

The Anglican PEACEMAKER

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The Gorgon's gaze: 'Medusa' by Caravaggio

The theme of this issue revolves around the beliefs that underpin the strategies of Christian pacifists and the wider peace movement to prevent war and bring about a more secure world. A central question is whether unilateral disarmament is necessarily the best strategy or whether exceptions can be made in limited circumstances. What are the boundaries?

We consider how beliefs are formed and influence people's political actions, an important consideration if they are damaging the welfare of others. Should we hold our beliefs quite so firmly?

The opening discussion places these concerns in the context of world events as they portend greater uncertainty and more conflict. Much reference is made to the role of the US because this is likely to determine whether we see another European war (or even a world war) in our time. How will the US react to the military aggression of other nations?

Passing reference is made to the origin of WW2 because of the parallels with current events. This includes the advance of genocide (as when the seemingly unimaginable became inexorable).

Education and training, especially of young people, is crucial to peace making and we consider this in the wider setting of disarmament. How do we persuade people to resist militarism which involves them personally?

Some of these issues are controversial and we hope they will encourage debate among readers. All comments would be most welcome.

Our opening article brings up to date some of the thinking in 'The ethics of pacifism and Just War in an age of terrorist violence', a paper published by Tony Kempster in 2007. Written at a time when military threats seemed more distant than they do today, it challenged the Churches to revise the Just War, placing it within the wider context of an ethical foreign policy going way beyond the narrow consideration of national interest.

The paper also referred to the role of pacifists in anti-war campaigning, advancing the view that: 'The pacifist case would contribute more to the arguments set out in this paper [concerning threats to international security] if it is made as rationally as possible, even if this means admitting to skepticism about its value in occasional circumstances. We may believe as Christian pacifists that love is the way to resolve international conflicts; but this does not mean that the use of military force will always fail and contribute more to the sum of human suffering than it prevents.'

The paper was presented at a MCPU conference and published in *Modern believing*: (volume 49:2 2008). It was also a feature of the APF information pack (War, peace and the Lambeth Conference) presented to bishops at the 2008 Lambeth Conference. Copies are available if anyone would like one.

Now, in these more threatening times, he considers the boundaries of pacifist belief. How are the lines drawn between what is acceptable and what is not? It is here that we encounter the 'truth' to which Gandhi refers when challenged about his acceptance of India's military support for the Allies in 1942. Showing flexibility and admitting that his grasp of international affairs was weak, he said, 'my aim is not to be consistent with my previous statement on a given question, but to be consistent with truth, as it may present itself at a given moment'.

Or perhaps we might find a little space before absolute pacifism, seeing it as 'the crack where the light gets in', a phrase that Leonard Cohen uses so well in his song, 'Anthem'.



The birds they sang at the break of day
Start again I heard them say
Don't dwell on what has passed away
or what is yet to be.

The wars they will be fought again
The holy dove be caught again
bought and sold and bought again
the dove is never free.

Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering

There is a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in.

You can add up the parts
but you won't have the sum
You can strike up the march,
there is no drum
Every heart to love will come
but like a refugee.

'THE FUTURE IS ALREADY IN PLACE'

Günter Grass, the Nobel literature laureate and great German man of letters, who died this April, used the words above in a *New Statesman and Society* interview in 1990. He was speaking about climate change – today's rapid increases in temperature, pollution and desertification – but it might equally have been the rising tide of militaristic nationalism.

His point, which has been made by other writers in different ways, is this: if we have the facts that foretell catastrophe, we should address the future as though it is already here. For those of us involved in campaigning for political change, it is a serious error to be blind to obvious trends and predictions that affect what we are trying to achieve; and continue in the same way as though nothing is changing. Sometimes cherished opinions have to give way to new facts and circumstances.

An unbridged version of this article with notes is available.

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The Gorgon's gaze

In the blink of an eye, or so it seems, the world has changed and a new disturbing future is in place. Perhaps it was always on the cards since empires rise and fall, but international politics is returning to the laws of the jungle, and the western world is ill prepared, both materially and psychologically, to deal with this. Daniel Johnson's writing in *Standpoint* magazine (April 2015) gives a personal perspective with which many of us will identify. He says, 'I was born in the 50s and thought of myself as "post war"'. For me the fascination of past war lay in its remoteness from my experience. For half a century the face of battle, in the late John Keegan's phrase, was averted from our gaze. Now it is we who must avoid the Gorgon's evil eye. We never thought the spectre of war would return to haunt our middle age. We had not prepared our own children to fight for what we inherited. We did not expect to see the survival of western civilisation at stake yet again in our lifetimes or theirs.'

The sharp edge of history has hardly affected most of us. Wars have been fought in distant places and we have enjoyed untroubled lives under the US defence shield, complacent in its effectiveness. But Russia's invasion of Ukraine and a return to a more unpredictable Cold War, the rise of IS and the obvious signs that China is becoming more assertive alter everything. Accompanying this shift, Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping have started using a new language, one of their rights as great powers, and their responsibilities in terms of looking after their own scattered about the 'near abroad'. Many countries are drawing fearful conclusions from this.

There are also anxieties about the longer-term role of the US in world affairs, particularly as it is making significant defence cuts. In the post-war period, America has made some awful international blunders, but it has also struggled to preserve the unity of purpose necessary to defend and nurture freedom across the globe.

Further, for people living on one of the world's political fault lines, it has become unwise to assume that the UN or the 'international community' will ride to their rescue. This extends more widely than just the neighbours of Russia and China. It applies to many Middle Eastern countries, surveying the Shia/Sunni schism, or South Koreans looking north. For many other countries, fragmentation or insurgency undermines their ability to respond to such security challenges, and malign neighbours are exploiting precisely these forces to weaken their efforts by steps short of war.

How secure is the West?

In a tightly argued book, *The edge: is the military dominance of the West coming to an end?* (2015), Mark Urban points out the dangers inherent in Europe's current disarmament programmes as threats increase. He says that the size of western armed forces, their stocks of weaponry and their readiness for combat are declining precipitously. His book is a wake-up call and shows just how rapidly the balance of power has shifted already. Extrapolating these trends to Grass's 'present' is alarming and causing concern among military figures in many countries.

Focusing particularly on the threat from Russia, Urban says Putin long ago crossed the red line that distinguishes those who consider war an acceptable means of advancing national interests from those who do not. Having done so, it becomes merely a matter of convenient judgement from the Kremlin about where and how violence is employed. And Urban asks rhetorically whether the political will, never mind the military means, exists in Britain, Germany or even America to fight Russia for Latvia or Estonia.

The West's changing attitudes to war

Whatever the peace movement thinks or does, these global trends have far-reaching consequences for national politics. We in western countries have been riding on a tide of public opinion that is against war, influenced greatly by the failed and costly campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. We saw this clearly

'International politics is returning to the laws of the jungle.'

'We in western countries have been riding on a tide of public opinion that is against war.'



in the national responses to the question 'Would you be willing to fight for your country?' in the Win/Gallup survey (highlighted in the last issue of TAP (14.3)). Indeed, some of us are pleased to be able to point up this so-called 'functional' pacifism, and I have done so in my talks at schools and conferences because it is a taste of success for the peace movement, although perhaps undeserved! But many commentators are saying that the West may come to regret this state of affairs when it compares the ruthless ethos of IS with its own reluctance to fight even in defence of allies and victims of genocide. And there is a similar contrast with the Russians, who appear prepared to take more casualties than their western counterparts.

Thus, a lack of military aptitude is becoming accepted in many European countries. But it ignores the existence of predators who do not play by our rules; and it is raising concerns that the West runs the risk of repeating the mistakes of WW2: inadequate military preparation carried out too late to deter aggression.

The General Election and future Government responses

Given the fact that leading defence analysts and military figures are becoming very forthright about the situation, it is surprising that the state of British armed forces figured so little in the UK general election. Trident was mentioned by the SNP, and there was some sniping between Labour and Conservatives over Britain's military involvement in Libya, its lack of involvement in Syria, and the combined effect of these actions on the Mediterranean refugee crisis. But that was all. There appears to be a consensus among the main parties that austerity, however it is implemented, should make defence spending a low priority.

The election was distorted on all sides by uncertainty about its outcome. This is perhaps understandable as the different parties played to an electorate focused on social spending. But it is also likely that British politicians are simply not sure what action is most appropriate.

This is not the place to discuss in detail a strategy for dealing with Russia but nobody can deny (at this stage of events anyway) that negotiation should be vigorously employed. But many observers are of the opinion that the West needs a way forward that allows discussion and cooperation without shying away from confrontation should this be the only viable option, the use of so-called 'smart power'.

Parallels exist with the situation in the Pacific where China is asserting itself. For both the United States and China, the primary future strategic challenge is to find a way to develop a mutually beneficial means of transition from US dominance toward a stable, more equitable balance of power in the western Pacific. This would be one in which neither nation has the clear capacity to prevail in an armed conflict, but in which both countries believe their vital interests can nonetheless remain secure. Michael Swaine argues these points in *Foreign Affairs* (volume 94: 3, 2015).

The approach of the anti-war movement and its campaigns

So, how could the peace movement best respond to this future that is now in place? [Note that we are talking here about the peace movement in general, and not pacifists tending towards a rejection of all military action.]

Anti-war campaigns operate in similar ways, and seem to spend an inordinate effort blaming the US and NATO for current crises. It is said that belligerent countries and terrorist organisations are simply reacting to the West's heavy handedness and past military interventions. There is some truth in this of course, but resurgent nationalism and religious extremism are fuelled by many other factors that the peace movement often chooses to play down or ignore.

Stop the War Coalition has been highly successful in bringing large numbers of people together with a common opposition to UK's involvement in US/NATO's wars. It is to be

Disarm our Church investments

► FROM THE CHAIRPERSON, NAT REUSS

My letter takes a more conformist stance on 'pacifism' than the opening article by Tony Kempster. He believes that the definition of 'pacifism' should countenance the use of military force in limited circumstances, which means that full disarmament would not be the aim.

Tony considers that his more liberal approach, together with a willingness to admit doubt or lack of understanding in some circumstances, would give pacifists a more credible face. Other Christians would be more willing to listen to their views, such that the fellowship might gain more members and have a higher profile within the Church. My writing is concerned with faithful action in response to the new world Jesus has inaugurated and trusting in its attractiveness to the world.

I hope you agree that our fellowship is 'big' enough to embrace such differing views and benefit from the discussion that this encourages.

In conversing with other Christians on the subject of disarmament, it often doesn't take too long before a sense of fear rises to the surface when mention is made of giving up our arms.

Growing up in the West – on the side of the powerful – can have implications for Christians that are not necessarily positive. What were once considered 'Christian nations' are now being reevaluated, particularly in light of the war in Iraq. Much reflection has ensued in response to the 'alleged' threats from Iraq as portrayed by the US and UK Governments. Who were we placing our trust in for our protection – God or the might of our armed forces?

Fear of 'the other' still plays a huge part in winning public favour in conflict situations. Growing up in Australia, I can recall an irrational fear directed toward neighbouring Asian countries and my juvenile self-soothing and misplaced trust as I reminded myself that our allies were the UK and USA: Held up against the Biblical narrative of peace as justice and forgiveness – it was a culture of fear and misdirected trust and in many ways it still is, as has been shown in Australia's fearful treatment of asylum seekers and the threatened closure of Aboriginal communities. Today, are we (as Christians) consciously or unconsciously with our inner lives, our theology, our Churches and our Church investments, placing too much trust in man-made systems of armaments that purport to allay our fears? Think about it for a moment - whom do we fear? Many people of faith argue to keep hold of a nuclear deterrent in the event of an attack by a terrorist group or rogue state. You will find this fear in the living rooms of the faithful all across the world. And yet, is this trusting in arms and violence not idolatry?

The ensuing lesson, of course, is always to have faith in God and not man. The lack of any coordinated, prolonged opposition to Trident and other countries' nuclear arsenals from within the mainstream Anglican Church hierarchy tells me that we as a Church are misguided. The issue of disarmament becomes first an issue of spirituality and spiritual maturity, followed by the discipleship practice of activism in speaking truth to power – what some might call a 'contemplative activism'. How might we as APF live this out more to our Church and world?

In the New Testament, we find time and again Jesus rejecting the expectations placed upon him for a military solution to the problem of fear of the other. Why? Because his love is for all humankind and his new reign is not a realm requiring borders and defence. Most radically, Jesus' followers were drawn from both sides of the fence. A new global community was formed made up of both Jews and Gentiles, citizens from warring sides were finally reconciled together to make one new people – a new heavenly community made not in the sky, but right here on earth. A community called to not fear their enemies, but rather to love them.

APF member, Nick Megoran in his book *The war on terror* describes this new community as one that lives with two

passports. As disciples of Jesus, we are citizens of our own countries but we are also citizens of Heaven (Hebrews 11:14-16). Through faith we become ambassadors to Christ and the Church becomes a new ethnos or ethnic group called out from amongst the Nations to be a blessing to the Nations seeking their peace.

How do we seek the peace of our Nations? There seems to be two ways in which this narrative has been understood. The first is to see our Nation as 'Christian' and place our trust in our political and military powers to quash abroad any supposed threats to our 'peace' at home using the Just War or other ideologies as justification. The end result however, when arguing from a national position, is always more violence.

The second and more faithful and transformative way are to see the Church as a community called to be 'salt' and 'light' in a darkened world. The Church acts to transform society and our nations through faithful witness bringing peace, not just as an absence of war but as a healing and wholeness to society.

In the West currently, this requires a move of resistance to confront and challenge those systems that bring death as opposed to life, both at home and exported abroad. CofE bishops have recently issued a call for a new kind of politics in Britain. But I think our position would carry greater influence if our own body politics and the way we use our Church finances were more in line with our mission. Globally there is a growing call to divest from fossil fuel companies on the grounds of their contribution to climate change. This is movement that needs the Church's support not least on the solid theological grounds of Creation Care. But more pressing is the impact to those suffering in the poorer parts of the globe, particularly through the relationship between corporations and war (see page 6 for evidence in Africa).

Briefly, the Church of England invests large swathes of its multi-billion wealth in some of the world's largest companies, including Royal Dutch Shell and British Petroleum. Despite the Church of England's investments being overseen by an ethical investment advisory board, these investments remain in the face of growing climate change and research into their profiteering from war including the Iraq War.

According to CNN correspondent Antonia Juhasz in *Why the war in Iraq was fought for Big Oil* (April 15, 2013): 'before the 2003 invasion, Iraq's oil industry was fully nationalized and closed to Western oil companies.

A decade of war later, it is largely privatized and utterly dominated by foreign firms.' What were local revenues to Iraq are now revenues

to shareholders in large corporations. If the CofE is to have a credible voice in seeking the peace of nations, both in the UK and around the world, it must first heed the warning provided from the so-called 'mission fields' to 'repent of its participation and complicity in irresponsible uses of power...' in *Nurturing Peace: Theological Reflections on Overcoming Violence* by Deenabandh Manchala.

Church divestment from oil and mining companies would be a good start. The Church would need to then work towards an alternative vision, one rooted more deeply in trusting to God by funding new social enterprises that are aligned to the Church's Mission rather than profit at any cost. Only then can the Church be Good News to those living in the land of darkness, only then can we speak more credibly and work towards the peace of the Nations. We must place our trust in God and show that we are doing so by the actions (witness) of our investments, that we seek to invest in enterprises that bring life and divest from those that only bring death.

‘What were once considered ‘Christian nations’ are now being reevaluated, particularly in light of the war in Iraq.’



Courage, stress and affirmation

► FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY TONY KEMPSTER GIVES HIS REPORT

Optimism is in short supply this year. International co-operation on many issues will suffer from the strength of nationalism. Just now the world seems uncommonly hard to manage. Citizens are fed up with the elites that govern them in many countries and jihadists are wreaking havoc in the Middle East and beyond. Whereas democratic governments seem weak and vacillating, authoritarians are busy arresting their opponents, muzzling their media and invading their neighbours. You know something is wrong when Henry Kissinger, the elder of foreign-policy pundits, writes a book called *World order* warning that 'chaos threatens'.

When I put together this issue of TAP, I was looking for an image for the theme, coming up finally with the 'gaze of the Gorgon' on the front page. Reference is made to this in the opening article. It also reminded me of the film-poem created in 1992 by Tony Harrison which examines the politics of conflict in the 20th century using the Gorgon and her petrifying gaze as a metaphor for the actions of elites during wars and the muted response and apathy these traumatic events generate among the masses, seemingly petrified by modern Gorgons gazing at them from pediments constructed by the elites.

'Gorgon Stare' is also a video-capture technology developed by the United States military. It is a spherical array of nine cameras attached to an aerial drone. The US Air Force calls it 'wide-area surveillance sensor system'. It was announced that the latest version is installed on the Reaper drone. It provides 'city-size' images taken twice per second, as well as 'chip-out' images of specific targets within that city.

Appointment of Bishop Protector

The Rt Revd David Walker, Bishop of Manchester has agreed to be the APF Bishop Protector. This follows the retirement of The Rt Revd Peter Price who was Bishop Protector from 2008. The 'idea' of Bishop Protector came from our New Zealand



A delegation to Manchester: Tony, Sue Claydon and Clive Barrett.

APF who initiated the role there back in 2001. The role is mainly advisory and also provides the fellowship with a voice in Church matters. We look forward to working with Bishop David.

NCPO General Election briefing

The Network of Christian Peace Organisations (of which APF is a member) produced this briefing to help Christian communities to prepare for the election by challenging parliamentary candidates with questions about militarism and war, peace and justice. This year will also see a new Strategic Defence Review and a review of the National Security Strategy, and it is important that Christians add their voices to debate on these strategies. The briefing argued that military spending and military R&D budgets should be reduced and spending on social and environmental needs significantly increased. This briefing can still be downloaded from www.ncpo.org.uk.

Trident Lock Down and Pentecost Communion Service

APF members were amongst the Christian contingent at the 'lock down' at AWE Burghfield on 2 March. Normal traffic to the bomb factory was disrupted.



The call to prayer said at the beginning of each hour included the following:

'To keep Lent is to confront the principalities and powers first of all in prayer. With Jesus we face the dark side of ourselves – this is so susceptible to capture and control by the powers. If it happens that we keep vigil publicly at the gates of economic, military, political or religious authority, we do so as an act of repentance, acknowledging the solidarity of sin.' (Pax Christi prayer resource).

An APF-organised Pentecost Communion Service was held on 22 May at the Construction Gate of the factory.



The Revd Professor Tim Goringe took the service.

Affirming peace

We would like to congratulate the Fellowship of Reconciliation on the programme of events to celebrate its centenary year. APF members attended several of these including the service at St Mary the Virgin university church, Oxford that rounded off the year. The latter was held to remember the witness of FoR members and supporters over the last 100 years and to give thanks to God for the guidance and strength.

The address was given by Bishop David Walker now APF's Bishop Protector. He urged those present to address the causes of war, not merely the symptoms, and suggested that in the future wars would be fought over increasingly scarce natural resources. He was keen to stress the human impacts of war, and spoke movingly of the effect fighting in WW1 on his grandfather's mental health. Bishop David also emphasised the part that education has to play in preventing conflict.

‘With Jesus we face the dark side of ourselves – this is so susceptible to capture and control by the powers.’

Notice of the 2015 Annual General Meeting and vote to change the membership pledge

To better reflect the 21st Century, APF is reviewing all aspects of its work. This includes how people join the Fellowship and what they are committing to. In 1937, it was common to sign a 'pledge' when joining such a group. Now many of our members are joining through the internet and are from the full range of countries in the Anglican Communion; and asking for a signature now seems outmoded.

Further, having looked at various other Christian peace organisations, people now commit to a vision for their organisation rather than a formal 'pledge'. This meets the need to focus on more positive action.

At our Governing Body meeting in February possible alternatives were considered by those present, and a majority were in favour of replacing the pledge with the following:

Members must be 18 or over and members of the Anglican Communion or Christians in communion with it and commit to the following:

We believe that as Christians we are called to follow the way of Jesus in loving our enemies and becoming peacemakers. We work to transform our Anglican Communion and the world to overcome those factors that lead to war within and between nations.

This will replace section 7(1) of the APF Constitution. The current pledge is shown in the application for membership form on page 8.

A motion to change the pledge accordingly will be moved at the next Annual General Meeting. This will be held on 24 October at Bicester House, Kings End, Bicester OX26 6NT. The meeting will start at 11.00 and transport can be arranged from Oxford or Bicester railway stations. Please let the Honorary Secretary know if you will be attending so that he can send the papers and provide/discuss travel details as appropriate. His address details are page 8.

International CO's Day

At noon on Friday May 15th about 70 people gathered in Tavistock Square, London, to mark International COs' Day. The event was organised by the First World War Peace Forum, which represents ten peace organisations. As this year saw the centenary of the 1915 Women's Peace Congress in the Hague, the theme was that of female COs.

There were two speakers. First, Sheila Triggs of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom gave an account of the 1915 Congress, which marked the founding of WILPF, and was attended by delegates from 12 countries. Secondly, a young Israeli CO, Mia Tamarin, spoke of her experience in resisting military service in contemporary Israel, which meant her serving a prison term, and eventually coming to Britain to study and work.

There were interesting parallels between the two accounts. Firstly, in patriarchal and militaristic societies, both then and now, women COs tend to be treated less harshly than men, but their protests are also less likely to be taken seriously. Secondly, it is easier for those whose objection stems from their religious beliefs to be granted CO status, and exempted from military service. Political COs are seen as more of a threat, and are more likely to be prosecuted.

As has become the custom, a white carnation was laid on the COs' memorial stone for each of 70 COs, including eight women, representing 70 different countries, and a minute's silence was observed.

The event was introduced by Valerie Flessati, and a choir, composed of members of Raised Voices and the Red and Green Choir, sang three songs, led by APF's Sue Gilmurray, including her anthem for COs, *The ones who said No*.

A century on, courage of the 'conchies' is recognised

It was good to see a page of *The Independent* given over to COs on International CO's day (15 May). The article reports that the Imperial War Museum has a new archive that records the experiences of COs and the punishment they suffered for their principles.

The article focuses on John and Joseph Pearson, pacifists from a Baptist family in Cheshire. They had both joined the No-Conscription Fellowship, an organisation for COs, prior to Britain's introduction of a compulsory call-up in 1916.

While John, who was then 24, was court martialled and eventually saw out the war at Home Office work centres, 22 year-old Joseph was meted out a different – and brutal – fate. Despite his refusal to sign the papers enrolling him in the British Army, he was enlisted into the 3rd battalion of the Cheshire regiment. He was almost certainly treated badly at the Birkenhead Barracks on Merseyside where COs were apparently 'broken in'. In 1917, he was killed in action near Ypres.

The story of Private Pearson and 16,499 other COs are now available online as part of a project to tell the story of the bravery of those who chose not to fight, alongside those who did. The unique CO archive, collated by Dr Cyril Pearce, details the records of nearly all the British men who refused to go to war on religious, political, moral or social belief – and in so doing were often punished with imprisonment and opprobrium. A copy of the archive was given to the Peace Museum (Bradford) and I used this to provide details of COs for local events around Evesham last year (see TAP 14.1, page 4).

MAW booklet on combat stress

APF-member Sue Dowell has written an excellent booklet on combat stress in collaboration with psychologist, Dr Colin Kelcey. Published as the first of a new series by the Movement for the Abolition of War, it traces the history of the condition back to the American civil war when fighters endured sustained bombardment by heavy weaponry for the first time.

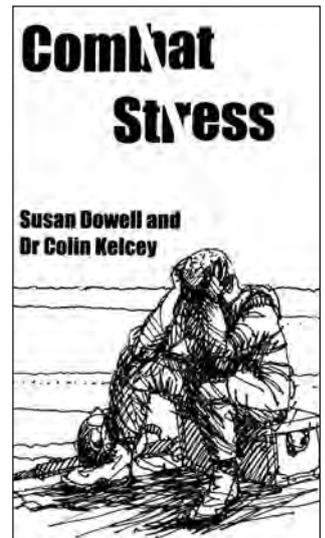
Colin Kelcey examines current research on the subject and describes the causes and symptoms of the condition. Combat stress – formally known as peri-traumatic dissociation or PTSD – as a 'stress-induced abrupt and transient disruption of the normal integration of conscious and psychological functioning'. It has many different effects on the body and can lead to the much longer-term post-traumatic stress disorder.

Sue says, 'We hope that by paying closer attention to some of the horrific psychological damage caused by combat, we can strengthen the argument that war should be avoided at all costs in favour of dialogue and negotiated sentiment – a sentiment we know is shared by many senior military people.'

The booklet can be ordered at www.abolishwar.org.uk.

Note: Interestingly, it was reported in *The Times* (18 June) that pilot stress was causing USA to cut drone flights. Deborah Lee James, secretary of the airforce admitted that drone pilots were under 'significant stress from what is an unrelenting pace of operations. The decrease coincides with an unreleased internal report, which said that the fear of killing civilians was a major cause of drone pilot stress.

'Women COs tend to be treated less harshly than men, but their protests are also less likely to be taken seriously.'



Israeli arms' sales to South Sudan

APF has a special interest in Africa and our members there are carrying out several small projects (reported on our International page in previous TAPs). Our vice-chair has returned recently from South Sudan where she has been doing development work.

In this issue we refer to some more general concerns about the impact of outside countries on Africa. First we draw attention to Israel's sale of weapons to South Sudan (reported by www.radiotamuziy.org on 2 June.)

Israeli citizens have been demonstrating against the sale of weapons from Israel to South Sudan's government, saying the arms may be used to commit atrocities. The main demonstration was outside the International Defense and Homeland Security Expo, a three-day arms' fair held in Tel Aviv, Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported and had some parallels with DSEI in London which is a focus of attention for the Campaign Against Arms Trade. South Sudan's Minister of Transport was expected to attend the arms fair, where the Israeli government-owned Israel Military Industries is showcasing its products.

Last week, Israeli national assembly member Tamar Zandberg sent a letter to Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon asking Israel to halt military exports to South Sudan.

'There is reasonable suspicion', Zandberg claimed, 'that Israeli weapons are being used to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity. She said that Defense Ministry export licenses for South Sudan should be revoked,' Haaretz reported.



The African Union recently called for an arms embargo against South Sudan.

Resource grabs and corruption in Africa

Following up on points from our chair's report (page 3).

The June 2015 issue of *New African* has a special feature on 'The politics of terror in Africa: enablers, resource grabs and corruption'.

Acts of terror and militant extremism in Africa have peaked in the last decade, prompting many questions and theories, including why this heightening insecurity is happening at a time when rich new mineral are being discovered in most of the affected countries, and global demand for natural resources is higher than ever.

In an opening article to the journal, Wanjohi Kabukuru examines the link between terror and the global quest for Africa's natural resources.

In 1997, Laurent Kabila (later to become president of DR Congo) signed mining concessions with several international mining firms to secure funds for his fight to oust President Mobutu from power. Under one deal, he was provided with funds and weapons in return for future mining rights. This act propelled Africa's natural resource wealth into the matrix of power struggles and set a precedent for other militia groups in DR Congo and for many other African nations to follow. Sadly this trend has not stopped to this day.

To date DR Congo has hosted dozens of armed militias, both local and external, who thrive on the looting of the country's mineral wealth. Rebels have also been a source of friction between Rwanda and DR Congo.

It is also probably true that al-Shabaab's highly publicised 2010 attacks in Uganda were related to the discovery of massive oil and gas reserves. And other sudden exhibition of strength by formerly weak militias points to external support with opaque deals sealing the partnerships.

In the same vein, parallels can be drawn in Kenya where Tullow Oil struck oil in Turkana in 2012. Tanzania and Mozambique have also made significant offshore discoveries.

Africa's youngest state, South Sudan, has of late been wracked with civil strife, at the heart of which is the sharing of oil proceeds. South Sudan has also been embroiled in a bitter war with neighbour Sudan over Abyei. The main cause of the Abyei contestation is largely pegged on oil.



Military protection at an oil installation at Abyei.

And other countries are experiencing similar difficulties. In Mozambique as an example) oil, ilmenite, gold, bauxite, nickel, cobalt, corundum, zircon, coal, gemet and graphite among other minerals have seen major mining conglomerates increasingly entering the country. It is instructive to note that natural resources were among the main reasons leading to the ousting of President Marc Ravalomanana in 2009.

The natural resources sector is one of the key sectors where the continent makes heavy losses, as the former South African President Thabo Mbeki-led High Level Panel on 'Illicit financial flows from Africa' testified recently. The report found that Africa loses no less than \$50 billion in illicit financial flows. According to the panel, Africa's natural resources sector. According to the report, Africa's natural resources sector is 'prone to the generation of illicit financial outflows by such means as transfer mispricing, secret and poorly negotiated contracts, overly generous tax incentives and under-invoicing.

It is beginning to be increasingly apparent that it is on this premise that many terror and rebel groups have negotiated, or will negotiate their deals.

Wanjohi Kabukuru says that countries in Africa dealing with conflicts do not want to have the real discussion regarding their conflicts. In my opinion, the real discussions are three. The first is about the economic cause of conflict, which is basically the scramble for resources. The second issue is the fact that governance has not been very good at managing diversity between various tribes and groups in their countries. And the third problem that is less known and talked about is the transition from pastoralist [times] to modernity. Every country in Africa that was based on pastoralism in the past is having a hard time transitioning to modernity.

But it is also patently clear that between 2006 and 2012, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Burundi, Somalia, South Sudan, DR Congo, Angola, Nigeria, Algeria, Niger, Mali and Madagascar had all made economically significant finds of natural resources, including oil, gas, coal, uranium and gold.

All these countries are currently wracked by their own unique set of conflict and security challenges. The bottom line is clear to see. Again this shows that we need to have a broad view of war and how it might be stopped.

Book Look

► RECENT BOOKS REVIEWED

Mark Urban (2015)

The edge: Is the military dominance of the West coming to an end?

Little, Brown

A polemic needs to be well timed to have impact, and this book is timely. Mark Urban, the writer and diplomatic and defence editor for Newsnight has written this book in an attempt to awaken western Europe, and especially Britain, to our unfitness to defend ourselves in an ever more threatening world.

He is also critical of the size of the Britain's aid budget and the argument that funding overseas development makes for a more stable international situation and persuades potential migrants to stay at home. This might be valid, he says, if the world's 20 richest nations really did coordinate and target their aid policies but they don't.

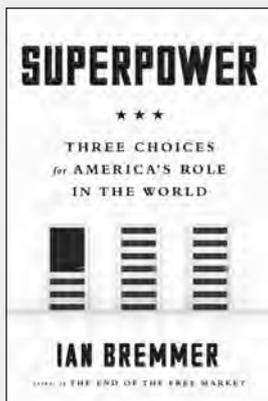
Urban also points out that some analysts argue that big armies and navies are redundant in the era of cyber-warfare and innovative technology. It is technical savvy that matters and that the US still has the edge. But such talk can be misleading and dangerous because it does assume (or hope) that the logic of nuclear deterrence would survive an intense conventional conflict. If an enemy comes to believe it might win in a competition in risk-taking – and idea that Vladimir Putin actively encourages – the rational response to the other side's technological superiority might be nuclear brinkmanship. The more successful the offset strategy is in extending US conventional advantages, the more attractive its adversaries will find strategies of nuclear escalation.'

It seems that the enemy always gets the vote and this underlines the need for a strategy that involves the use of smart power (force and negotiation as appropriate).

Ian Bremmer (2015)

Superpower: three choices for America in the world

Portfolio Penguin



Bremmer argues that Washington's directionless foreign policy has been expensive and dangerous. Since the end of the Cold War, the US has stumbled from crisis to crisis in Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Libya, Syria and Ukraine with not clear

strategy. He explores three possible future options:

Independent America: America should not longer take responsibility for solving other people's problems. Instead, America should lead by example.

Moneyball America: America can't meet every international challenge. The priorities must be to focus on opportunities and to defend US interests where they are threatened.

This combines realism and overseas balancing to achieve results at the lowest possible cost. Thus America will step back from seeking to dominate in the Middle East and Europe. Instead it will coordinate with local allies to achieve a regional balance. That means Europe will be given the lead in dealing with Russia, and Washington will step back even further than it has under Obama.

Indispensable America: Only America can defend the values on which globally stability increasingly depends. It will never live in a stable world while others are denied their basic freedoms. This is for the Republicans who haven't fled the Bush-Cheney legacy.

The case is made for the US to ensure international order but also using diplomacy, economic sanctions and ever-growing military power in the service of democratic values.

Having laid out the options, Bremmer admits he favours the 'Independent America' plan with its minimal intervention and maximum potential for prosperity. He argues that 'Moneyball' is too cynical for Americans and 'Indispensable America' too expensive for wary public and a weakened country.

But James Rubin (*Sunday Times* supplement, 14 June 2015) believes he is wrong on a number of counts. He says that even the American public is uncomfortable with the idea of leaving IS, Iran's nuclear programme and Russia's aggression for US allies to solve without the US. Also he is overly supportive of Obama's leading from behind strategy, even suggesting that it was a success in Libya.

Such differences of opinion illustrate the problem with instant analysis. But whatever happens in the 2016 presidential elections, the choices made are likely to affect us all.

Emma Sky (2015)

The unravelling: high hopes and missed opportunities in Iraq

Atlantic



Amid the turmoil of post-invasion Iraq, Emma Sky became one of a handful of British volunteers to join the western reconstruction effort, and was attached to the US 173 Airborne Brigade. Through the decade she became a political adviser to Paul Bremer, the country's first proconsul, then to General Ray Odiemo, one of the foremost US military commanders. She writes here, 'Nothing that happened in Iraq after the overthrow of Saddam was preordained ... Those the US-led Coalition excluded from

power sought to undermine the new order that was introduced. And those we empowered sought to use the country's resources for their own interests, to subvert the nascent democratic institutions, and use the security forces we trained and equipped to intimidate their rivals ... We looked like, and were, an occupying army. She was impressed by the fact that 'the soldiers generally wanted to do the right thing'. But they were ignorant of the language and culture (above all, vitally, of the tribal culture) in the societies they were striving to set to rights. Max Hastings, reviewing the book, says it is impossible to doubt that the author's heart is in the right place. But her account is flawed by a lack of overarching conclusion, about how the western powers can do better at post-conflict reconstruction. The game is always about which family, tribe or warlord gets access to power and cash.

Timothy W. Ryback (2015)

Hitler's first victims: and one man's race for justice

Bodley Head



Gate at Dachau

This book is salutary, indicating just how easily violence against a few individuals can develop into genocide once law and justice break down. It is a lesson for today.

In April 1933, deputy prosecutor Joseph Hartinger was summoned to the newly established concentration camp of Dachau, where four prisoners had been shot.

The SS guards claimed the men had been trying to escape. But what Hartinger found – a barbed wire cage in a sprawling industrial wasteland, the men's corpses dumped on the floor of an ammunition shed, precision gunshot wounds to the backs of their shorn heads, all of them Jews – convinced him that something was desperately wrong.

Hitler had been appointed Chancellor only ten weeks previously but the Nazi party was rapidly infiltrating every level of state power. Soon they would have a stranglehold on the entire judicial system. In the weeks that followed, Hartinger was repeatedly called back to Dachau, where every new corpse, the gruesome reality became clearer: contrary to the guards' claims, prisoners were being systematically executed and tortured to death.

Hitler's first victims is the story of Hartinger's race to expose the Nazi regime's murderous nature before it was too late. It is at once a tragic legal drama that shows precisely how the Holocaust that followed became possible.

DIARY OF EVENTS

▶ LOCAL AND NATIONAL

15 July Witness and act of worship outside Church House Conference Centre which is hosting a Royal United Services Institute conference on air power. Contact FoR on 01865 250781 or office@for.uk for further information.

6 August Interfaith service of commemoration and commitment to mark the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. 2.30 at Friends House, London (opposite Euston station). The event is free but the organisers ask that you register if you are coming at www.quaker.org.uk/event/hiroshima-and-nagasaki-interfaith-commemoration.

29 to 31 August Greenbelt Christian Arts Festival at Boughton House, Kettering. Fellowship of Reconciliation will be in the G-source tent. www.greenbelt.org.uk.

15 to 18 September DSEI, London's arms fair. Come to London to challenge the arms fair! www.caat.org.uk and 020 7281 0297.

11 to 18 October Week of Prayer for World Peace. www.weekofprayerforworldpeace.com.

17 October WPWP National Service. Hosted by Brahma Kumaris. 2.30 at the Global Co-operation House, 65-69 Pond Lane, London NW10 2HH. (020 8727 3350).

The Wilson/Hinkes Peace Award

This will be presented at the service on 17 October and carries a value of £500. The award was established by WPWP to recognise significant contributions by individuals, organisations or projects in furthering peace, justice and reconciliation. The award seeks to focus on grassroots initiatives. It enables otherwise unknown stories to be told and honoured and to inspire others to work for peace.

Named in honour of Revd Gordon Wilson and Revd Sidney Hinkes, both former chairs of WPWP [and APF] the award is made annually. This year the Award is sponsored by APF. Nominations can come from any individual or group. Submissions in the form of a letter describing the nominee's contribution to peace and justice issues should be sent to the WPWP Secretary, Jennifer Jackson at jjackson215@btinternet.com. The closing date for nominations is 31 August.

APF website

We are upgrading our website and becoming more involved with communication generally on the web through Facebook and other channels. Keep in touch with what we are doing at <http://www.anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk>.

A new APF counsellor

We are pleased to announce that The Revd Donald Reece has been appointed APF counsellor. He has been a member for many years and has wide experience of Christian peacemaking. Until recently he was on the Board of Trustees for the FoR (England).

Subversive peacemakers: war resistance 1914-1918

by APF counsellor Clive Barrett was published in October.

Clive masterfully narrates the story of the peace movement, bringing together stories of war-resistance until now lost, disregarded or undervalued. The people involved, as well as the dramatic events of the conflict themselves, are seen in a new light.



You can buy it direct for

£10 post paid UK. Overseas £18 post paid. Send a Sterling cheque made out to 'Anglican Pacifist Fellowship', Address: Treasurer APF, 33 Glynswood, Chinnor, OX394JE. UK. Or use the DONATION page on the website to make a payment and request via PAYPAL.

OFFICERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP

Chairperson: The Revd Nat Reuss
nathanaelreuss@gmail.com

Vice-chairperson: Mrs Sue Claydon
Bridge House, Whittlesey Road, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 0AH 013546 54214 sue.claydon@tesco.net

Honorary Secretary: Dr Tony Kempster
11, Weavers End, Hanslope, Milton Keynes, MK19 7PA
01908 510642 ajkempster@aol.com

Honorary Treasurer: Mr Roger Payne
33 Glynswood, Chinnor, Oxfordshire, OX39 4JE
01844 351959 apfpayne@btinternet.com

Membership Secretary: Mrs Sue Gilmurray
13 Danesway, Pinhoe, Exeter EX4 9ES
01392 464982 suegilmurray@icloud.com

If you would like to join the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship and are in agreement with the pledge:

'We communicant members of the Anglican Communion or Christians in communion with it, believing that our membership of the Christian Church involves the complete repudiation of modern war, pledge ourselves to renounce war and all preparation to wage war, and to work for the construction of Christian peace in the world.'

Then please (✓) box **one** in the form below.

If you are sympathetic to the view expressed in the pledge but feel unable to commit yourself to it, you may like to become an associate of the APF and receive the Fellowship's newsletter and notice of our various open events, then please (✓) box **two**.

Send your completed form to the Membership Secretary:- **Sue Gilmurray, 1, Wilford Drive, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 1TL.**

I am in agreement with the pledge and wish to become a member of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.

I wish to become an Associate of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.

Name and designation (Revd, Dr, Mr, Mrs etc):

please print clearly and give your Christian name first.

Address

..... **Year of birth** **Diocese**

I enclose a cheque for as my first subscription (*makes cheque payable to the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship*)

Please ✓ if you are a UK-income tax payer and want your donation to be treated as a Gift Aid donation.

APF can then reclaim income tax paid on the donation.

Please ✓ if you want to make a regular monthly or annual subscription using a Standing Order

I heard of APF through **Signed** **Date**

Application for
MEMBERSHIP

Son of Saul (2015)

Directed by László Nemes



This film is set entirely, and with unyielding intensity, inside Auschwitz, and is not for the faint hearted. Towards the end of 1944, Saul Auslander, Hungarian prisoner is working among the Sonderkommando – prisoners who were given a stay of execution to work in the gas chambers.

It focuses on just two days of his life, as he tries to carry out an impossible deed, to bury the corpse of a boy he takes for his son: salvage the body and find a rabbi to perform the funeral rites. While the Sonderkommando is to be liquidated at any moment, Saul turns away from the living and their plans of rebellion to save the remains of a son he never took care of when he was still alive.

Contemporary resonance is unavoidable. This is a film about whether one participates in the suffering of others. Géza Röhrig, an artist and poet, who plays the part of Auslander, has strong views on this and was interviewed by *The Guardian* (20 May 2015). He said: 'You have different societies in every country. But whichever group you belong to, you are never exempt from taking a side when it comes to crimes against humanity. That is true in Syria and America and Israel and everywhere. Every day, we all have to make a case-by-case evaluation. Is this an important enough demonstration to go on? Is this where I should send money? Is this a petition I should sign? One of the lessons of 1944 lies with the bystanders – we just can't let things happen.'

He understands that the Sonderkommando were compelled to do what they did – it was the only way for them to do their best to survive. But he does admit wrestling with one aspect of their duties: whether to fool the Jews that they're taking a shower. 'That is the only question which I think has some legitimacy', he says. Yet he thinks, to have done otherwise, prompting a bloodbath, would have been cruel and fruitless.

He also said he would find it difficult to cope, did he not believe that God, 'who is all-capable in some mysterious way, was there holding the hand of every Jew in the gas chamber – each and every Tutsi, Armenian, Kurd, Palestinian who suffers injustice.'

'71 (2014)

Directed by Yann Demange



Review based on interviews (*Guardian* article by Henry McDonald entitled 'Fear, excitement, tension: how a generation recalls the reality of Belfast's streets in 1971').

This thriller tells the story of a young English soldier's experiences on the streets of Belfast as the city erupted into sectarian violence. Gary Hook has barely taken to the streets before rioting breaks out, and he finds himself cut adrift from his companions and being chased relentlessly by an armed gang of provisional militia. As night closes in, he has no idea how to get back to his barracks, and must throw himself on the mercy of loyalist allies who prove neither consistent beacons of help nor guarantees of sanctuary. McDonald interviewed people who saw the film, including Maria McManus (poet and playwright), Anthony McIntyre (Republican ex-prisoner) and Armie Brown (Former UDR soldier)

It was clearly very evocative for them reliving memories of that time. They had different reactions but all said that the film scenes of bin lids banging trigger a reflex – muscle memories, involuntary and visceral; a peculiar metallic taste in the mouth; a sickening terror that makes bones feel hollow, one said. My stomach knocks, my heart pounds – all coupled with an impulse to 'be good'. It is regressed, real and contemporary. Another said 'I had to pinch myself to realise that we are still living in the same place'. 'The impact of '71 was immediate. To use the well-worn phrase, a journey back in time. The screen immediately saturated my mind with powerful ambience and stunning effects, both visual and audible'.

We are many: the largest protest in history that changed the world (2015)

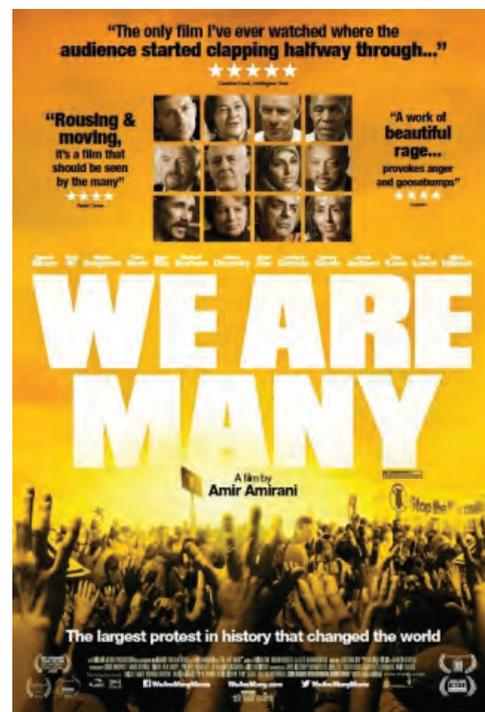
Directed by Amir Amirani

This must be a first. It is a documentary of the demonstration in February 2003 against the invasion of Iraq. It recounts how up to 30 million

people, many of whom had never demonstrated before in their lives, came out in nearly 800 cities around the world to protest against the impending Iraq War. The *New York Times* called this movement the 'Second Superpower'.

The film features testimony from a unique cast of direct participants, including organizers, activists, high-profile figures, and of course the public, filmed in seven countries – Italy, Spain, Egypt, Sweden, Australia, UK, and the USA.

In Britain, nationwide screenings with live Q&A hosted by Jon Snow with special guests were held on 21 May before its release to cinemas. Filled with celebrity comment by many people including Tony Benn, Richard Branson, Ken Loach, Noam Chomsky and Mark Rylance and with some of the organisers, it is a moving documentary of the day and a demonstration of what the peace movement could do.



But one must confess to some reservations because of the follow up. It is claimed that the documentary charts the birth and growth of the new people power movement, now sweeping the world, taking us up to the Arab Spring and Syria, a little over 10 years after that historic day. This is true to some extent, but it is tinged with disappointment of things past, particularly when we think of the rise of IS, the renewed Cold War and the fact that nuclear arsenals are being upgraded and renewed. Considering the British scene, it is the inability of the anti-war movement to continue the communication with a broad spectrum of opinion has been a weakness. Many people came to the demonstration in 2003 but their commitment faded away. Those remaining with Stop the War Coalition tend to be from the political far left in their thinking. They seem to believe that the 2003 invasion of Iraq is a skeleton key that fits their doctrine for all future conflicts.

Disarming learning

By Milan Rai, Editor of *Peace News*



We want to bring an end to war. It's not all we want to do, but it's a big part of what the peace movement is about.

One common counter-argument is that violence is innate; humans are naturally aggressive so there will always be war. I would like to suggest that arguing against this position might be the wrong move for abolitionists. Perhaps the first step, when we encounter this position, ought to be to help people separate 'individual human aggressiveness' from 'socially-organised war'. War, today, is an industrial process.

What makes for war?

Wars are fought with technologies developed in laboratories by calm and thoughtful researchers. Nuclear bombs and drones are not constructed in a red haze of wrath.

Wars are fought with machines and supplies assembled in factories by patient, careful workers; missiles and uniforms are not put together by people in a rage.

Wars are fought with detailed, interlocking logistics; meals are not cooked, fuel and ammunition is not delivered, intercontinental supply lines are not managed by people constantly in the grip of a visceral urge to smash someone in the face.

Wars are fought by soldiers, sailors and pilots who are prepared for war through deliberate, extended educational and training processes; Square-bashing, torpedo-loading and flight checks are not learned by women and men shaking with anger. It is quite the opposite!

Wars are fought with money raised and managed in complex funding and financial management systems; taxes are not raised, and budgets compiled by people ready to scream with fury.

Modern war is an industrial process which does not depend of an 'innate aggressiveness' to drive the vast majority of the people who make it possible – the bookkeepers and managers, the drivers, the military workers, the scientists and technicians. Even for those on the front line, it turns out that it is quite hard to train soldiers to kill. Former US army ranger, later professor of military science at Arkansas State University, lieutenant colonel Dave Grossman has studied what he calls 'the universal human phobia' against killing another person. Grossman writes: 'I spent almost a quarter of a century as an army infantry officer and a psychologist, learning and studying how to enable people to kill. Believe me, we are very good at it. But it doesn't come naturally, you have to be taught to kill.'

Wars happen for a lot of reasons, including our values, our beliefs, our commitment to being a part of our 'community', whether that's a nation or a street gang. One of the main reasons wars happen is because we the people are willing to obey, to acquiesce, to allow the war preparation to build up, and war-making to take place.

Wars happen not because, as a species, we have a tendency towards physical aggression, but because we have a tendency towards obedience to authority and submission to the group. We obey too much and resist too little.

If this is right, then the priority for our abolition work should not be things that may encourage aggression in our society (such as violent video games or violent language), but things that encourage obedience – things that encourage us to conform even when that goes against our own moral impulses or best thinking; things that encourage us to obey even when we violate our own consciences.

This kind of violation can occur as much in a pacifist society as in a munitions factory or research laboratory. Each one of us can think of times when we've gone along with something that has not felt morally right to us.

It is obviously crucial, if we are going to abolish war, to reform,

and often abolish, those institutions that create pressure for, or enable, or actually carry out war. Institutional change is a huge part of abolition. At a deeper level, there are other goals we need to pursue in relation to the individuals who make up society.

It goes without saying that we need to change the values and beliefs of people in society: not just militarist values, but also values or beliefs that involve domination and oppression, that provide justifications and motivation for war.

As well as changing values, we also need to change what people do with their values. We need to increase the chance that people will resolve the tension between what we believe to be right, and what we actually say and do, by standing up for ourselves and our values. We must try to break down immoral conformism, which is undoubtedly inculcated from early childhood. How do we do that?

Direct education

In the last few years, I've become increasingly convinced that training is going to be a crucial part of our work for peace and social justice. I use the word 'training' rather than 'education' because 'education' has a sense behind it that there is a body of knowledge out there that someone with expertise will pour into our empty heads, and that will 'educate' us.

Training, as I've experienced it recently, has not been about making learning more entertaining through participatory exercises, but about making it more powerful and efficient by learning from and through our own experiences.

It turns out that learning even quite complex skills (even mathematics!) can be deepened and accelerated by this kind of 'direct education'.

In order to make institutional change in society, we need powerful movements. Such movements are built out of strong groups – that are skilled in campaigning, that can gain the committed support of people from a wide range of backgrounds, and that can deal effectively with internal conflicts.

'Direct education', pioneered in the US by Training for Change and founded by Quaker activist and author George Lakey, seems to me to be the kind of training that we need urgently in all kinds of movements, to help us gain campaigning, anti-oppression and group process skills.



George Lakey

Our movements need skills in campaigning (such as media or fundraising), in opposing oppression (to help us build multi-racial and cross-class coalitions, for example), and in creating thriving groups (improving meeting facilitation and conflict resolution, for example).

I've been to three Training for Change workshops in the UK (nine days in total) and to their world-class 17-day four-workshop 'Super-T' activist training programme in Philadelphia. Having gone through all that, I'm firmly convinced that their experiential model of training is the most efficient and effective way of helping people to learn skills, and of supporting activists in becoming more capable as people.

This work is immediately relevant to the challenge identified above, of enabling people to become more capable of standing up for their own values, more capable of resisting immoral conformism. Direct education offers the opportunity, for participants to discover more about what is holding them back from fully standing up for themselves and for their values.

Collective liberation

Direct education training is also about building anti-oppression

‘Peace News is seeking to organise a five-year Training for Change training programme in the UK.’

work into every workshop. This is important for building powerful feminist, multiracial and cross-class movements for peace and justice. It’s also something that younger activists in different movements are increasingly concerned about and energised by.

Anti-oppression work is about helping people to understand the power dynamics that are at work in their groups, and helping them to find concrete ways to change attitudes and behaviour to make groups more inclusive and more suited to people from a wide range of backgrounds.

For example, it is clear that racism has helped to justify ‘noble wars against lesser beings’. It has also helped to divide the forces in society that might oppose war. Racism within peace movements has made it harder to build the strongest-possible coalitions against war.

One could say that committed anti-racist work by white people in a society like Britain is a form of disarmament – disarming white people as a whole in relation to racial advantage, and also helping to dismantle one very important force that supports the war system.

Peace News believes that the peace movement urgently needs activist training that pays attention to different forms of oppression, that supports people learning from their own experiences, that helps groups to cope with conflict constructively, that empowers people, and that helps us to find ways to stand up for our own moral truths.

That’s why Peace News is seeking to organise a five-year Training for Change training programme in the UK, to help spread direct education training throughout our movements for peace and justice.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWO

THE FUTURE IS ALREADY IN PLACE

congratulated particularly on the demonstrations against the 2003 invasion of Iraq (see ‘We are many’, Film Look, page 9). But, grounded in the political left and anti-imperialism, the organisation has been unable to build on these achievements and influence the mainstream or the political establishment. It continues to speak on message largely to committed supporters. The Geneva-based International Peace Bureau (of which APF is a member) runs an ambitious project to establish a global movement with the aim of persuading governments to reduce defence and spend the money on overseas development. The US is selected out for special attention since it is by far the biggest military spender. Peace organisations around the world (including a number in the UK) contribute to the project by arranging to run campaigns under the banner of GDAMS (Global Day of Action on Military Spending). But unfortunately most of the organisations are located in liberal democracies and not in the rising powers that are rapidly arming. The latter would suppress such campaigns and experience shows that the use of external pressure to influence them can be counter-productive because it tends to ignite defensive nationalism.

Other anti-war organisations employ a number of different strategies for preventing war. Almost without exception they argue for disarmament. But as IPB’s GDAMS campaign, the target is almost exclusively the western democracies, most of which are already making substantial cuts to their defence spending. So clearly new thinking is needed here.

Evidence and argument, as well as conviction

When dealing with complex issues like the present international crisis, few anti-war activists are likely to be making judgments based on probability theory and the analysis of geopolitical facts; or admitting that they lack the necessary skills or knowledge to take a position – something that Gandhi did when asked about similar questions. No, they will almost certainly make a judgement based on their belief or derived doctrine.

Although this is the way of politics, it is relevant, given that we are dealing with critical issues affecting the lives of millions, to inquire how such beliefs are shaped. One would imagine that beliefs have some basis in common sense and rationality and

that they will be revised to fit new evidence or changing circumstances. But recent research casts much doubt on this and emphasises the dangers involved especially when beliefs are regarded as absolute.

The subject was discussed by Graham Lawton in a *New Scientist* article (14 April 2015). He explains that beliefs are fundamental to our lives, but when it comes to what we believe and why, it turns out we have a lot less control than you might think. The uncomfortable conclusion is that some if not all our fundamental beliefs about the world are based not on facts and reason – or even misinformation – but on gut feelings that arise from our evolved psychology, basic biology and culture. Further, if you hold a belief, by definition, you hold it to be true and for some people it would be virtually impossible to step outside its implications.

The world would be a boring place if we all believed the same things. There would be nothing to challenge and help us think through what we do believe. No people exercised as Thomas was in John’s gospel! But it would surely be a better world if we stopped holding our beliefs quite so firmly so that, in matters of great complexity and moment at least, the light might shine through the crack.

And, for pacifists to admit some exceptions – perhaps that the UN responsibility to protect (R2P) or the military containment of an enemy may be valuable - may offer room for engagement and dialogue with those who hold different views. It would also allow them to speak in places, in those schools for example, where they unwelcome. It also diffuses the criticism (right or wrong) that pacifists are more concerned with their own righteousness than with the suffering of others. The American theologian, Walter Wink makes this point in his little book, *Jesus and nonviolence* (2003). Referring to statements by Dietrich Bonhoeffer and William Miller, he says the question is not ‘what must I do in order to secure my salvation’, but rather ‘what does God require of me in response to the needs of others?’

And finally ...

None of this means that the principal response to aggression should be military. To treat war as a self-contained option is hopelessly out-dated in the 21st century. Governments need to react more intelligently to belligerent political groups and states before things get out of hand. The principle response is to pay attention to underlying factors: the fears and motivations of their leaders, extremes of inequality and any issues associated with failure of governance (as well as the more general factors of population growth, resource shortages and effects of climate change). We supposedly do, and yet we don’t! Wars are symptoms of the fact that we do not.

We should go out of our way to find the resources to make this a peaceful world. Western countries are very rich and it is misguided to believe that military budgets have to be cut to the bone or completely abolished to respond effectively to the underlying causes of war. If there is political acceptance that a catastrophic future is on the way, we should find the appropriate resources for both.

This is not an argument for the Just War as presently conceived but for the strategy – referred to at the beginning of this article – that places our armed forces in the wider context of an ethical foreign policy which goes way beyond the basic considerations of national self interest and looks to the survival of humanity.

The absolute pacifist may disagree with my argument for maintaining some armed forces. Their position is a respected part of a wider pacifist witness that accepts that some military capability is necessary. And, of course, the disagreement says nothing about the personal witness of conscientious objection where those involved understand the consequences of their actions and take full responsibility for them. This is a brave and valid position but in a fundamentally different league from advocating total disarmament such that the military resources are not available to intervene if necessary to prevent humanitarian disasters and genocide abroad or at home for that matter.

'Poems for peace' by Poppy Kleiser

Article by APF vice-chair, Sue Claydon who lives in Fenland.



Presentation to Rowan Williams.

'Poems for Peace' is an anthology of mainly local poetry covering war throughout history across the globe, with a strong pacifist stance and a foreword from internationally acclaimed poet Benjamin Zephaniah. 'These poets are learning from the lessons of the past, they are exploring the universal truths', writes Zephaniah. The poems explore conflicts from Iraq to Somalia; the Highlands to Heligoland.

Poppy Kleiser, Fenland's Poet Laureate in 2014, edited the book which contains 29 poems from East Anglian poets. Poppy said, "I wanted to commemorate those that fought in WWI whilst reminding readers that it was not 'the war to end all wars'. The poetry covers war and the impact and futility of wars throughout history, all over the world and from many different perspectives."

Once she had the idea, Poppy placed an advertisement and was overwhelmed by the response. 'I was surprised to find so many people felt the same as me. I wanted to share the poems and this book was a platform for doing that.'

As with any anthology, the poems vary from poet to poet covering a range of historic situations. The united theme of peace holds these varying strands together in the collection. Each poem has a biographical note many of which include the reason underlying its focus.

I was especially moved by Peter Irving's 'Peterborough Pals', based on one of the many pals' brigades of WWI. These 166 pals were all local football players and only 15 of them returned. The back cover includes a quote from Vera Brittain, former APF counsellor, 'The pacifist's task today is to find a method of helping and healing which provides a revolutionary constructive substitute for war.'

The anthology was launched at Wisbech museum in April where the poets featured read their poems.

'Poems for peace' costs £12.99 and can be obtained by contacting thelsc@live.co.uk.

'Unofficial war artist'

Review based on an article by Laura Cumming in *The Observer* (17 May 2016)

This is an exhibition at the Imperial War Museum (London), a retrospective photomontage by the great political artist, Peter Kennard.

Even those who have never heard of Peter Kennard are very likely to know his work. His images have long since passed into visual parlance: Constable's 'Haywain' stacked with cruise missiles (as if on route to Greenham in the early 1980s); the globe as a gigantic gas mask spewing out nuclear weapons; Mrs Thatcher in full imperial pomp as Queen Victoria.

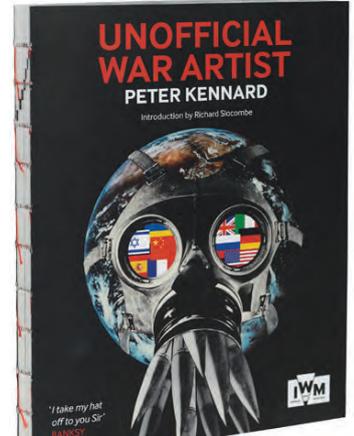
Kennard's ability to coin definitive images for different protest movements turned this lifetime exhibition into a period gallery of recent British history. CND, Rock against racism, the Anti-Nazi League, Stop the War Coalition – he has always kept pace with the times.



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Kennard produced that indelible montage of Blair taking the selfie, the world going up in war behind him. And then there are the CND pamphlets, especially 'Protest and survive', in which a skeleton takes a sardonic interest in the government's preposterous Protect and survive pamphlet. Kennard was, he says, beginning to doubt the value of photomontage as a critical and political tool in the digital age. 'Unofficial war artist' is on until 30 May 2016



'If I am good' ... a song by Sue Gilmurray

Sue says the song was written in response to the provocative question, 'Don't you know that there are people who would like to saw your head off?', and the naiveté of its first verse is deliberate. The bit about the line between good and evil in the third verse is taken from a quotation from Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Hear how the song sounds on www.soundcloud.com/mightierpen.

If I am good and you are bad
and I in peace lay down my gun,
then you might come and murder me,
and good has lost and bad has won.
If all the good men in the world
put all their weapons in the bin,
the bad might come and murder them,
and good would lose and bad would win.

And is the real world like that,
a comic-book, a fairytale,
where cardboard cut-out villains scheme
to make the cardboard heroes fail?
For if it is, we simply need
to blow the evil ones away
for happiness to rule the world
and peace and justice win the day.

But when we find the good and bad
and try to prise the two apart,
the line between them runs right through
the centre of each human heart,
for I am good and I am bad,
and you are wrong and you are right,
and if we two should disagree,
then who deserves to win the fight?

If I am good and you are bad,
I will reach out the good in me
and try to touch the good in you,
and maybe so we shall agree,
and maybe so the bad in us
will wither in the light of day
and we will know each other true,
and both our guns be thrown away.



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