whether in Britain, France or the USA – have been quite unwilling to go along with the idea. As one US Congress-

man put it, it seems we're stuck with 'one damn war after another'.



Photo credit: www.rj-whenlovecomestotown.blogspot.co.uk/

This war-weariness presents peace campaigners with an opportunity to have alternatives to war taken seriously, and to create interest in many aspects of a culture of peace. Efforts to make the centenary of the outbreak of World War 1 an occasion to celebrate heroic sacrifice may well be subverted by an understanding that the war was a terrible disaster, which should have been avoided.

The Peace and Justice Centre will be doing what it can to give substance to what is still mainly an instinctive reluctance to support military options. To do this we need the financial support of the people who share our concern. A modest monthly standing order will help give us a secure base for our work. Consider it.

Geoffrey Carnall

Contents

Editorial	4
Centre News	5
Injustice in Elderly Care	6
Living the Dream: Nonviolent Communication	8
Alternatives to Violence Project in Scotland	9
News from Around the Movements	11
Book Review: <i>Holding Faith</i>	17
Unsung Heroes: Sunila Abeysekera	18
Reflection: Gandhi, Resistance and Jail	20

Editorial : US, Israel Must Disarm Chemical & Nuke Bombs

Heeding popular opposition to UK involvement in another Middle East war Parliament rejected David Cameron's plan to support potential US military strikes against Syria. It was a hugely significant turn of events. Then, astonishingly Syria signed the Chemical Weapons Convention and agreed to the destruction of its chemical weapons. We should cherish this hugely significant victory for diplomacy, fragile as it is.

But we must be vigilant. President Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry continue to wield a big stick: the US is prepared to strike should Syria not carry through with its stated intention of handing over its chemical weapons. This notion we must resist. Without the authorisation of the UN Security Council, such an attack would be an illegal act of aggression. The US is not the world's policeman; nor is it, as Obama claims, exceptional. Some in the US, notably John McCain, are still clamouring for war. As we would expect. For they and those they serve, would profit handsomely, with each Cruise missile, manufactured by Lockheed Martin, costing an estimated \$1.4million. But, beyond Syria, the real object of an attack on Syria would be to warn Iran that the US is prepared to back up its threats with action.



Photo Credit: npr.org

But the narrative of the US as the good guys intervening to stop the brutal dictator from using weapons of mass destruction serves to distract attention from US possession of a vast arsenal of nuclear weapons which it is prepared to use. Enough to destroy life on this planet. Having refused to pledge No First Use, and indeed, with NATO (and the UK), under the Strategic Concept, they are prepared to use them. The US are in

the process of building a vast new complex of bomb factories, and an array of bombers, missiles and submarines at a cost of \$100Billion. If chemical weapons must not be possessed or used then nuclear weapons must not be.

Moreover the US chemical has 3 times as many chemical weapons as Syria (as well as biological weapons) and plans to take until 2023 to dismantle them while insisting Syria agree to dismantle its chemical weapons within a year. And its key ally Israel has nuclear and chemical weapons and has not signed up to the NPT or ratified the chemical weapons convention. But the US took no action against Israel when it used white phosphorous on the people of Gaza. Indeed the US continues to pretend that Israel's nuclear weapons do not exist while it threatens military action against Iran for its nuclear programme, even though Iran has never been shown to be developing nuclear weapons. Following the 2010 NPT Conference it was agreed to convene talks on a Middle East free of nuclear weapons but that fell through due to Israel's refusal to participate.

As we go to press the Conference on Disarmament is meeting at the UN. If it was honest and genuinely committed to a world free of weapons of mass destruction the US would use this opportunity to pledge No First Use. It would announce and end to its provocative missile defense deployments in Eastern Europe which stand in the way of further mutual reductions with Russia and commit to those reductions. It would drastically speed up the timeline for the destruction of its own chemical and biological weapons, insist that Israel and Egypt ratify the chemical weapons convention, and Israel join the NPT and relinquish its nuclear weapons.

Brian Larkin

Centre News

New Treasurer

We are happy to report that we now have a new Treasurer, **Sarah Qui**. Sarah writes: *Hi everyone, I have been given the honour of becoming the new Treasurer for the Peace & Justice Centre. It is a role I am eager to fulfil and enjoy doing. I have built up experience in the past by volunteering as a fundraiser treasurer for Marie Curie Cancer Care Edinburgh West Group, which I still enjoy doing. I am also a penultimate year accounting student in Edinburgh Napier University.*



The Peace and Justice Centre writes about and highlights the issues that are too often ignored by the mainstream media. Regardless if the injustice is done in a country far away, or it occurs just around your corner: both issues are treated with the same respect and attention. EPJC works with the moral values I thoroughly believe in and I am grateful to have the invaluable opportunity to get involved.

Peace and Justice Centre events in the Edinburgh World Justice Festival.

Drones Quilt Exhibition

St John's Church Hall. 9:30 - 11:30 & 1:00 - 2:30pm. Saturday 19 Oct.

This 40 foot patchwork quilt is a tribute to victims of Drone wars. Each square was individually created by different people from around the world to represent a life lost to a drone attack, most civilians, many children. The Quilt is a living petition which will be presented by Fellowship of Reconciliation to Parliament. We displayed the quilt throughout August. It is an evocative way of connecting to the reality of what drones mean, the destruction of the lives of innocent human beings. Many people found it very moving. If you missed the Quilt it in August don't miss this opportunity to see it.

Organised by Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre with Edinburgh CND, Edinburgh Stop the War, Edinburgh Campaign Against the Arms Trade and Scottish WILPF.

The Economic and Human Cost of Drones Wars

A Talk by Chris Cole, Coordinator of Drones Wars UK

Plus Raz Mohammed of the Afghan Peace Volunteers, from Kabul.

St John's Church Hall. 11:00am - 1:00pm. Saturday 19 Oct.

The UK is conducting drone attacks in Afghanistan from Warrington Air Base. Chris Cole, Coordinator of DroneWarsUK will talk about the economic and human cost of drone wars and his part in cutting a fence and planting a peace garden inside Warrington Base.

Afghan Peace Volunteer Raz Mohammed speaks about the impact of drones on his family in Afghanistan in a short Video.

Organised by Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre with Edinburgh CND, Edinburgh Stop the War, Edinburgh Campaign Against the Arms Trade & Scottish WILPF.

Library Update

We will be sorting through the Centre's remarkable library in the last week of September and first week of October. If you would like to help please contact the centre.

Volunteers Needed

Our Saturday Volunteers have moved on to greener pastures and full time jobs! Could you give 3 or 6 hours on Saturdays, or every other Saturday? Or one Saturday a month to keep the Centre open? Contact the Centre if you want to help.

Web Developer

We want to make some improvements to our Wordpress website. Do you have website development skills? If so you could make an impact on promoting peace and justice in Scotland. Please contact the Centre.

Injustice in Elderly Care: private home care companies' disregard for responsible care and the minimum wage

Older generations remember times in which care was regarded as a moral obligation. However, despite the new generation being less determined to take care of their old ones, today's elderly still seem to prefer applying for care packages rather than moving into elderly homes. As the quality of private care homes has been deteriorating dramatically since the start of the austerity cuts, it may not be a surprise, but are the elderly really better off when care is brought to their home?

In 2011 Thomas Hammarber, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, responded to the cuts by warning that the austerity measures would have a drastic effect on "vulnerable people's quality of life" and argued that "privatisation is not the solution". To outline the differences between care provided in care homes and home care by visits to the person's home: private companies involved with the latter aren't subjected to the cuts in a similar way. While care homes are allocated a budget which becomes tighter by the year and which needs to cover a number of issues, care packages just simply cover the cost of the service. In some cases the council provides the service by sending council workers (carers); in other cases the package is given from council to the company, assigning it to provide care.

This does not mean that both parties - those people who apply for the packages and the council allocating them - remain unaffected by austerity measures. On the contrary: the private companies dealing with the packages are certain to have more than enough work. As a matter of fact privatisation has become a booming industry.

Having worked as a carer myself I soon grew suspicious that short visits were preferred by the company I worked for. A visit of an hour in which often more serious care had to be provided could easily be exceeded in time, whereas a brief visit would force carers to con-



Photo Credit Belfast Telegraph

stantly be timekeeping in order not to be late for the next visit. The theory seemed proven when after being shortly enrolled I already found myself being 'ping ponged' up and down between different service users. I also had to get accustomed to non-stop stress and a heavy work load, working nine days continually was normal. The office, from which orders were given on daily, would tell you that your colleague had fallen ill or had a holiday, and you had to stand in for them.

Despite this, the pay was disgracefully low. Cunningly the company only pays for 'the time you work' and not for the 'time you travel'. Whereas council carers get paid from morning till night, a company carer who does ten 30-minute visits on a day, with 15 minutes of 'rushing time' in between, is paid for 5 hours, instead of the 7.5 he actually 'works'. Furthermore, when not spending time rushing up and down, you spend it on taking inconvenient breaks causing these 7.5 hours to be divided over the course of 08.30 AM till 10.00 PM. Taking into account that carers often go without any information about the service user prior to meeting them, I strongly doubt whether the company I worked for was able to provide responsible care.

That an even murkier future will be looming over Britain's elderly care system seems inevitable. As the current coalition sternly pushes their agenda through, some might argue that the tide has changed if the next general election results in a government led by the current opposition. But hopes have been lessened with news reports in June revealing that head of the Better Together Campaign and former Labour Chancellor Alistair Darling "...was paid thousands of pounds by a company heavily involved in the privatisation of the English NHS..", proving preference for privatisation is still an open question for many political parties.



Photo credit: <http://www.absolutehomehealthllc.com>

Let's face it: by currently dealing with one of Europe's highest rates of fuel poverty related deaths, privatisation of home care for the elderly seems to be the least efficient solution to for Britain's baby boom generation. Unfortunately the handover of care packages from council to private care companies happens ever more and goes hand in hand with the problem of secure jobs being sacrificed for unreliable jobs which pay less than the minimum wage.

sources:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/8575680/Elderly-Britons-in-care-homes-crisis-Europes-human-rights-chief-warns.html>

<http://newsnetscotland.com/index.php/scottish-news/7709-alistair-darling-paid-thousands-by-nhs-privatisation-company>

Jeroen van Herk

Living the Dream: Nonviolent Communication

It's all very well to say 'Be the Change', but what exactly *is the change that you want to see in the world, and more subtly, how do you 'be the change' as opposed to chasing or making change externally?* These are questions that my practise of Nonviolent Communication (NVC) has helped me answer.

For me "Being the Change" is "Living my dream". Both are about following what is most alive for me in any given moment and acting out of my values even (or perhaps especially) in challenging situations. Living my values means, for me, doing what is most urgent and meaningful without attachment to the outcome.

My practise of NVC has helped me ask myself the question 'What is most important for me here?' more often and with more depth. This keeps me focused, motivated and on purpose. Perhaps the only thing that separates the leader of a corporation from the leader of a social movement is the depth to which they ask this question.

In NVC values are conceived of as needs. Marshall Rosenberg, the founder of NVC, was inspired by Maslow and his conception of universal needs ranging from basic needs for food, shelter and water up to needs for companionship, belonging and transcendence.

Once I'm clear what my needs are, I'm able to find strategies to meet them, thus freeing myself from depending on one particular person or situation. When I'm effective in meeting my own needs, I'm happy – I'm living my dream!

On the other hand when my strategies are not working, I'm unhappy. This highlights one of the key principles of NVC: I feel what I feel, not because of what someone else does or says, but because of my inner relationship with my own needs via the interpretations or stories I'm telling myself about the world. Cultivating this attitude of self-responsibility towards my feelings and needs stopped me blaming myself, others and the world and brought me closer to my intrinsic motivation.

For me, Martin Luther King and Gandhi epitomise this approach. Both these men were deeply attuned to the suffering of the people around them and at times must have felt tremendous anger. However, with a radical acceptance of the truth and full responsibility for their feelings, each arrived at peaceful responses to the injustice.

Unfortunately we may not all get the opportunity to throw off a tyrannous despotic occupation or roll back decades of racial apartheid, so our role in 'being the change' may appear somewhat less clear cut than those of Gandhi or King. Happily, from an NVC perspective, most of us have enough conflict in our everyday lives, to furnish us with opportunities to emulate the same kind of actions out of the same values and in this respect 'be the change' to the same degree.

When I observe someone speaking loudly, slightly red in the face, NVC stresses the importance of maintaining a connection with them. This empathic connection is one in which I accept, without judgement, the truth of the other person's subjective experience – 'It seems like you are totally furious', I might say, 'what's made you so angry?'

Interestingly, WHAT happened, i.e. the observable facts, will not explain WHY the other person feels the way they do. Only by identifying and hearing their interpretation of events will

that become clear. Once I see anger as an urgent expression of a need to communicate, I'm a lot more willing to listen. As the person feels they have been seen and heard, my experience is that their body language and voice volume become calmer, and deeper needs can be addressed.

The application of these principles is infinite and is exemplified by Gandhi's response to the British in India: The "common sense" strategy would have been to raise an army, for which there was no shortage of willing soldiers, and to force the British out with violence. Instead, Gandhi focused on what was important, devised an innovative strategy, walked across the continent and took salt from the Indian sea for the Indian people. With this simple action, Gandhi redirected a large scale surface conflict towards the deeper needs of the Indian people for freedom, sovereignty and self-determination.



Photo credit: meetup.com

NVC has provided me with a toolkit for nonviolent responses to conflict situations, enabling me to take personal responsibility and thus move towards mutual trust and shared understanding. On the deepest level it has helped clarify what my dream is in terms of my most important values and provided an effective method for living them in my everyday life – I'm no Gandhi, but I do share his dream.

Alternatives to Violence Project in Scotland

The Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) Britain is a national charity delivering workshops for people who want to find ways of handling conflict without using or being the victim of violence. The workshops draw on people's own experiences and definitions of violence and use group exercises, discussions, fun activities and role play to explore non-violent ways of working with conflict.

AVP began in 1975 when inmates of a New York high-security state prison asked a group of Quaker visitors to help them to develop a programme addressing violence among the younger inmates. The programme was highly successful and it soon became apparent that the need for this work existed both in prisons and in the wider community. The programme has now spread to over 40 countries around the world, including Rwanda, Burundi, Russia and South Africa.

AVP first began working in the UK in 1988 and AVP Scotland started in 1999. During this time we have run workshops for diverse groups including prisoners, prison staff, the police, domestic violence workers, homeless groups and many individuals in the community who want to address the violence in their own lives. We offer level one workshops which help people look at general issues underlying violence and builds self esteem, trust and communication skills, as well as providing skills in dealing with potentially violent situations. The participants begin to realise they have the answers to their own problems and that they have choices which they can make in any situation. We also offer level two workshops which explore one aspect of violence (chosen by the participants) in some depth. Some participants

may wish to continue to train as facilitators; all our facilitators come from workshop participants.

Two years ago a grant from the Robertson Trust and other donors enabled AVP Scotland to employ a part time Development Worker, Des Fik, which has led to a significant increase in our activities. In the last year we have run workshops in partnership with Addaction North Glasgow, GAMH Govan, SAMH Redhall Gardens, and Parent Network Scotland. We have also run open workshops for participants in Edinburgh, many of whom have been referred from the NHS or Social Work as a result of extensive and on-going partnership building in the Edinburgh and Lothian areas. We also have been running a programme of



workshops at HMP Addiewell, a privately run prison. A recent development has been the introduction of a distance learning course Facing Up To Conflict (FUTC) which is based on our level one workshops. It consists of six lessons which are completed by the participant individually and returned to an adviser who returns them with comments. This has proved extremely popular especially in prisons and is now being extended to community participants.

As might be expected our work faces many challenges. In our community workshops we try and work with some of the most vulnerable people in society, such as individuals who are in recovery from drug and alcohol dependency. Such people

often lead rather chaotic and disorganised lives and this is often reflected in the structure of the organisations we work with. The drop-in culture of many of these groups also often leads to participants coming and going from workshops despite explicit explanations of the need for continuous attendance. Efforts to overcome barriers to participation, for example moving our workshops to mid-week rather than running them over the weekend, have had some success. We have also run workshops on separate days over successive weeks with Redhall Gardens and Parent Network Scotland. However, despite the difficulties, our workshops with partner organisations have generally been very rewarding both for the participants and the facilitators. Even those who do not fully attend the workshops are still able to take significant learning from the sessions they do complete.

Our prison work is also rewarding although it also sometimes faces logistical and communication problems in the prison. Our prison work so far has been restricted to the private prisons (Kilmarnock and more recently Addiewell). However, AVP recently met with senior officers from the Scottish Prison Service and we hope this will lead to a programme with at least one Scottish Prison Service prison.

Despite the valiant contribution of our volunteer facilitators, our workshops are unlikely ever to be financially self-sufficient and we are facing the challenge of becoming more financially sustainable in the long term. We have received support from Awards for All and the Cooperative Bank and various Quaker Meetings but we feel that income generating partnerships with the Prison Service and other organisations could offer the best way forward.

Martin Mansell

News from Around the Movements

Mass Nonviolent Action Disrupts the DSEi Arms Fair

Source: www.stopthearmsfair.org.uk/

A key event for the international arms trade took place in London from 9-13 Sept: the DSEi arms fair which hosted 1500 arms companies and 30,000 arms buyers and sellers. The UK government's invite list was a roll call of authoritarian regimes and human rights abusers, but the fair was challenged by daily direct action disrupting and blockading its business.

Hundreds of people 'occupied the arms fair', blocking both entrances and set up an Occupy camp and following a musical protest at the ExCel disrupted the set-up as arms dealers arrived on the eve of the drones conference.



An exorcism was performed by priests and activists from Christianity Uncut. Eighteen people were arrested for obstruction of the highway, after refusing to leave the road. The Occupy camp continued throughout the week. At least one activist managed to enter the site on a mission to remind arms dealers of the consequences of their business. Lockheed Martin, the World's largest arms company was blockaded for three hours. At the ExCel centre, tens of campaigners gathered to challenge the drones conference. In Wales, over a hundred people gathered at Aberporth to challenge drones too. Activists stopped an armoured



vehicle from entering the ExCel complex by sitting in the road.

Photos from www.stopthearmsfair.org.uk

For a full account of the week of action see: www.stopthearmsfair.org.uk/

To get involved with CAAT in Edinburgh contact: caatedinburgh@live.com

Report from Trident Ploughshares Burghfield Disarmament Camp

As part of the three year Action AWE (Atomic Weapons Eradication) Campaign resisting Trident about a hundred activists took part in a two week long Trident Ploughshares disarmament camp and blockade outside the Burghfield nuclear warhead factory near Reading in the last week of August and first week of September. 21 people were arrested on the blockade, including anti-militarist activists from across Europe as well as England and Scotland. The blockaders shut down access to the bomb factory for more than two hours with the Spanish blockade continuing for fourteen hours. Eight resisters, including two from Scotland will appear in Reading Court 13-14 January. The two week camp ended with a nearly naked action at the Burghfield Main Gate revealing the naked truth about nuclear weapons, as seven activists bared their backsides to reveal the words "Exposing Britain's WMD".

Full story, lots of photos & videos at: www.tridentploughshares.org and www.actionawe.org/

Trident Ploughshares Backs Scottish Independence

Wearing tabards that read TRIDENT NO on their fronts and SCOTLAND YES on their backs about a dozen Trident Ploughshares members staged a demonstration on the Bridges in support of Scottish Independence as the best way currently available to achieve the disarmament of nuclear weapons in Scotland and the UK and to provide a new impetus for the worldwide abolition of nuclear weapons. Singing Bin the Bomb and turning round after each verse the group captured the attention of thousands of Yes Scotland supporters

as the march

passed en route

to the rally on Calton Hill. Marchers cheered as the TP group rotated revealing the flip side of its message. And that message was reiterated by every speaker on the rally: Blair Jenkins, of the Yes Campaign, gave only two reasons to vote yes. The first was that we would get rid of Trident. The second was that we would get rid of the Bedroom Tax.



Speaking for Trident Ploughshares David Mackenzie said: “We are asking people to vote Yes in September 2014 so as to grasp the unmissable chance of a step towards a Scotland transformed whose security will be based on human solidarity rather than the weapons of war - a Scotland whose constitution will ban nuclear weapons. And that is a move we believe will cause the rest of the UK to be free of them also and will rekindle hopes of worldwide nuclear disarmament.” Photos and full report at:

www.tridentploughshares.org/trident-ploughshares-says-trident-no-scotland-yes/



Photos: Brian Larkin

Trident Ploughshares Activists Admonished for Entering Faslane

Trident Ploughshares members Sylvia Boyes, 70 & Mary E Millington, 65, were tried in Dumbarton Justice of the Peace Court yesterday 24 September 2013 on charges of malicious mischief resulting from cutting the fence at Faslane Naval Base (where Trident nuclear missiles are based), entering, and painting CND symbols on a gardener's hut on 4 Feb 2013. Sylvia had also hung a banner and read her statement of opposition to Trident which she also read in court. Mary was allowed to read the postscript to International Court of Justice Judge Mohammed Bedjaoui's Advisory Opinion on the illegality of nuclear weapons, not as a defense but as something that contributed to her state of mind at the time. The women were found guilty but only admonished not fined. The prosecution had made no attempt to put a value on the damage.

Faslane Peace Camper Cycles into Faslane Naval Base

In an apparently spur of the moment decision, finding the gate at the Faslane Naval Base, where Trident nuclear weapons are based, wide open, a peace camper cycled through the main gate of Faslane Naval Base in September. He was detained briefly and charged under SOCPA, the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act. Slightly embarrassing perhaps for the MOD police. No doubt an indication of the high level of security surrounding Britain's nuclear deterrent.



from Dr Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb. Photograph: The Ronald Grant Archive

Revealed: US Nuclear Weapon Nearly Exploded Over North Carolina

The Guardian reports that a document obtained by the investigative journalist Eric Schlosser under the Freedom of Information Act has revealed that a US nuclear bomb was dropped from an airplane which crashed over North Carolina. The 4 Megaton bomb was 260 times the destructive force of the Hiroshima bomb. A

series of six "fail safe devices" failed with only one low voltage switch preventing the bomb detonating and spreading deadly radioactive fallout over densely populated areas including Washington DC, Baltimore and Philadelphia. Source: Guardian 20 Sept 2013.

www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/20/usaf-atomic-bomb-north-carolina-1961

Edinburgh Stop the War: No Western Intervention in Syria Demonstration

Edinburgh Stop the War held a demonstration at the West End of Princes St on the Monday in September as the UK and US were considering an attack in response to the use of chemical weapons. An impressive 500 signatures were collected on petitions. The combined emails, letters and demonstrations across the country expressed an overwhelming anti-interventionist sentiment which the politicians could not ignore and Parliament rejected David Cameron's proposal to join the US in its plan (at that time) to bomb Syria.



Photo Brian Larkin

Later that week about 50 people demonstrated outside the US Consulate, delivering a letter to the US Ambassador calling for diplomacy not war. Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre staff and volunteers took part. Brian Larkin, P&J Coordinator spoke at both demonstrations.

SCANA Summer Witness for Peace

The SCANA Summer Witness for Peace 2013 took place at the gates of Faslane Trident base 12 Sept. This was an opportunity to underline our belief that nuclear weapons are immoral and they should not be maintained or renewed.

Events Coming Up in October

Food Sustainability: Edible Edinburgh Festival - Feeding the 5000 **Saturday 5th of October in Bristo Square and Potterrow, University of Edinburgh.**

Raising awareness of local food production, food waste and social responsibility, engaging Edinburgh residents over the proposed strategy to develop Edinburgh as a Sustainable Food City and launching "Edible Edinburgh" - an action group of the Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership. Community stalls showcasing local food related action and a discussion

about the future as a sustainable food city. 5,000 people will be fed with a delicious free meal created by celebrity chefs and community groups from ingredients that might otherwise have been thrown away. Contact Graham Burgess, Communications Manager, Nourish Scotland or Emma Baker, City of Edinburgh Council.



ScANA Witness at Faslane

Edinburgh Interfaith Association EIFA 2013 Annual Lecture for 'Gandhi Day'

6pm, 2 October, City Chambers.

Speakers: George Paxton, a trustee of the Gandhi Foundation and Professor Dermot Killingley, Former Lecturer in Hindu Studies at the University of Malaya, Newcastle University and the University of Vienna. Followed at 7.30pm by a Civic Reception hosted by The Lord Provost of The City of Edinburgh. For tickets and invitations please email Matt Lord at mattlord.eifa@gmail.com

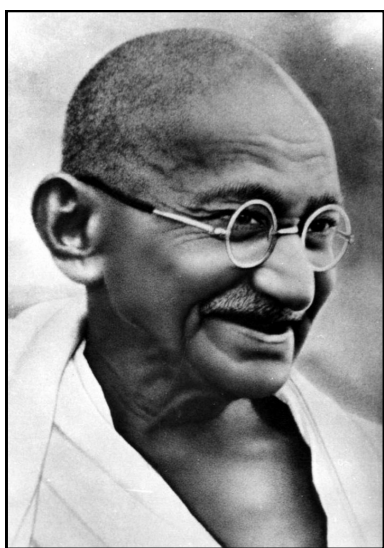


Photo credit: <http://www.researchhistory.org>

Edinburgh World Justice Festival, 12-26 October

A range of events related to Human Rights, Trident, Non-violent resistance, Women and War, HIV/Aids, Environmental Justice, Climate change, and the Arms Trade. See Centre News for EPJC Drones events 19 October.

Take One Action Film Festival 27 September - 12 October

Cinema concerned with global change/positive campaigning and non-violent resistance. Themes include: HIV / AIDS, empowerment/activism, corporate responsibility, environment, hunger/food issues, conflict/reconciliation, Mid East/Isr-Palestine, climate change, trade/economic justice, gender and power, democracy/political systems, climate change, poverty (global).

See Diary and Filmhouse Programme.. <http://www.takeoneaction.org.uk/home>

Voices in Conflict: Rights, Realism and Moral Outrage **2013 International Conference of the Edinburgh Peace Initiative** **Edinburgh City Chambers, 19-20 October 2013**

Details coming soon. Contact the Peace and Justice Centre.

Coming in November

St John the Evangelist, Remembrance Sunday 10th November, 6 pm. The evening service will include the first-ever Edinburgh performance of the deeply moving 25 minute long cantata "Dona nobis pacem" (c.1955), for voices, organ, drums and solo piano, by the Aberdeenshire composer Ronald Center (1913-73), which juxtaposes Civil War poetry by Walt Whitman with liturgical and Scriptural texts. Sung by the choir of St John's under Stephen Doughty. The piano soloist will be Christopher Guild.

CAAT in the News: Senior Cabinet ministers accused of 'profoundly misleading' claims about Britain's arms export industry



Photo credit: CAAT

from *The Independent*, 19 Sept. <http://tinyurl.com/pn4237o>

Senior Cabinet ministers have been accused of making “profoundly misleading” claims about Britain’s lucrative arms export industry by stating there is no evidence that shipments to hardline regimes are not used for “internal repression”. MPs have demanded an explanation from the Government as to why export licences were granted earlier this year for goods ranging from sniper rifles to CS gas grenades to be sent to countries with questionable human rights records such as Saudi Arabia and Libya. The Commons committee dealing with arms exports has listed 18 nation which are currently the subject of embargos or considered a “Country of Concern” for human rights which

were cleared to receive military or law enforcement equipment worth nearly £80m in the first three months of 2013. A spokeswoman for the Campaign Against Arms Trade said: “Once military goods are sent abroad, the exporter has no control of how, when or where they will be used. But as in law, ignorance is no defence. When there are well-documented accounts of a government using similar weaponry for internal repression, or a strong likelihood that they will do so in future, then common sense says that the licence should not be issued.”

TAKE ACTION:

Last Stand of the Orangutan.

Sign Rainforest Action Network's petition to save some of the world's most important rainforests and the last remaining wild orangutans.

They're going after 20 of the companies most responsible for putting conflict palm oil into our food: They are the makers of some of the top name brands in the world, companies like PepsiCo, Kellogg's, The Hershey Company and Kraft Foods Group.

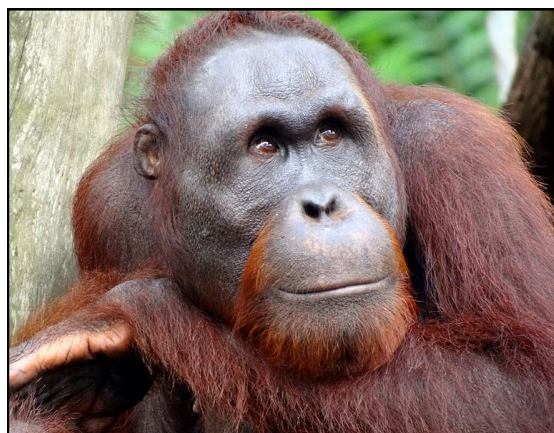


Photo credit: <http://commons.wikimedia.org>

Read the new report *Conflict Palm Oil: How US Snack Food Brands are Contributing to Orangutan Extinction, Climate Change and Human Rights Violations*.

Sign the Petition at:

www.causes.com/v2actions/1760194-a-petition-to-the-snack-food-20

Support the Transform Now Ploughshares

Write a Letter to the Judge asking a lesser sentence than the 20 years they face.

Greg Boertje-Obed, Michael Walli and Megan Rice are currently in the Irwin County Detention Facility in Georgia, awaiting sentencing. The three were found guilty in May of interfering with or obstructing the national defense (sabotage) and depredation of government property for their witness at the facility where US nuclear weapons are built. The maximum sentence each can receive is 30 years.



Photo credit: <http://disarmnowplowshares.wordpress.com>

ty for their witness at the facility where US nuclear weapons are built. The maximum sentence each can receive is 30 years.

Please write to the judge asking for justice in this sentencing phase.

Invite Judge Thapar to think about sentencing in light of the fact that this was an act of nonviolent civil disobedience, and no evidence was presented that it was an act of terrorism meant to harm anyone. The action was carried out with the understanding of the illegality and immorality of nuclear weapons, and intent to uphold higher laws.

Encourage him to consider downward departures from the high guidelines for the charges,

and bring more justice into the situation; and remind him of the intentions of the three nonviolent activists: to follow the words of the prophet Isaiah to beat swords into plowshares, and build a safer world for all.

Post cards from the P&J or download at: transformnowplowshares.wordpress.com

Wear a White Poppy this November

The White poppy was an initiative of the Co-operative Women's Guild and was first worn on Armistice Day in 1933. It has become a symbol of our inability to settle conflicts without resorting to killing but also, and more importantly, of hope and commitment to work for a world where conflicts will be resolved without violence and with justice (Peace Pledge Union). This year the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Scottish Branch (SWILPF), is asking you to wear a White Poppy and to buy two additional white poppies and send one to your MP and one to your MSP. The reason for this is that in the build up to the commemoration of World War I and the glorification of war that is coming with this we would like to remind those in power that there are those in all wars who have resisted war; particularly the women. We also want to remember the innocent victims in all conflicts, 5 million refugees from the current conflict in Syria, the vast majority of which are women and children, and that negotiation and the use of International Law are better ways to bring about peace.

In your letter to your MP and MSP give them your reasons why you wear a white poppy. White poppies are available from the Peace and Justice Centre and will also be on sale at events during the Edinburgh World Justice Festival.

For further information on the White Poppy see www.whitepoppy.org

Anne Scott SWILPF

Write a letter in Support of Pvt Manning's bid for clemency!

Manning has revealed the truth about civilian deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan, including the killing of two Reuters journalists. Under the Uniform Code of Military Justice Commanding General of the Military District of Washington Major General Jeffrey S. Buchanan has the power to reduce or eliminate Manning's sentence.

Important guidelines to keep in mind as you compose your letter:

Letters should be approximately 1 page long.

- Pvt Manning's recently announced that her preferred name is Chelsea, and that folks should use female pronouns. However, she also understands that for efforts such as these, it is most effective for supporters to use her legal name and military rank, "Pvt. Bradley E. Manning", along with male pronouns.
- The letter should focus on why you believe justice will be served if PVT Manning's sentence is reduced. The letter should NOT be anti-military.
- Please print and sign the letter. Then scan it and send it to nathan@bradleymanning.org by November 1, 2013. If you cannot scan the letter mail it to Pvt Manning Support Network, c/o Courage to Resist, 484 Lake Park Ave #41, Oakland CA 94610.



Photo credit: AP Photo/Patrick Semansky)

Letters will be submitted by Pvt. Manning's attorney as part of the clemency packet.

Day of Action Against Depleted Uranium Weapons on the Dundrennan Range

The Campaign Against Depleted Uranium (CADU) is calling a Day of Action Against Depleted Uranium Weapons on the Dundrennan Range on November 6th, the International Day of Action Against Depleted Uranium Weapons. DU weapons have been used in the Balkans and Iraq. When fired they leave a toxic dust that may be the cause of rising birth defects and cancers. The MOD has fired DU into the Solway Firth for over 30 years. Over 31 tons of DU remain at the bottom of the Firth. We must make sure the MOD never fires DU in Scotland again. People will walk on to the range en masse and release (biodegradable) balloons with messages of solidarity to all those suffering the effects of toxic wars in Iraq. Details at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/211204779055436/>

Book Review - David Gee — Holding Faith: Creating faith in a violent world

Reprinted from Peace News, September 2013

This accessible book – exploring what it means to make a commitment to peace in a violent world – could appeal equally to someone with an interest in peace who may be wishing to find ways of putting this into action, as to a seasoned activist. As much to an agnostic as a person of faith. Wherever you are internally, that is where it takes hold and shakes you. I even lost my copy, preferring perhaps to drift in the 'pale blue window' dividing the 'over there' of violence from the 'here and now' of a comfortable, oppressive reality. But shake I

did, as I moved through my condition, described as ‘Pax Alienata’: a place inside ourselves which is alienated, sees division, and perpetuates it in our everyday life and structures. Our ability to live in two worlds at once is explored: being faithful and being fallen. Being faithful to the life-giving word of God, the wholeness of Shalom or whatever you conceive this to be, as opposed to our common fallenness: a broken spiritual condition. Creating peace, it is suggested, can be waged by spiritual weapons, by making a decision as to where we stand: ‘with the crucifying structures of the arms trade or the peace-making crucified and all those who suffer in war’.

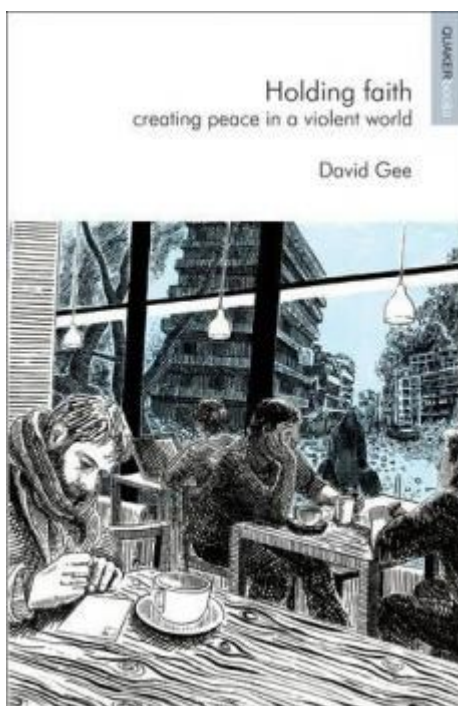
The religious terminology but it describes clearly the Quakers of the 17th century, tion went hand-in-hand with grew the Quakers’ Peace Testimonies of Quakerism, given as a ‘declaration’ to Charles II through the centuries and Friends.

And yet this is not a history of the present. It becomes at once practical and emancipatory – those who are open and will. The events which put this away again, and landed me at the process I went through in space of hope and grace’ which is exactly ‘where people committed to the trust of faith need to be’, and – as an ambivalent activist considering my role in a local campaign – I found it helpful in understanding and facing the polarities of violence and peace within myself.

It also helped me grow stronger in unity with my Quaker faith and achieve a greater understanding of the spiritual roots that lead into action, including the Friends’ Peace Testimony. It does not give answers about how we should make good on such a commitment, but rather opens up a myriad of possibilities of dismantling current violent structures and redeeming faith communities.

Peppered with apt quotations and endnotes which allow the reader to develop further in whichever direction he or she is interested, it calls us in diverse ways to be patient while answering to the urgency in our hearts: a sincere, direct call to build a movement through ‘militant gradualism.’

Fiona Wright



could put some people off, faith of the early founding for whom spiritual revolution – out of which timony [one of the basic classic expression in a faith in 1660 – eds], held dear and tussled with by current

book, as it pulls us back into once collective and personal, an experiential book, for making that choice. The book into my hands, took its second copy, are symbolic of reading it. I was led to ‘a

Unsung Heroes – Tribute to Sunila Abeysekera

This month, the world lost a great human rights activist and a greater human being. Sunila Abeysekera, who many remember as a fiercely committed activist for Sri Lankan human rights and women’s rights passed away after her long battle with cancer. She was 61 years old. Sunila Abeysekera was born in Sri Lanka on Sept. 4, 1952 to a politically progressive family. After receiving her education in Colombo, she began her professional life there as an

actress, singer and dancer onstage and in films; she later worked as a drama critic (The New York Times, 2013).

Her activist career began in the 1970s, with one of the first Sri Lankan human rights organization called Civil Rights Movement (CRM). She later on became the executive director of Inform Human Rights Documentation Center - INFORM, a nongovernmental organization that exposed serious abuses and sought to bring institutional change in the country. Abeysekera struggled against the entrenched culture of impunity to hold perpetrators accountable for enforced disappearances, killings of civilians of all ethnicities, and the protection of those displaced by Sri Lanka's armed conflict (Human Rights Watch, 2013). But she never gave up hope. Sunila vigorously worked to bring the world's attention to the acts of violence in her country. What was unique about her work was that she refused to take sides - publicly denouncing the abuses, perpetuated by both the state and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Her commitment to human rights for all – regardless of their ethnic background won her broad based respect.



Photo Credit: bbc.co.uk/news

Feminism and human rights were never mutually exclusive for Sunila; they blended with and informed each other. Therefore, she brought a feminist perspective to peace-building and conflict transformation in Sri Lanka's post-conflict society and worked for reproductive rights and economic parity and to end violence against women. At the same time, she advocated on behalf of sex workers, homosexuals as well as people with H.I.V. Her work put her at risk and she had to move and live in the Netherlands until recently because of the death threats against her. This was after the state-controlled news media labeled her a traitor for her support of a 2012 resolution by the United Nations Human Rights Council calling for "reconciliation and accountability" in Sri Lanka. When asked in an interview by the Unesco Courier how she handled the constant scrutiny about her work, she said - "When everyone is criticizing you, then you are doing the right thing." (The New York Times, 2013) For four decades, she expanded her activist reach to a global scale while still remained deeply connected to her country's problems. She played an instrumental role during the United Nations' World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 and worked with the Centre for Women's Global Leadership in organizing a global feminist campaign that led to legitimizing feminist activism and incorporating women's rights issues into the larger discourse on human rights (Lauren Rankin, 2013).

Sunila has many honors to her credit. For her contribution through INFORM, she received the 1998 UN Human Rights Prize for Asia and the Pacific in 1998. She was also presented the Human Rights Defender Award by Human Rights Watch in 2007.

Sunila worked at the grassroots level but made sure that the people's voices reached policy-makers to bring about real social change - she served as a bridge between two worlds that often seemed impossible to unite. Nehama Jayewardene, a research at Centre for the Study of Human Rights in a tribute to Sunila writes – 'A personality like Sunila's is rare. Apart from being able to add magic to even the most mundane task in her life, I am amazed at how much time she gives to other people. Her experiences are so vivid and contrasting to that of most other human beings that she gives life to the words of Rudyard Kipling: "If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue, or walk with kings — nor lose the common touch."' (The Sunday Times, 2013)

Varsha Gyawali

Reflection – Gandhi and the Need for Nonviolent Resistance

It is apt that as we celebrate Gandhi's birthday and International Day of Nonviolence on 2nd October we pause to reflect on the meaning of nonviolence. Gandhi had his faults. Some of his "experiments" with nonviolence were in some respects problematic. But he is one of the great pioneers of nonviolent action in the struggle for justice.

I was deeply influenced by reading Gandhi's biography at an early age. As a young activist in the 80's with the Cold War at its height and the risk of nuclear war looming I responded to the call to engage in nonviolent resistance to the preparations for nuclear war. Local Cruise missile engine builders Williams International had been granted an injunction against blockading or trespassing there. One group of civil resisters (Gandhi's term) had been jailed for more than two weeks in "civil contempt" of court for refusing to abide by the injunction, an act of what Gandhi called "non-cooperation". I saw this as an unjust use of the law by the State in an attempt to intimidate protesters. I set out to challenge that injustice by joining the next blockade with twelve others from the Ann Arbor Peace Community. My Gandhian inspiration is a matter of public record. I was quoted in the local paper saying my action was "a Gandhian, Kingian thing to do".



Photo credit: www.mkgandhi.org

While we did not stop the manufacture of cruise missiles that decision changed my life. We were held indefinitely in a rural County jail. Some of the group appealed the indefinite sentence which was finally ruled an unconstitutional breach of freedom of speech by the Michigan Supreme Court. But a few of us remained in jail for three months. Our story got a lot of coverage in Michigan papers and eventually the New York Times. I was a bit of a local hero, with a banner on the Main Street with the words "Free Brian Larkin" on it. I thought from my jail cell, "That's right...I am free in here". Having stood against the state's preparations for omnicide, the greatest injustice of our age, I never felt more free. People asked how I had been able to face the uncertainty of jail. I could only say that, with the US and Russia pointing tens of thousands of nuclear weapons at each other and Ronald Reagan calling the Soviet Union the "Evil Empire" and joking on radio "We begin bombing in 5 minutes" I had to resist this madness. Most of that time in jail was spent in a cell with 7 other protesters, some WW2 conscientious objectors, reading and sharing life stories. I did however spend some time in an overcrowded Detroit jail cell with young mostly black guys, of whom I admit I was scared. But the experience led me, an graduate of a privileged prep school, to go on to work in a shelter for the homeless. Thus Gandhi led me not only to civil resistance but to serve the poor.

People often asked if there were not career implications? Strangely the only job I ever lost was my peace movement job at the time with a national anti nuclear weapons lobby group because I was quoted saying it was time to move from political to direct action. Others have faced career implications, and anyone considering civil resistance should consider that. Since then I have been arrested many times for similar actions though I never faced another indefinite sentence. I believe that campaigns of nonviolent resistance, like those led by Gandhi in the struggle for India's independence and the Stop the Arms Fair week of action and Action AWE are a key component of struggles for peace and justice. Unless many more people are willing to risk jail we will not see an end to the nuclear arms race. For me this is the legacy and lesson of Gandhi's life.

Brian Larkin