



MAKING THE LINKS,
WAGING PEACE



PEACE & JUSTICE NEWS

APRIL 2014



IN THIS ISSUE:

Myth of Gaia

Biofuels

Mandela & Libya

Whose Crisis, Whose Future?

Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre

Nonviolence ♦ 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 - Mailbox facility for groups

Postcards, badges and books for sale

Speaker series - Library

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 we are exploring the theme of Earth Day which is coming up in April.

Earth Day is an annual event that is celebrated worldwide to demonstrate support for environmental protection. Following this theme, Brian Larkin feature story is about the myth of Gaia - "an emergent property of interaction among organisms". Mythologies are just stories that we tell ourselves that ultimately reflect on us human beings. Earth Day marked the birth of the Ecology movement in the 1970's following the 60's widespread environmental destruction and unregulated industrial pollution. Brian links this theme to the events taking place in Crimea reminding us that Climate Change is not the only problem facing the planet but that we also live with the threat of nuclear weapons being used.

Douglas Shaw's editorial tackles the controversial topic that is Ukraine. He reminds us that big power players in the world are fighting over Ukraine and the Ukrainian people are caught in the middle of the mess.

Geoffrey Carnall writes a piece about how Nelson Mandela's involvement may have had an alternative and more positive outcome for Libya.

And Pat Bryden's book review is again from a book in our newly reopened library: *'Whose Crisis, Whose Future? Towards a Greener, Fairer, Richer World'* by Susan George.

May's edition will be based on the theme of conscientious objection. Contributions welcome.

Email by 22 April to contact@peaceandjustice.org.uk

Emma Logan



Photo Credit: <http://www.earthregenerative.org>

Contents

Editorial	3
Centre News	4
Myth of Gaia	6
Mandela and Libya	9
BioFuels Watch Campaign	11
News from around the	13
Movements	
Take Action	16
Book Review	18
Reflection	19

Editorial

Our press have painted President Putin as clearly in the wrong over his recent military invasion of the Crimea, which is clearly against international law. But it fails to condemn the West's similar illegal military "adventures" in Iraq, Afghanistan, Cuba in 1962 or Vietnam in the early 1960's. Russia is using the argument of democracy to justify its illegal actions, and presenting itself as having similar values to the west. But the hasty arrangement of the referendum in the Crimea while under military occupation was unacceptable under international standards. Nonetheless, the overwhelming vote, including among non-Russians, to join Russia is a clear indication of widespread will within the populace to change allegiance. The referendum should be rerun with proper international electoral observation, no Russian military presence and sufficient time for an open democratic debate, just as is currently happening in Scotland.

What the mainstream press also ignores is that the US has spent \$5 billion in Ukraine, on "nation Building", resulting eventually in the Orange Revolution which ended in failure and corruption, and the election of another leader who tried to balance the demands of West and East. But when President Yanukovich chose Russia instead of the West, the uprising started, fuelled by money from the US. One writer claims that Ukraine has been slowly converted into a "US-EU vassal state; financing and recruitment of cadres, organisation and training of politicians and street fighters, with a capacity to combine street action with electoral politics" The new post-coup government has neo-liberal politicians to manage the economy, ties with NATO, and violent neo-Fascists to control any pro Russian movement.

Let's face it. Ukraine is being fought over by two superpowers who have been in conflict since the Second World War. The trouble is that NATO has been expanding up to Russia's borders as the former Soviet satellites have turned to them rather than Russia for military security. NATO bases and listening posts in the Ukraine would be on Russia's own borders. Would the US accept Russian military bases in Mexico? We saw the problems of Russian missiles in Cuba in 1962 just 70 miles from Florida - the same distance that US missiles in Turkey were from Russia. The invasion of Crimea is to protect Russia's bases there, particularly the naval base. In "real politics", Ukraine is in Russia's "backyard". Its position offers NATO and the US a "military springboard" into Russia; it has huge resources and is strategic for "penetrating the Caucasus and beyond". Let's not pretend that one side is clean and fighting for democracy while the other is just a violent bully. Sadly the people of Ukraine are caught in between, forced to choose one side or the other. A world of power blocs is a more dangerous one, not a safer one. The case for more non-aligned countries is stronger than ever.

Douglas Shaw

Centre News

Kites Not Drones Event a Massive Success

The 'Fly Kites Not Drones' event on Saturday 22nd March proved to be a massive success for raising awareness about those living under the threat of drones. It was a fun-filled day that included: crafting and flying kites, face painting, storytelling, a live samba band and a dazzling fire display. Many people and families gathered in the Meadows to take part in 'The Day of Action' that was called for by Afghan Peace Volunteers and Voices for Creative Nonviolence UK. It was one of several events around the UK that was campaigning for the abolition of drones. Significantly, this included a demonstration at RAF Waddington - the UK base from which Drones in Afghanistan are operated.



Fantastic events like this are not be possible without the help of volunteers. A big thank you goes to Kiera Zammit, for arranging the venue and to Amanda, the owner of the



Meadows Pavilion Café and to storyteller Ken Musso, Jane Tallents for Kite Crafting, Angus Doyle for doing graphics for the flyers and badges, Michael Elm for badge making, the Rhythms of Resistance Samba Band for drumming and the members from Pyro Celtica for their fire poi. Also, thanks to Cameron and Zack for helping set up, Michael Dunne, Sofia Hafeji, Arthur

Chapman, Phil Lucas for staffing the P&J stall, Gandolf for help taking down the dome and Sheila Mackay for transporting the dome from Portobello.

Donations from the day are going to benefit the Afghan Peace Volunteers Duvet Project which enables Afghan women to earn a wage while the duvets are given to people living in the Kabul refugee camp. Visit the VCNVUK and APV blogs to learn more about the project: <http://vcnvuk.wordpress.com/> and <http://ourjourneytosmile.com/blog/>. To learn more about drones and what we can do to stop them, come hear **Chris Coles**, Coordinator of Drone Wars UK, speak on **Grounding the Drones. 16 May. St John's Church Hall, 7 - 9pm.** You can also visit the following websites: dronewars.net and <http://dronecampaignnetwork.wordpress.com/>.

New Volunteers

Sofia Hafeji

Sofia joined the centre because she is interested in the work and campaigning that the centre promotes, particularly Trident and the support for Palestine. She hopes to become more involved in individual campaigns and centre events. Her particular interest lie within the power struggle and the causes and influences behind situations of conflict and war. Sofia has achieved a BA in Politics from the Open University and hopes to start a Masters very soon. She has had a varied career, from working in a bakery to investigation fraud cases. Her main role at the Peace and Justice Centre will be helping to restructure the website and assisting with general office duties.



Sumita Kunashakaran

Sumita will be developing campaign work on ending military recruitment of 16 & 17 year olds for the P&J. She is currently undertaking her Masters in International Relations at the University of Edinburgh. She has been part of energising her community wherever she has been. From volunteering with the Singapore Anti Narcotics Association (SANA) where she facilitated programmes that aimed to educate youth about the dangers of drug abuse to her internship with the UN Women's Committee in Singapore where she worked on Project Inspire, an international competition that has changemakers from all over the world submit proposals on how to empower women in rural parts of Asia, Africa and the Middle East.



Her time in the Singapore military also played a vital part in how she views the international environment. Having studied treaties and protocols has helped her gain a deeper understanding of the utter devastation that warfare, introduced by national policies, can bring about. Her goal is to play a role in international policy making and study the analyses of social movements and how governmental policies are influenced. She also aims to venture into non-profit international organizations in order to make a positive impact on the global community, especially in terms of progressive educational and social policies

New Fact Sheet: Gender and Oppression

The latest in the P&J Fact Sheet, on Gender and Oppression, published for International Women's Day is available at the Centre or to download from the website.

Upcoming P&J Events

Grounding the Drones

Chris Cole, Coordinator of the Drones Campaign Network

Friday 16 May 7:30pm. St John's Church Hall

If you missed Chris when he spoke to us in November this is another chance to learn more about Drones. **Event Jointly organised with Edinburgh Stop the War**

Pete Seeger Sing-a-thon

A Fundraiser for Penny Stone to take her Sing Louder than Guns Workshop to the International Peace Conference in Sarajevo

3 May. 3pm - 11:30pm. St John's Church Hall, Lothian Rd, Edinburgh

One World Peace & Justice Ceilidh

With Clapshot Ceilidh Band, 30 May. 7:00 -10:00pm. Edinburgh Steiner School

Penny Stone Report from Sarajevo Peace Conference

24 June. St John's Church Hall. 7:30 - 9pm.

The Myth of Gaia – 1970 to Now

In 1972 James Lovelock published a paper which proposed a radical hypothesis, that organisms interact with their inorganic surroundings on earth to form a self-regulating, complex system that contributes to maintaining the conditions for life on the planet. Taking a suggestion from the writer

William Golding Lovelock gave the hypothesis the name of the Greek goddess of the Earth, Gaia. At a Middle East Festival of Spirituality and Peace talk in March, Prof Robert Segal argued that Lovelock's Gaia Hypothesis represents a 21st Century Myth. It was a myth he said because in his original writings, Lovelock maintained that the Earth was a living being which has the capacity to intentionally adapt to insure its own survival. And in her book, *The Symbiotic Planet*, microbiologist Lyn Margulis who joined

Lovelock in developing the Gaia Hypothesis as a theory, objected to the widespread personification of Gaia and stressed that Gaia is "not an organism", but "an emergent property of interaction among organisms". Defining Gaia as "the series of interacting ecosystems that compose a single huge ecosystem at the Earth's surface" Margulis almost took the life out of the idea and Lovelock later maintained that he was misinterpreted: He never meant that the earth was a living being.



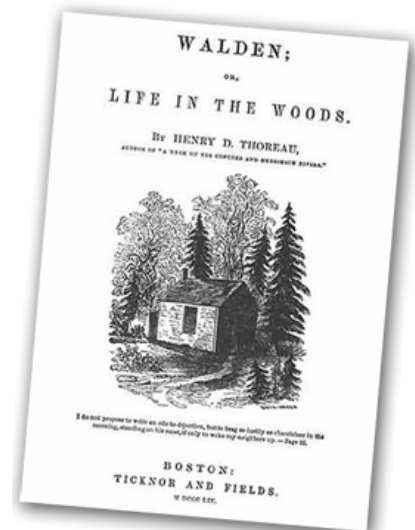
But the Gaia idea was bigger than Lovelock's theory. Quoting the famous speech of Chief Seattle who said "The Earth does not belong to us we belong to the earth" panellist Nancy Adams articulated another version of the myth. As a teacher she had promoted the idea of the sacred earth and our responsibility for insuring the survival of life. Indeed Lovelock's idea, that the earth has the capacity to save itself as if it were a personality capable of intention has captured the imagination of many people since. The personification remains among those who "worship" Gaia. What has come to supplement the idea of the ability of the earth to sustain itself has been the advocacy of our responsibility, as people of the earth for helping the earth sustain itself.



The idea of earth as God(dess) is not entirely new in human history. Substantial archaeological evidence exists in the form of earth mother figurines found throughout the ancient world that pre-patriarchal cults worshipped the Earth Mother. The Old Testament God in contrast belonged to patriarchal systems of domination with the Creator outside the earth itself, and, Man designated the role of subduing the earth. Dominant Christian traditions have followed the patriarchal theory of domination but even Genesis contained the alternative idea of Original Blessing, as theologian Matthew Fox argued. Celtic

Christianity, Native American spirituality and other indigenous cultures also considered the Earth sacred.

Mythologies are the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves. We make our own meaning. But our meaning arises from who we are. Thus Lovelock's ideas should be seen in context. Following from 1960's liberation movements, and reacting to widespread environmental destruction, particularly in the US, by unregulated industrial pollution, the 70's saw the birth of the Ecology movement. Building on a tradition in American literature and thought including Thoreau's *Walden*, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* and Aldo Leopold's *Sand County Almanac* writers such as, Wendell and Thomas Berry, John Seed and the authors of the *Whole Earth Catalogue* articulated a sense that industrial agriculture was killing the planet and promulgated a "land ethic" and the back to the land movement. 1970 saw the first Earth Day, still marked annually on 12 April.



Lovelock's first statement of the Gaia hypothesis followed closely on the first photograph of the earth from space in 1968. For us now the image is familiar; but it is

perhaps the unfamiliarity of the picture of the whole of the earth seen from space which helped to galvanize the ecology movement and midwifed an awareness of the immanence of the planet as a whole and holistic biosystem. It is ironic though that we owe that image of our home planet as a borderless whole to rocket science and the space race, which in turn derives directly from military efforts to deliver bombs, that is, the Second World War German V-2 rockets. Indeed the US space programme, and the race to reach the moon developed alongside the development of ICBMs to deliver nuclear weapons to our enemy on other side of earth. And with the imminent threat to use this capability during the Cold War years, there developed a concomitant awareness of the possibility of ecocide, described in painful detail by Jonathan Schell in *The Fate of the Earth* (1982) (available from the P&J library).



Jonathan Schell. *The Fate of the Earth*. 1982.

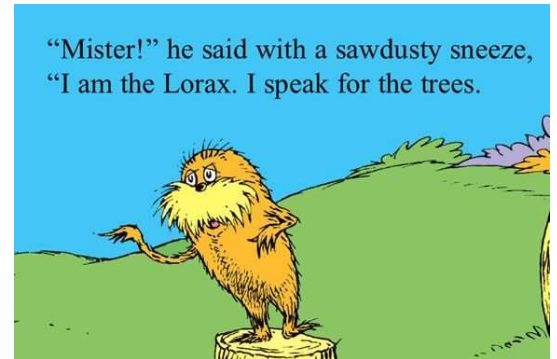
The 80's saw a rise in anti-nuclear resistance, like the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp, which grew out of the awareness that the survival of the planet as a living entity was at threat. Like Dr Seuss's Lorax, who popped out of the trees cut down for profit, activists spoke for their mother the earth and humanity. Jonathan Schell wrote that the threat of nuclear annihilation was "unimaginable...but full of sorrowful meaning for us ...because we are of the earth." "The soul" Schell suggested, was not capable of taking in "so much horror." People were in denial: "A society that ...shuts its eyes to an urgent peril & fails to take steps to save itself is psychologically unwell."

Most people pushed the possibility of nuclear holocaust out of mind in order to get on with life & feel well again. Joanna Macy Cox said people were in despair about this terrible unprecedented threat to life itself, and in deep despair. But by tapping into that despair it was possible to gain strength, what she called "empowerment." And millions did wake up and faced the possibility of nuclear holocaust. Over a million people marched on Hyde Park in 1983 demanding unilateral nuclear disarmament.

After the Berlin Wall fell though most forgot, thinking the threat had receded. And that was a terrible thing, because the danger remains. Recent research using sophisticated mathematical models of the impact on the earth's ecosystem has concluded that an exchange up to 100 nuclear weapons of the size possessed today (10 times that of the Hiroshima bomb) between India and Pakistan, each of which possess more than 100 bombs, would be sufficient to cause nuclear winter & cause global famine. A full scale exchange between Russia and the US could destroy life on the planet. Lovelock's Gaia Hypothesis argued that the Earth ecosystem was self sustaining and even hinted that Gaia could make corrections to insure the survival of life. The theory arose at a time when people were faced with the possibility that humanity might destroy life itself. In this form the story constitutes a myth in the negative sense of the word, a story perhaps

born out of denial, and one which bore little resemblance to fact. It was perhaps, as Jonathan Schell wrote, a denial mixed with love of life. But the good thing about myths is that they don't belong to one author, they change over time. And the more prominent myth of Gaia today is perhaps more like Dr Seuss's *The Lorax* who spoke for the trees. In the end the little curmudgeonly nature being who, amidst a deforested wasteland, tells a little boy there was no hope for the trees "Unless". He give a little boy a few seeds, tells him "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot." The boy is given the responsibility to plant seeds, to take responsibility for the industrial devastation and take action to regenerate the planet.

Those who live by the myth of Gaia today do not believe that the planet is doomed, despite the imminence of climate chaos made visible in chaotic climate change, extreme weather and the melting of the polar ice caps; or that the earth will somehow mystically revive itself. Instead they look reality in the eye and, as inhabitants of this borderless earth become the change, living in ways that reduce their carbon footprint whilst campaigning for policies that will insure that remaining fossil fuels stay in the ground.



The Lorax. Harper Collins Childrens Books

But let the conflict over Crimea be another wake up call. Climate Change is not the only threat to life on earth today. Nuclear weapons sufficient for planetary devastation remain in the hands of unfriendly adversaries. The Crimean crisis could be the beginning of a new Cold War, and could lead to a hot war between those adversaries. Let us not deny that those weapons could be used. Let us instead, do what we can to insure the survival of our planetary home, our sacred mother earth, and take action to insure the disarmament of these weapons of biocide.

If the Earth is a Sacred living holistic ecosystem, perhaps the only place life can be found in the Universe, that has significance for how we live. If Earth is God(dess) and we her devotees, we cannot just pay homage, make offerings, tell ourselves stories: we must act for change. We can save earth from our greed and destructiveness by being conscious of ourselves as part of a stream of living beings, not as central or dominant, not acting as if earth is for our sole use and acting accordingly, share resources with other beings and be stewards for future use.

Brian Larkin

If only ... Nelson Mandela and Libya

Older readers of this newsletter may remember the formidable Hilda, Lady Morton, pillar of the United Nations Association, and energetic supporter of many good causes.

She enjoyed remarkably good health, and was still driving her car around Edinburgh at the age of 100. It is true that at that point she crashed her car into a traffic island in Queen Street, but as she pointed out to the police, it was ridiculous to have a traffic island at that point without lights.

Nelson Mandela seems to have had a similar sturdy constitution, but it was badly affected by his many years of imprisonment, and although he lived into his nineties in his last years he was very frail and unable to take part in public life. There is particular reason to regret this when one considers the role South Africa tried to play in 2011.

In the February of that year Libya's president, Colonel Gaddafi, was trying to suppress demonstrations against his rule by force, in a way that caused outrage in the international community. On February 23rd there was a meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, an organisation representing all the governments on that continent. There was agreement on a resolution condemning the Libyan government's actions, and offering to mediate between that government and the protesters. The Libyan representative angrily withdrew from the meeting, but had to accept that he was unable to veto the resolution.



Photo Credit : www.rferl.org

The following day a high-level delegation from the Council, led by the South African president Jacob Zuma, went to Benghazi in the east of Libya, and put the Union's offer to the protest leaders. The offer was rejected out of hand, on the ground that the African Union was an organisation of 'Gaddafi stooges'. The protesters were now an armed insurgency, deliberately choosing to make war on Gaddafi. In this they had the support of the British and French governments, seeing as they did Gaddafi as a Bad Guy who needed to be eliminated. The UN Security Council was persuaded to establish a 'no-fly zone' over Libya, ostensibly to protect civilians, but in practice to support the insurgency. This eventually succeeded, though at a considerable cost – not only many civilian casualties, but with power being left in the hands of rival militias, over which the central government had no control. But most damaging of all was the way Gaddafi himself met his death, dragged helplessly through the streets of Tripoli before being killed.

The consequences of this spectacle were immense. President Assad was probably never much inclined to react constructively to protest movements in Syria, but he can hardly be blamed for not wanting to suffer the humiliation experienced by Gaddafi. It will have hardened his determination to suppress opposition regardless of the cost. The

dreadful barbarity of the Syrian civil war is the consequence of the decision in February 2011 to reject the Africa Union's offer of mediation.

If the A.U. delegation had been led by Nelson Mandela it is just possible that the outcome might have been different. His prestige would have made it difficult to be described as anyone's stooge. Gaddafi himself would have found it difficult to ignore a plea from Mandela to accept mediation. It is just conceivable that Mandela's advocacy might have had an influence over Cameron and Sarkozy. But Jacob Zuma was not Nelson Mandela, and the African Union's efforts were simply ignored.

When Mandela died, people from around the world were lavish in their praise of his generosity and wisdom. It is not so clear that they were willing to profit from his generosity and wisdom – the understanding of competing interests and concerns essential to conflict resolution, and abstention from the seductive narrative of good guys and bad guys. It is perhaps too much to hope that wisdom will come instantly, but maybe the Mandela legacy will gradually make an impression on decision-makers. Not too gradually, I hope.

Geoffrey Carnall

Biofuels Watch Campaign

The Biomess Awards

An alternative awards ceremony where the public vote for the biggest biomass baddie

On the 9th and 10th of April the biggest corporate names in the global biomass industry will be gathering at the "Argus European Biomass Trading 2014" conference. Representatives from key organisations will be attending to discuss how to further increase profits from the environmental destruction and social injustice, which is an inherent part of the big biomass industry.

Participants will include the energy companies E.On, RWE, Drax, Eggborough and GDF Suez. There will be North American wood pellet producers and exporters there and consultancies and suppliers profiting from such business. There will also be UK biomass companies in attendance, such as MGT Power and Helius, hoping to cash in on the lucrative government subsidies available for burning biomass.

As part of the event, these companies will be treating themselves to a gala dinner and awards ceremony designed to recognise "outstanding contributions" to the biomass industry. In response Biofuelwatch are hosting an Alternative Awards Ceremony to show contempt for this celebration of the profits of a few at the expense of many.

Anyone concerned about forest destruction, carbon emissions and air pollution, is invited to come and “welcome” delegates on their way to the Gala Dinner on the 9th of April with banners and placards. We will then present our alternative “Biomess Award” to the Biggest Biomass Baddie at the conference. In order to choose the prize winner, we are encouraging the public to cast their vote for the Biggest Biomass Baddie in the run up to the event, from a short-list which includes:

Drax - who are responsible for burning more wood than any other company in the UK.



The Green Investment Bank – who granted their first large loan to Drax for a £100 million to help them partially convert from coal to biomass.

The Department for Energy and Climate Change – who are responsible for drawing up

and implementing the rules for renewable energy subsidies. These have been increasingly skewed in favour of big biomass, while support for wind and solar energy is being cut.

The Renewable Energy Association - who have been acting as a mouthpiece for big energy companies investing in large-scale biomass electricity, while remaining virtually silent about the Government cutting back on support for wind and solar.

ENVIVA - who are North America’s largest pellet producer. One of their mills was found to use at least 80% native trees from ancient swamp forests.

The Wood Pellet Association of Canada – who work closely with coal power station operators across Europe – their key customers. They claim that pellets made from old growth forests are sustainable and are working on opening up markets in the Boreal forest.

For details of this event, to read more about our Big Biomass Baddies and to cast your vote, please visit: <http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/biomess-awards/>

This Alternative Awards Ceremony is part of a month of events which put the spotlight on the destructive biomass industry. Visit our website for more information on what else is going on in April, including a demonstration outside the Drax AGM. Contact us by writing to biofuelwatch@ymail.com

News from around the Movements

Protesters inspect Submarines without an invitation

Two campaigners from Faslane Peace Camp were arrested on Wednesday 19 March aboard the Royal Navy submarine HMS Ambush at its berth in Faslane. Security at the site - home to Britain's Trident nuclear weapons – was again called into question by the protesters' actions.

Speaking today following her release from custody, boarding party member Heather Stewart (29) said 'I am amazed and disturbed by the accessibility of the UK's top defence site. Up to eighty nuclear warheads are often stationed here, along with several nuclear reactors. We thought we could get in, but not that we would be arrested within meters of nuclear materials.'



Photo Credit : gizmag.com

HMS Ambush is one of the new Astute class of hunter-killer submarines. Two of a planned seven Astutes have been completed, with all seven intended to be based alongside the £100 billion Trident replacement at Faslane. The base is currently undertaking a £31 million expansion to accommodate the additional service personnel for these submarines.

'These submarines use the same leaky reactor which has recently been disclosed to have caused problems at Dounreay. Bringing another five to Faslane will double the chances of nuclear accident' said Jamie Watson (29) on release Court. Having been charged with bye-laws offences, malicious mischief, and offences under the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act, the protesters were allowed to leave custody with no trial date set. Stewart said 'Since there's nowhere for them to go, a “Yes” vote in September will help pile on pressure for these engines of destruction to be sent to the breaker's yard as part of a programme of unilateral disarmament.'

CAAT Activist Convicted and sentenced

Yesterday CAAT supporter and anti-arms trade campaigner Sylvia Boyes was convicted for “obstructing the highway” during a protest at the DSEI arms fair in London last September. Over the last few weeks a number of activists have either been found not guilty or had their charges dropped, but Sylvia, 70, was fined a total of £440 for ‘obstructing the highway.’

Not only is the financial punishment totally disproportionate to the alleged ‘crime’, but it also shows the completely muddled priorities of the British legal establishment. As Sylvia said, “When you are dealing with the sale of weapons and torture instruments which are being used to hurt so many, what can I as a human being do that is proportionate with those facts?”

Fracking protest in Flintshire

On Sunday 16th March over 200 people converged on the site at Kingsmarsh on the English/Welsh border. A few are now camping there, supported by local people living under threat of drilling and fracking; many residents of Cheshire, north-east Wales and beyond are organising in local groups. Several public meetings have been held. Other nearby test sites include Upton near Chester, Kinnerton between Hope and Chester, and Shocklach near Malpas.

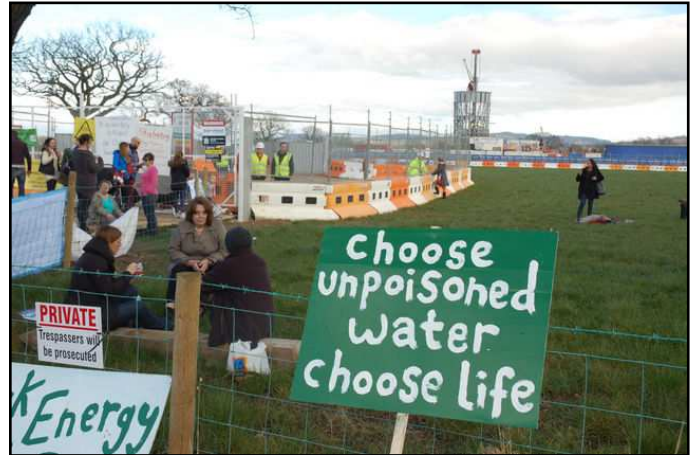


Photo Credit : Indymedia

<http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2014/03/515992.html>

Father Martin Newell sentenced



Photo Credit : ITN News

Catholic Priest Fr. Martin Newell, was today sentenced to 28 days in prison for non-payment of fines arising from numerous nonviolent peace protests against war and war preparations. Appearing at Westminster Magistrates Court this morning (15 March) Martin told the court that for "reasons of faith and conscience" he would not pay fines of £565 that had been imposed following protests against the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the UK's use of armed drones and Trident nuclear weapons system. Fr. Newell said, "Jesus taught us to

love not just our neighbours but also our enemies. He showed us by his life and example how to resist evil not with violence but with loving, persistent, firm, active non-violence. It was this revolutionary patience on behalf of the poor and oppressed that, humanly speaking, led to him being arrested, tried, tortured and executed by the powers that be. The acts of witness that resulted in the fines I have refused to pay were a form of conscientious objection. Refusing to pay them is a continuation of that

objection. It is a privilege to be able to follow on the path that led Jesus to the way of the cross and resurrection."

Fr. Newell is a member of the Passionist Order. He currently works with homeless refugees at the London Catholic Worker, and is planning to move soon to start a new project in Birmingham.

CAAT Science Festival Campaign

Stop arms company (SELEX) sponsorship at the Edinburgh Science Festival. On Saturday 29th March there is a march to the Mound. Meet at the Forest Cafe, Tollcross at 2pm, to highlight Selex's sponsorship of the Edinburgh Science Festival. The British and Italian defence giant, Selex ES, is one of the "major funding partners" of the festival, which opens 7 April. The firm helps fund festival visits to one quarter of Scotland's primary schools each year and sponsors a "rampaging chariots race" for robots, expected to attract 6000 children at this year's festival. The £3 billion company sells weapons and missile electronics to the United Arab Emirates, weapons management systems to Malaysia and Thailand, unmanned surveillance drones to Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Pakistan, and radar for use in Israeli drones. Selex ES, which has a base in Edinburgh, specialises in high technology electronics and is owned by the major Italian firm, Finmeccanica, the world's eighth-largest arms company. Scientists, politicians and campaigners against the arms trade say it is wrong for a festival aimed at children to be backed by a firm whose products "cause death and destruction around the world." A petition has been launched and "Disarm the Science Festival" protests planned.



Take Action

Trident Ploughshares NVDA & Membership Training

27 April 10am - 5pm in the STUC Building 333 Woodlands Rd, Glasgow G3 6NG. Trident Ploughshares activists campaign for the disarmament of the UK's nuclear weapons. An opportunity to explore nonviolence and direct action or supporting these activities. Contact Brian at the P&J to sign up or for more information.

Greenpeace NVDA Training

Edinburgh. Saturday 26 April 2014. To apply, please <http://tinyurl.com/nvbxljj>

Wool against weapons Scotland Help create the 7 mile long pink scarf that will stretch between Aldermaston and Burghfield on 9th August .



5th April – Glasgow, George Square 11am. Display scarf so far and recruit folk to join in.

7th April –Scarf to join the SCND Spring Peace Walk at Faslane.

Sat 26th April 11-1 – Flashmob knit-in outside Scottish Parliament

Send completed sections of the scarf to: Jane Lewis , 7 Rosefield Avenue, EH15 1AT www.woolagainstweapons.co.uk/
facebook.com/groups/woolagainstweaponsscotland/

Join the email list by contacting Jane Lewis: <jane[at]gn.apc.org>

Trident Ploughshares Gathering: Devonport. May 10th - 12th 2014. All welcome.

Workshops on: Fast and Functional Facilitation - The Dance of Nuclear Physics - NVDA refresher or intro -Revisiting consensusand more. Eclectic musicians of Plymouth - Networking and planning. - Sleeping space and vegan food provided. To Register or for more info contact: tp_tamarians@hotmail.co.uk

New Independence Choir Forming Learn a number of relevant songs that we can sing at events and gatherings. You don't have to be able to read music and there are no auditions. First meeting was Sun 30th March but still open to new people and don't worry if Edinburgh is too far away – we are trying to coordinate leaders/groups in the airts and pairts! Karen kdietz@phonecoop.coop



CND Spring Walk for Peace 1- 7 April

Walk Starts at the Scottish Parliament Tuesday 1 April. Assemble at 11.45am. Speaker at 12.15am, March starts 12.30 am. Procession up the Royal Mile to Parliament Square. Speakers: Humza Yousaf, Neil Findlay, Patrick Harvie and Jean Urquhart. Meeting in Currie **Tuesday 1 April 7pm at Gibson Craig Hall, Lanark Road.** Speakers are Colin Keir MSP, Green Party and Scottish CND. Music from Penny Stone and Lisa Rigby. Plus “Peaces of History” puppet show.

Glasgow March and Rally Saturday 5 April George Square. Assemble 10:30am. March 11.00am. Rally 12.00pm. Speakers Nicola Sturgeon MSP, Lesley Riddoch, Lord Provost Sadie Docherty, Dave Moxham (STUC), Sally Foster-Fulton (Church of Scotland). Sheboom Drummers, Protest in Harmony Choir.

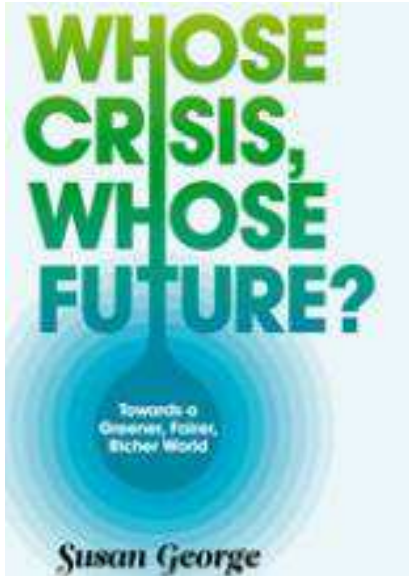
For more details contact 0141 357 1529, Email contact@springwalk.org

Book Review from our Library

Whose Crisis, Whose Future? Towards a Greener, Fairer, Richer World,

by Susan George. 2010, Polity Press, Massachusetts ISBN – 13: 978-0-7456-5138-5

(Available on loan in the P and J library)



Susan George expresses what many thinking people can identify with: anger 'because so many people are suffering needlessly on account of the economic, social and ecological crisis and because the world's leaders show no signs of bringing about genuine change...' Using the phrase 'another world is possible' she shows her faith that it is still possible to restore health to planet and people. She helps readers to see the relationship between finance, the economy, society and the planet, comparing where we ARE with where we SHOULD be: from the situation where constant growth comes first to one where the wellbeing of the planet and all its people are prioritised.

Susan George is no starry-eyed idealist, however. She understands the extent of the challenge that climate change, hunger and inequality present, but she is not calling for a 'big bang' to end the crisis. She advocates a 'process of transformation' through public pressure on governments to put people and planet first. Only states are amenable to pressure. Institutions such as the World Bank and World Trade Organisation are neither elected nor influenced by ordinary people.

The chapters are headed 'The wall of....' listing the systems that imprison the world in inequality and damage to the natural and human environment. First is 'Finance', i.e. 'greed' dressed up in mathematical formulae and terms like 'self-regulating markets'. The bankers in charge have rarely had to pay the price for failure. The 'ideology of neoliberal globalization' goes back at least to Adam Smith and the 'Davos class' whose motto was, 'All for ourselves and nothing for other people'.



Photo Credit : Daily Mail/Getty Images

The welfare culture developing after the Second World War was not conducive to this, and so 'the right' set about changing it, leading to Milton Friedman and the belief in the supremacy of 'the private sector' and financial 'freedom'. This chapter explains how the gap between the very wealthy and the majority of 'ordinary' citizens has grown, and so

leads to the next 'wall' – 'poverty and inequality'. George quotes Andrew Carnegie who claimed that competition and the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the few was 'not only beneficial, but essential for the future progress of the race.'

The book spans the world, illustrating the effects of financial policies causing a rise in unemployment leading to increased domestic abuse, a drop in health services, an increase in early mortality and cognitive impairment resulting from poor diets, and migration to 'richer' parts of the world. The message: it is up to citizens to exert their power with governments. This is not a book that one can ignore: basic needs are for us all, and the shame is that they are so hard to access for many and so taken for granted by the few – which includes most of us readers.

The author emphasises the danger of speculation on and commodification of food, water and energy, every human being's rights. Agribusiness take-overs and water privatisation are inevitable consequences of the greed-power culture that is the concern of this book.

All this has been taking place in a world of conflict, another of Susan George's 'walls'. Not only are countries spending enormous resources on 'defence' and arms trade deals but these also breed the kind of insecurity and oppression that lead to further conflict. The message of this chapter is that campaigners for peace, for the environment and for social change must join together, as people did before the Iraq invasion in 2003. She says, powerfully, 'Climate change threatens us as it threatens civilization itself. We must choose to win. We must choose each other.'

Pat Bryden

Reflections

WATERS OF THE EARTH (song)

The waters of the earth are flowing,
 Down the mountainside,
 And all of life through earth is growing,
 Feel the rising tide.
 Give me strength to carry on,
 Weary I may be.
 Give me strength to carry on,
 Oh troubled world be free.

Penny Stone



CHILD OF THE UNIVERSE

I am a child of the universe,
I've been here before
and I'll be here again.
I am a child of the universe,
A part of all women and a part of all
men.

Theo Simon (Seize the Day)

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