

# The Anglican PEACEMAKER

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Humanity faces a perfect storm of threats which it may not survive. Competition for declining food and other resources, militarisation, infectious disease and economic collapse have always been with us but impending changes to the global environment will exacerbate these in ways that can hardly be imagined.

Survival in this age of uncertainty will require a new internationalism which recognises the inter-connectedness of things and the fragility of civilisation, which George Monbiot describes as "just a russeting on the skin of the biosphere, easily rubbed off by environmental change."

Since these various threats to life are interrelated, it is becoming more difficult to think about pacifism and non-violence in the simple terms of anti-militarism. Can the pacifist focus so precisely on the military aspects of injury and killing when all the carbon-intensive aspects of our western lifestyles are pushing the poor of the world ahead of us down the road to death? It is all one and the same, and we may come to view the personal sacrifices made to counter global warming in a similar light to those made by conscientious objectors in the wars of the 20th century.

Our witness is not only to love our enemies and reject war but also to work for the construction of Christian peace in the world. Since climate change will almost certainly be a cause of future conflict, it should be high on our agenda. It is the main theme of this issue.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to be held in Copenhagen in December is of crucial importance. Unless a binding international agreement to limit global warming to 2C is reached, the consequences are likely to be disastrous. To reach such an agreement, the main polluters need to move away from the "I will if you will" attitude to the "I have moved... now will you?"

The agreement has to include major greenhouse gas reductions from developed countries and significantly more financial aid for adaptation and mitigation in developing countries. But, many politicians believe that this will be a much more difficult nut to crack than the 1997 Kyoto convention. Far more countries are involved and real difficulties are expected among the rich countries because they are reluctant to face up to the effects on their economic growth.

Scientists too are pessimistic and concerned that the action we now take will be too little, too late. A recent *Guardian* poll (April 2009) indicated that 90% of climate scientists do not believe political efforts to restrict global warming to an additional 2C will succeed. An average rise of 4-5C by the end of the century is more likely they say.

The article below examines the problem of climate change and how a Christian response could help. On page 10 we consider the biblical theology that might be invoked.

## GREENING THE ROAD TO HELL: CHRISTIAN RESPONSES TO CLIMATE CHANGE

TONY KEMPSTER

Paper to be presented at the International Conference of the Council for Christian Approaches to Defence and Disarmament in Bratislava (4-8th September 2009).



"That summer, the summer that all the rules began to change, June seemed to last for a thousand years. The temperatures were merciless: thirty-eight, thirty-nine, then forty in the shade. It was heat to die in, to go nuts in, or to spawn in. Old folk collapsed, dogs were cooked alive in cars, lovers couldn't keep their hands off each other. The sky pressed down like a furnace lid, shrinking the subsoil, cracking concrete, killing shrubs from the roots up. In the parched suburbs, ice-cream vans plinked their baby tunes into streets that sweated tar. Down at the harbor, the sea reflected the sun in tiny, barbaric mirrors. Asphyxiated, you longed for rain. It didn't come."

*The rapture* by Liz Jensen (2009, Bloomsbury).

### A problem of attitude

Humanity has a serious attitudinal problem which, if not solved, may soon end civilization and commit future generations to a hell on earth.

The majority of Europeans now regard climate change as a scientific fact. It is seen as the third most serious problems facing the world - after poverty and a major global economic downturn. Yet few seem willing to take real action to prevent it: 60% say they have done something - but for 45% it is just a tendency - 35% say they have done nothing and the rest don't know. Young people are less likely to have taken any action. (Eurobarometer 313, July, 2009).

This apathy does not seem to be due to a lack of information about the effects of climate change. Media coverage of the underlying science is good; and at this moment, international climatologists somewhere will be in conference reviewing the latest information and deciding what else should be published about the deteriorating situation. Hundreds of environmental NGOs will now be

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**Editor's note.**

The phrase 'perfect storm' originates from the 1997 book *The perfect storm* by Sebastian Junger which refers to the simultaneous occurrence of weather events which, taken individually, would be far less powerful than the storm resulting of their chance combination.

‘The message should encourage people to identify with the natural world and project themselves into the bleak future that its destruction will create.’

gearing up to campaign and report on the decisions taken at the forthcoming climate change summit in Copenhagen.

Rather it reflects people's attitudes. What we are seeing is proof of society's failure to construct a shared belief system about the harm climate change will do and assume some responsibility for it. Religious beliefs should be a major influence here because ethics are at their heart. Any significant international progress on the climate issue is likely to involve some moral persuasion – the arguments of economics and politics alone are unlikely to deliver.

Christians are a world-wide community with certain shared beliefs and traditions about humanity's place in creation. Like other religions, these enable people to find meaning in their lives. And, as memes, they have evolved because they offer certain survival advantages. There is now an urgent need to tap into this resource to promote the selflessness and sacrifice that is needed for human survival.

**Belief systems**

Belief systems are generally constructed through social interactions within peer groups. People choose storylines that best fit their world view, and they can tell us a lot about their beliefs. For example, in the Eurobarometer 313 survey, 25% of people said that the effects of climate change are being exaggerated. There is also evidence that others reject personal responsibility by shifting blame elsewhere – to politicians, the rich, the Americans or whoever – or they suspect that the issue is a Trojan horse built by green activists who want to spoil their fun. Many people also hide behind the view that the problem is so great that any action they take personally will be futile.

How, then, could a shared belief about climate change be strengthened? Clearly how the message is conveyed is important and needs to come from those we trust - we need to know that it is not being spun by vested interests. Trustworthiness is a complex bundle of qualities: expertise and confidence are among them, but so too is charm. It is also reinforced if the communicators are role models, making sacrifices in their lives that we should be making in ours. Additionally, and because of the feelings of impotence referred to earlier, it is essential that the communicators believe in the importance of the “small contribution”.

Since people tend to put faith in those who share their values and understand their needs – which is particularly true for the young - the range of voices speaking on climate change needs to be widened. More use could be made of people from within the Church. This will mean the experts relinquishing some of their role but then they are not necessarily the best media communicators. The highly important Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change does not have a recognizable public face and the cautious language of science is often inadequate to inspire action for change.

The message should encourage people to identify with the natural world and project themselves into the bleak future that its destruction will create. Both these require an appeal to the collective emotional imagination.

**The role of the arts and academe**

The arts have a significant role to play and could be used more effectively in a religious context. Popular music can also reach large numbers of people. Chris Rea's “The road to hell” released 20 years ago was one of the first songs to draw attention to the perilous direction humanity was heading. The video has been viewed nearly a million times on YouTube over the past 5 years.

*The road* by Cormac McCarthy (2006, Picador), is one of a number of recent books portraying a dystopian future. It tells of a journey taken by a father and son across a post-apocalyptic landscape and, as a thought experiment, shines a cold light on the dreadful consequences of our apathy. It also exposes the one fact to which our technological hubris blinds us, that our dependence on biological processes remains absolute.



From “The road” by Cormac McCarthy

Film and the visual arts can be very influential and it will be interesting to see the public reaction to the newly released “The age of stupid”, starring Pete Postlethwaite, which is set on a devastated Earth in 2050 (reviewed in Film Look, page 9). The visual arts have a part to play but the general view of critics is that they haven't yet quite found that role and younger artists seem weighed down by the times. (Page 12 gives some examples.)

Intellectuals, theological or otherwise, also have a role and perhaps need to be reminded of this, as Stephan Chan does in his brilliant book, *The end of certainty* (2009, Zed Books). He writes: “Outside the classrooms and libraries a world burns with slaughters and starvations and serious illness. No word is enough for those who die in such fires”. He says that his book is “an unashamed effort to speak about complex things, with imagination in public, and to discharge an intellectual's public role – to say ‘this is how the world is, this is how the world should be, this is how to think about the world as we wish it to be, this is how to turn that wish into reality”.

Christian responses have to be seen against this background.

**Apocalyptic views and the shutdown of human concern**

First, mainstream Christians have to challenge the view of right-wing fundamentalists who believe that concern for our planet is irrelevant because it has no future. Some might even believe that environmental destruction should be hastened – as the sign of coming Apocalypse. Another view with which to contend is that humanity cannot possibly understand what existence is about, and indeed the destruction of human civilization as we know it may be part of a greater design. In *The road*, McCarthy describes the collapse of the protagonist's core beliefs. And one senses that something like this might be happening already: that a hardening of interests, a shutting down of concern, is taking place among the people of the rich world. If this is true, we do not need to wait for the food supplies to shrivel before we decide that civilisation is in trouble. Perhaps civilisation ends with a shutdown of human concern. If so religion will have failed us.

**The theological basis for environmentalism**

As the awareness of environmental problems has grown, so the weakness of Christian theology in dealing with it has become more evident.

The biblical basis for environmental thinking is often said to revolve around humanity's “stewardship” of the world. In the Old Testament, the term translated ‘steward’ usually refers to “the man over the house”, with responsibility to the master for the affairs of the household. In fact, nowhere in the Bible is humanity actually described as a steward of the natural world. Clare Palmer (*The earth beneath*, 1992, SPCK) showed that it is difficult to establish a clear-cut biblical concept of stewardship. She also asks questions about whether any possible interpretation of the term is capable of grounding the critical view of the humans in the natural world which is now required. The teaching of Teilhard de Chardin which involves no radical separation of creator from creation seems much nearer the mark.

# “Not worth even one life”

## ► FROM THE CHAIRPERSON, MARY ROE

Dear Friends,

In the early 1990's, Gordon and I were staying with friends in Wisconsin and were invited to the last pow-wow of the season of the Native American tribe to which our friend belonged. It was great fun, but I did have misgivings when, in the handing out of honours, a young man stepped forward to receive his first head feather as a warrior of the tribe. He had earned his feather in the first Gulf War. To me, the whole scene was bizarre: there was this very ordinary young man, in sweat top, jogging trousers and sneakers, wearing a band round his head from which one pale feather stood up. As he marched proudly round the field I just couldn't help reflecting on the irony of the situation and wondering what his ancestors would make of it, many of whom gained massive head dresses with feathers trailing right down their backs from the many battles they had fought trying to defend their lands, their homes and their livelihoods from the European invaders.

Now, this young brave, descendant of a proud and courageous people, having been raised on a poverty-stricken reservation, devoid of any opportunities for education or employment, was gaining his rather sorry little feather by helping the oppressors of his people to invade another ancient land. I wondered, too, if he would survive long enough to add even one more feather, or what awaited him back in Wisconsin when he was no longer of use to the US military forces.

A little later, the buffet was announced, and, as strangers, not belonging to any tribe, we made our way to the back of the line but were soon spotted and pulled to the very front, not because we were visitors, but on account of our grey hair! "In our society, we honour our elders". Needless to say, we thoroughly approved of this practice and thought that it was one which we in Britain would do well to adopt. I hope I am not unduly prejudiced when I say that societies which do honour the wisdom and experience of older people tend to prosper more than those led by cocky young whiz kids whose main qualification is confidence in their own opinions, whether in relation to other nations, stable monetary management, educating the young or whatever. We can only speculate as to what the situation in the Middle East would be now if, when King Solomon (the wise) died, in 922 BC, his son, Rehoboam, had not brought about the disintegration of his well ordered kingdom when "he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him and took counsel with the young men who had grown up with him", (see 1 Kings 12 for the whole depressing story). Of course, there are plenty of people with "old heads on young shoulders" and far too many silly old fools. I am well aware that age alone does not confer wisdom!

So, where is this old woman's rant leading? To Harry Patch, of course. I am writing this on the day of his funeral, at the age of 111 and recalling that heart-breaking interview with him, in which he remembers his experiences in the First World War and finds nothing to glory in, but only tragedy. He concludes that the war was "not worth 20,000 men – it was not worth even ONE life." He would like to see war-mongering politicians given a gun each and sent out to shoot each other. We honour him and his like with our lips – and with wreaths, bands, hymns and parades every November – but our leaders and many of us, dismiss their words of wisdom born of experience, saying that these old people don't understand the world to-day. They understand it all too well. Harry's very last words were in that interview were, "World War III will be chemical – don't let it happen!" Why, oh why will we not listen to him and his peers (now all gone from us, sadly) and, in the words from Ps. 34, "Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."

I look forward to seeing you all at the AGM and annual

conference at Whitby on 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> October. May God grant us wisdom in all our discussions, worship and fellowship that weekend.

## WAR POETRY: OURS AND THEIRS

The Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy has called for new war poetry and commissioned British poets to respond to events in Afghanistan and Iraq and some excellent poems appeared in the *Saturday Guardian* on 25th July. If you would like copies, please let the secretary know. One by Paul Muldoon, which says much in just a few words, is at the top of the next page.

But in *Saturday Times* on 8 August, seemingly not wanting to be outdone, Erica Wagner asks what about the poets for whom war is daily life and publishes three telling poems.

Here are two of them.

### Afghanistan

“Like a desert flower” by Parween Faiz Zadah Malaal



Like a desert flower  
waiting for rain,  
like a river-bank thirsting  
for the touch of pitchers,  
like the dawn  
longing for light;  
and like a house,  
like a house in ruins for want  
of a woman –  
the exhausted ones of our times  
need a moment to breathe,  
need a moment to sleep,  
in the arms of peace, in the arms of peace.

### Iraq

“Pronouns” by  
Dunya Mikhail

He plays a train,  
She plays a whistle,  
They move away.

He plays a rope,  
She plays a tree,  
They swing.

He plays a dream,  
She plays a feather,  
They fly.

He plays a general,  
She plays people,  
They declare war.



Dunya Mikhail was awarded the UN Human Rights Award for Freedom of Writing in 2001.

‘World War III  
will be  
chemical –  
don't let it  
happen!’

‘He plays a  
general, she  
plays people.  
They declare  
war.’



# Endless, ineffective and pointless

► FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY  
TONY KEMPSTER GIVES HIS REPORT

## “Afghanistan” by the poet Paul Muldoon

**It's getting dark, but not dark enough to see  
An exit wound as an exit strategy.**

It seems that political leaders, because they have to be seen to be strong on action and successful, are destined to repeat the old mistakes of history. But let us hope that in their relations with Afghanistan and Iran, they see sense in these times of global threat.

As I write, this has been the bloodiest month yet for British troops who are locked in a struggle to hold territory in Helmand Province. Now as a resurgent Taliban mounts operations in Kabul itself, the western mission in Afghanistan looks more doomed than ever. This is fuelling fears in Whitehall that the government is now struggling to shore up public support for the military campaign; and this at a time when senior military figures are calling for more and better equipment to fight the war.

The government continues to talk in Churchillian tones while pro-war political columnists speak of western “honour”. But the business of government is not to strike poses, it is to set goals and provide a strategy for achieving them. Ending the war should now be the prime goal.

History records that when ill-conceived military adventures look doomed, their advocates tend to grow more strident about “honour”, especially if it can be upheld to the last drop of other people’s blood. Richard Nixon’s “peace with honour” primarily consisted of devastating Cambodia in addition to Vietnam. The brilliant analysis of America’s defeat in Vietnam by Bernd Greiner *War without fronts*, 2009, (reviewed on page 8) is a cautionary tale for those fighting in Afghanistan the ‘War on terror’ who are talking of honour.

As the end game in Afghanistan is in sight, endorsed by the US state department, Britain’s Foreign Office now speaks of talks with the Taliban. But thousands of British soldiers continue to fight, and the war, certain now to peter out in some



face-saving compromise, has only just entered the most terrible phase for those still in the thick of battle. My colleague Lesley Docksey, who is the editor of *Abolish War*, has written an intelligent and well-researched paper on Britain’s losses in Afghanistan. I would recommend that you read it. It appears on the Centre for Research on Globalisation website or you can obtain a copy from me. The link to the website is (<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=14809>).

Turning now to Iran, let us hope that history doesn’t also repeat itself there. Politicians have a tendency to overreact to risk, their policies often encouraged by the media. Grappling with risk involves juggling logic and emotion and carefully considering the unintended consequences – when thinking of the Just War, this could almost become a pacifist manifesto!

One consequence of Iran’s disputed presidential election is that President Obama’s best-case scenario for dealing with the nuclear issue was the loss of a reformist victory and a new Iranian government willing to stop short of turning into the world’s 10th nuclear state. The scale of opposition protests suggests that change will come, but it may arrive later than sooner. In the meantime we have an insecure conservative regime that hopes to shore up its fragile position by making national security the defining issue of domestic politics.



Waiting impatiently in the wings is a new hardline Israeli government which is unwilling to tolerate a nuclear-armed Iran and ready to bomb Iran’s nuclear installations if they believed it necessary (possibly without USA support). President Obama has said he would not support Israel’s military operations because of the wider repercussions from the Islamic world. The military strike might also fail.

It is time, therefore, for western leaders to consider if such an outcome would really be preferable to the alternative of adjusting to the prospect of an Iranian bomb. This judgment would depend on whether Iran is viewed as a collective suicide bomber, or simply as a country with the rather traditional aim of trying to increase its regional influence in the Middle East.

No one should want a nuclear-armed Iran and new sanctions should certainly be tried. But if we calculate correctly that the prospect of an Iranian bomb ultimately comes down to a matter of Iranian willpower, then a mature debate needs to be had about how we best manage the risk to avoid military conflict. The world does not want nuclear proliferation, but we may have to live with a nuclear Iran at least in the short run.



In response to the government’s introduction of an Armed Forces Day on Saturday 27 June, the Movement for the Abolition of War held a discussion meeting on the ‘Limits of military obedience’ at the Imperial War Museum (London). This was held on the evening of 26 June with the aim of examining how far the soldier’s obedience to government and military commanders should go, the legal restraints on military action and when servicemen and women have to say “No”.

Doubts about the legality of the invasion of Iraq have presented many serving personnel with difficult moral and ethical questions. For military families this has also been a painful and pressing problem, and for the public at large there is a moral dilemma – how can they support the Armed Forces while strongly disagreeing with certain military actions. Furthermore, few people, including some in the Forces, realize that serving

‘Ending the war should now be the prime goal.’

‘We may have to live with a nuclear Iran.’

personnel have the right to say "No" when asked to perform an action they genuinely believe to be illegal and/or morally wrong. This applies as much to the Chiefs of Staff as to the new recruit.



George Farebrother addressing the audience

The speakers were Bruce Kent, George Farebrother (Institute for Law Accountability and Peace) and retired General Sir Hugh Beach. The meeting was chaired by Kat Barton (Quaker Peace and Social Witness). Bruce Kent looked at some actual cases, British, Austrian, Israeli and Russian, where individual soldiers had

refused to obey orders and emphasized just how impressive their actions were when one considers the frequent heavy punishments as well as the public and official hostility they suffered. For a much fuller account of the whole issue of refusals by serving members of the military, which includes examples from Russia, Romania, Finland and Uruguay, Bruce recommended the *right to refuse to military orders* published by IPB and IALANA (1994).

George Farebrother gave an overview of international law obligations from the Hague Conventions to the Rome Statute which set up the International Criminal Court. His key point was that 'The Rule of Law applies to states as well as to citizens. He ended setting out what ordinary citizens can do particularly in creating a climate of opinion in which it is no longer acceptable for a soldier to be forced to choose between conscientious objection and blind obedience.

Hugh Beach took a different approach. While acknowledging the legal situation, he said that in practice it was the leadership of the officers that was crucially important in avoiding situation where soldiers would have to questions orders. He said that the key words in describing the style of leadership in the British Army "would give pride of place to consultation, persuasion and courtesy; never overbearing, often diffident, and with a large place for humor".

#### **Council for Christian Approaches to Defence and Disarmament AGM**

I am a member of the executive committee of CCADD and closely involved with its activities and was present at the AGM in July. The speaker at that event was Shirley Williams who discussed "The prospects for nuclear disarmament".

She began with the timetable for the Nuclear NPT Review meeting to be held in New York in 2010, emphasizing its critical importance because of the nuclear ambitions of Iran and North Korea. We do seem to be in for some significant meetings at the moment, considering again the discussions on the climate change meeting this December.

And the climate change and nuclear issues are linked. Shirley drew attention to the major problem that the threat of global warming is increasing the demand for civil nuclear power: Some 270 nuclear stations are being planned, often in unstable regions of the world and especially in areas of potential desertification - Lebanon, Jordan and Saudi Arabia were mentioned. This is dangerous because in the early stages of development, it is impossible to distinguish a civil nuclear project from one intended to produce weapons. And India, Pakistan and Israel are all in zones of potential conflict.

But there are some positive signs. President Osama appears to be on the side of nuclear abolition. He is also willing to talk to those who matter, such as Iran. It is also significant that Russia and the USA have agreed to reduce their warheads to 1700 each, but they need to do more: to get the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty approved by Congress, weapons taken off alert and co-operation agreed on missile defense.

*'The Rule of Law applies to states as well as to citizens.'*

#### **Movement for the Abolition of War's November programme**

MAW has a major programme of activities in November with which I and several members of APF are involved. MAW's Remembrance Sunday lecture at the Imperial War Museum (London) will be given by Dr Mark Levene, Reader at Southampton University and a co-founder of Crisis Forum. His lecture is entitled "Weapons of the strong: what will western states do in response to climate change?"

This speaker and subject were chosen because MAW is beginning to focus on the way climate change is likely to increase the likelihood of military conflict. It is also preparing to produce a film for use in schools on this topic. Sue Gilmurray has written a song to complement these activities, the words of which are as follows. If anyone would like the music for this, please contact her (details on page 8).

#### **"People of Earth" by Sue Gilmurray**

All of us on this planet, citizens of the Earth,  
look at the world around us: what do we think its worth?  
Think of the teeming forests, think of the surging seas:  
if we're to have a future it will depend on these.

*People on Earth join hands and people on Earth make plans  
for giving the world a future.*

*(Sung after each verse)*

Everything in creation here as it lives and thrives,  
part of the one great pattern, interconnected lives.  
We have a place among them, we who can have free will,  
we who can make and break things, we who can heal or kill.

So many different races, so many different creeds,  
so many ways of living, so many wants and needs,  
all the competing voices, clamouring that they're right:  
surely we do have choices, surely we need not fight.

Look at the time and money, science and wit and skill,  
look at the Earth's resources spent upon ways to kill.  
Ask if it makes us safer, living in hate and fear;  
ask if we need some changes, surely the answer's clear.

Power of human body, power of human brain,  
Pow'r of imagination, let it not work in vain.  
Power to reach our neighbours, power to share and give,  
power to make the earth a happier place to live.

MAW is also mounting an exhibition of quilts and arpilleras in the Imperial War Museum on Remembrance Sunday curated by Roberta Bacic an international expert. Some fifteen will be shown on the theme: "The human cost of war". Roberta will also be the speaker at the MAW AGM in the morning of Remembrance Sunday.



Roberta Bacic

The exhibition will then be shown at St Ethelburgas Centre for Reconciliation and Peace on 18 to 21 November with various events taking place there on each day. On 21 November a special seminar; this time on quilts and arpilleras related to the Spanish Civil War will be held as part of the "Nature of the Beast" exhibition in the Whitechapel Gallery (see The Art of Peace, page 12).



## Tears in the darkness

Elizabeth Norman (the sister of our vice-chair Sue Claydon) is a co-author with her husband of *Tears in the darkness: the story of the Bataan death march and its aftermath* which has been high in the *New York Times* best sellers list (it is reviewed in Book Look – page 7).

On 26th June this year, the authors gave a reading of excerpts from their book at the Madison Building of the Library of Congress in Washington DC. During the talk, Michael and



Elizabeth Norman disclosed that ten years of work went into the writing of the book, including interviews with survivors of the Bataan Death March from the Philippines and the United States as well as soldiers from Japan. The book talk, launching and signing is a partnership of the Embassy of the Philippines, the Library of Congress Asian Division Friends Society, the Veterans History Project and the LCPA Veteran's Forum as one of the activities held during the month-long commemoration of the 111th Anniversary of Philippine Independence in June.

### APF member in Zimbabwe seeks support

Cloud Mabaudi joined the APF in 2007. He lives in Banket, 60 miles north-west of Harare. He and some friends formed the Christian Living Group in 2006, to try to spread peace education, and the Horizon of Hope Group to care for and educate about 20 of Zimbabwe's many orphans, and to give them an environment of Christian peace and reconciliation in which to grow up. Here are some excerpts from his letters, which usually take 3 or 4 weeks to arrive.



**May 2008:** I had commenced on organising some peace clubs in schools but due to the high costs of travelling and material I have failed to continue.

August 2008: Our pacifism work is being disturbed by the political violence still going on. I am just coming from attending the funeral of a relative who was murdered for being an opposition activist.

**January 2009:** I am well acquainted with the present parish priest (in Banket) Revd. Dzikamyi Mundenda, whom I am working with in a project with those

living with the HIV/AIDS disease in a group called Kunday Aids Support Group, based in Banket and assisted by Operation Mobilization.

**February 5 2009:** I have got many things to say of my experience as a peace worker, regarding the challenges from those who think the teaching of pacifism is a dangerous threat to national security. I am desperately in need of a computer so as to have internet and communicate on a daily basis. On 1st February at Barket parish the ousted Bishop Kunonga came with four policemen and ordered everybody out and closed the church. I shall send you a picture of the HIV/AIDS orphans I am looking after. May you keep on praying for peace for us.

**February 9 2009:** This weekend the church services went on nicely without any disturbances. I recommend you to show this picture to the APF board members and well-wisher who might feel free to help us (photo above).

### Prayer for Zimbabwe



Here is a prayer from Bishop Sebastian Bakare, Harare Diocesan Bishop, sent to TAP by Jenny Nicholson. It was published in *Partners*, the Newsletter of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe, Botswana and the former Transvaal (TZABA) November, 2008 where the bishop described some of the depredations faced daily by people in Zimbabwe.

**Jesus Christ  
when scorn and shame besiege us  
and hope is veiled in grief,  
hold us in your wounded hands  
and make your face shine on us again,  
for you are our Lord and God, Amen.**

Bishop Bakare and his wife Ruth also refer us to Psalm 31 for personal reflection.

### Report on peace concert and mission from Kirinyaga, Kenya

Elijah Nyagah, an APF member in Kenya organised a peace concert and mission from 3rd to 5th July at Gathaithi in the Kirinyaga district of Kenya. There has been much violence in the area and the theme of the meeting was that "Two wrongs do not make a right".

During the three-day event a film on community togetherness produced by the Kenya Film Federation was shown and there was music and drama by local groups. The speaker on the second day was the district officer John Kamau who emphasised the importance of community.

On the final day, people assembled at Gathaithi stadium. The guests present included the local MP, Martha Karua and the district commissioner who both gave addresses of peace and hope. During the service, the sermon was given by the area archdeacon, Ven. Peter Marcharia who developed the theme "Two wrongs do not make a right".

The mission was a success in bringing the Gathaithi village community together and APF wishes to express its thanks for all those who helped with the organisation.

# Book Look

## ► RECENT BOOKS REVIEWED

### David Cromwell and Mark Levene (editors) (2007)

*Surviving climate change: the struggle to avert global catastrophe*

Pluto Press

This is the first multi-authored book published by Crisis Forum which was set up for the study of crisis in the 21st century ([www.crisis-forum.org.uk](http://www.crisis-forum.org.uk)).

The book is for those who want to read about what is really going on around the politics of climate change. Governments and business keep reassuring the public they are going to fix the problem. This book brings together some leading activists who disagree. They expose the inertia, denial, deception - even threats to our civil liberties - which comprise mainstream responses from civil and military policy makers, and from opinion formers in the media, corporations and academia.

Climate change is a pressing reality. From hurricane Katrina to melting polar ice, and from mass extinctions to increased threats to food and water security, the link between corporate globalization and planetary blowback is becoming all too evident.

An epochal change is called for in the way we all engage with the climate crisis. Key to that change is Aubrey Meyer's proposed 'Contraction and Convergence' framework for limiting global carbon emissions. This book, which also includes contributions by Mayer Hillman and George Marshall, is a powerful and vital guide to how mass mobilisation can avert the looming catastrophe.

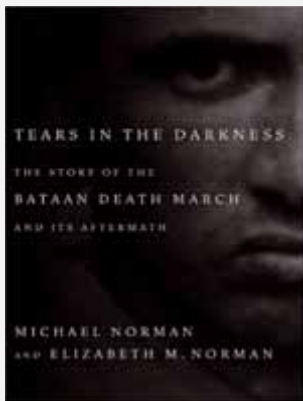
Dr Mark Levene is Reader in Comparative History at Southampton University, Crisis Forum co-founder and Director of the "Climate change and violence" project. He will be giving the Movement for the Abolition's Remembrance Sunday lecture at the Imperial War Museum which is part of a series of MAW events during November (see Diary of Events on page 8).

### Michael Norman and Elizabeth M. Norman

*Tears in the darkness: the story of the Bataan death march and its aftermath*

Tears in the Darkness was praised by the Associated Press' Richard Pyle as "an extremely detailed and thoroughly chilling treatment that, given the passage of time and thinning of ranks, could serve as popular history's final say on the subject."

Tears in the darkness is in the tradition of *All quiet on the western front* and



*Hiroshima*. For the first four months of 1942, American, Filipino and Japanese soldiers fought what was to become America's first land battle of World War II: the battle for the tiny Phillipine peninsula of Bataan. The brutal fight ended with the surrender of 76,000 Americans and Filipinos, the single largest defeat in American military history.

The defeat though, was only the beginning, as Michael and Elizabeth Norman make dramatically clear. From April 1942 until the Japanese surrendered in August 1945, the prisoners of war suffered an ordeal of unparalleled cruelty and savage: forty-one months of starvation, dehydration, hard labour, deadly disease, torture, murder and journeys on 'hell ships' to the enemy's homeland.

The Norman's bring to this story exceptional reportage and literary empathy. Their protagonist, Ben Steele, is a figure out of Hemingway: a young cowboy and aspiring sketch artist from Montana who joined the army to see the world and ended up on a death march. In the end, his is a story that goes beyond survival, a story of how one man's abiding humanity sustained him.

Juxtaposed against Steele's story and the sobering tale of the death march and its aftermath are untold accounts of a number of Japanese soldiers, common hohei, who struggle to maintain their humanity while carrying out the superiors' inhuman commands.

The result is a brave, beautifully written, and deeply affecting book: an altogether new look at World War II that exposes the myths of war and shows the extent of suffering and loss on both sides

### Bernd Greiner (2009)

*War without fronts: the USA in Vietnam*

Bodley Head

This is a brilliant analysis of America's defeat in Vietnam and a cautionary tale for those fighting the war in Afghanistan.

Greiner begins with a masterly analysis of 'the dynamics of symmetrical warfare'. Such warfare is personified in the story of David and Goliath - the contest of an apparently hopelessly mismatched opponent with a massive conventional military machine. The 'weaker' side (David) drops below the level of technology with which the stronger side (Goliath) fights and brings him down with a primitive weapon that is able to penetrate to the one vulnerable point. In addition time is on the side of the weaker party, for reasons of financial resources and opportunity cost, abhorrence of casualties and others. The side that appears weakest, therefore, has no interest in ending the war swiftly. "On the contrary", Greiner says, "so long as it does not lose, it has won... On the other hand, if the ostensibly strong side is not to lose, it is condemned to winning". The strong side makes the mistake of using violence to force a decision and thus recoup lost time. In other words there is a direct correlation between asymmetry and unfettered violence.

It was this dynamic, he argues, "that condemned the US military to lowering the threshold of inhibitions [which] was seen as imperative and therefore legitimate, [and] even the *jus in bello* [Rules of War] lost its effectiveness".

He examines in particular the gratuitous killing of civilians at My Lai and My Khe and the furore that followed this, with many people in the USA supporting the perpetrators. This led on to the end logic, apparently, of 'Get out or win', as Greiner puts it - 'the slogan of the silent majority in the United States in the late 1960s.

So Greiner in this scrupulously argued book explains the failure of what is now known as the moral component of warfare, and exactly how it was that the US lost. None of this will come as a shock to the Generals Petraeus and McChrystal as they shape the campaign in Afghanistan.

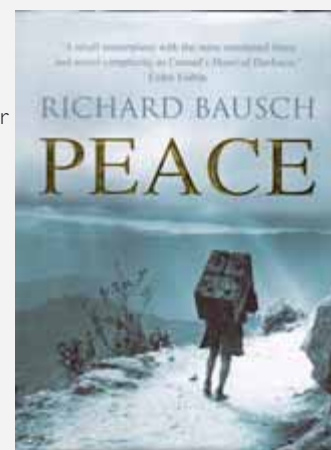
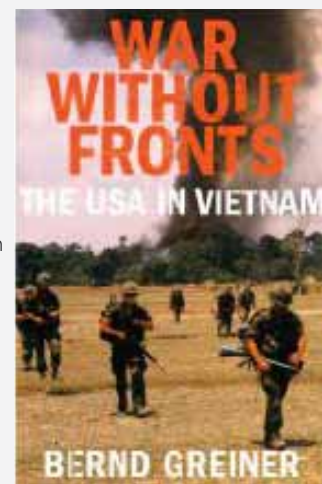
### Richard Bausch (2008)

*Peace*

Tuskar Rock

Three American soldiers set out on the gruelling ascent of a perilous Italian mountainside in the uncertain closing days of the Second World War. Haunted by their sergeant's cold-blooded murder of a young girl, and with only an old man of uncertain loyalties as their guide, they trudge on in a state of barely suppressed terror and confusion. As snipers lie in wait for them, the men are confronted by agonising choices.

This book is a feat of imagination and economy of words; a touch meditation on the corrosiveness of violence, the human cost of war, and the redemptive power of mercy.



# Diary of Events

## ▶ LOCAL AND NATIONAL

2009

### APF Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting will be held at Sneaton Castle near Whitby on the 9th to 11th October.

The theme is "The prevention of wars in the 21st century" and we shall be looking particularly at legal and political aspects. In addition Clive Barrett will be discussing the Christian history of Yorkshire and we shall be making some visits to places around. And, of course, there will be the usual mix of worship and entertainment. Accommodation costs are modest and people attending for just one overnight would also be most welcome. Please call the Secretary on 01908 510642 if you would like further details and a registration form.

**21 to 31 August Greenbelt Festival 09, 'Standing in the long now'.** Cheltenham Racecourse. APF will be taking part in the Peace Zone under the auspice of the Network of Christian Peace Organisation.

**1 and 2 September** Conference on 'The Citizen and the law of armed conflict' organised by the INLAP and World Court Project, and held at Friends House, London. This two-day conference is being organised by the Institute for Law Accountability and Peace (INLAP) and World Court Project UK. Speakers include John McDonnell MP, Nick Grief, Paul Dorfman and Dr Nick Ritchie. The second day will be a workshop day with discussions on ways in which communication can be improved. For further details: go to <http://www.peacebourne.serifweb.com/lawpeace/index.html> where you can also register on line or call 01323 844269.

**14 September** "Myth, truth and nation-state: how do our 'histories' help create our wars." Lecture by Professor Stefan Berger at Portcullis House, Westminster, London at 6.30pm. Organised by Movement for the Abolition of War. For further information call 01908 511948 or visit [www.abolishwar.org.uk](http://www.abolishwar.org.uk).

**20 September** International Day of Prayer for Peace. Call: 0131 4469545 for resource pack and other information.

**21 September** Worldwide International Day of Peace. Information at: [www.internationaldayofpeace.org](http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org)

**10 and 11 October** CND Annual Conference. Incorporating an international meeting: "Working for a successful NPT Review Conference 2010". Info and booking forms: [www.cnduk.org/index.php/about/general/cnd-conference.html](http://www.cnduk.org/index.php/about/general/cnd-conference.html).

**7 November** Annual Conference of the Peace Education Network entitled 'Creative approaches to conflict: teaching peace, human rights and reconciliation' to be held in Coventry. Further information from [www.peaceeducation.org.uk](http://www.peaceeducation.org.uk).

**8 November** Movement for the Abolition of War with quilt exhibition and talk by Roberta Bacic followed by MAW's annual Remembrance Day lecture given by Dr Mark Levene of Southampton University. The title of the talk is "Weapons of the strong: what will western states do in response to climate change?" For further information call -1908 511948 or visit [www.abolishwar.org.uk](http://www.abolishwar.org.uk). Other MAW events in November were mentioned on page 5.

**5 December** National Climate March in London. Details from Campaign Against Climate Change on 020 7833 9311 or visit [www.campaignccc.org](http://www.campaignccc.org).

### Website

Remember – if you want to keep up with activities, news and actions between your issues of *The Anglican Peacemaker*, go to the APF website. The Red Hand Campaign appeared there and so does all the latest news. [www.anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk](http://www.anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk)

Andrew Duncan-Comb who lives in Bracknell and joined APF in 2006 is on Facebook and would like to meet other APF members there. His email address is: [a.comb@btinternet.com](mailto:a.comb@btinternet.com) if you would like to get in touch.

### OFFICERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP

**Chairperson, Mrs Mary Roe**  
1 North Lodge, Bicester House, Kings End, Bicester OX12 6NT  
01869 321639  
[mary@roes.org.uk](mailto:mary@roes.org.uk)

**Vice Chairperson: Mrs Sue Claydon**  
Bridge House, Whittlesey Road, March, Cambridgeshire,  
PE15 0AH  
013546 54214  
[sue.claydon@tesco.net](mailto:sue.claydon@tesco.net)

**Honorary Secretary: Dr Tony Kempster**  
11, Weavers End, Hanslope, Milton Keynes, MK19 7PA  
01908 510642 [ajkempster@aol.com](mailto:ajkempster@aol.com)

**Honorary Treasurer: Mr Roger Payne**  
33 Glynswood, Chinnor, Oxfordshire, OX39 4JE  
01844 351959  
[rjpayne@o2.co.uk](mailto:rjpayne@o2.co.uk)

**Membership Secretary: Mrs Sue Gilmurray**  
1 Wilford Drive, Ely CB6 1TL  
01353 668495 [s.m.gilmurray@anglia.ac.uk](mailto:s.m.gilmurray@anglia.ac.uk)

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**



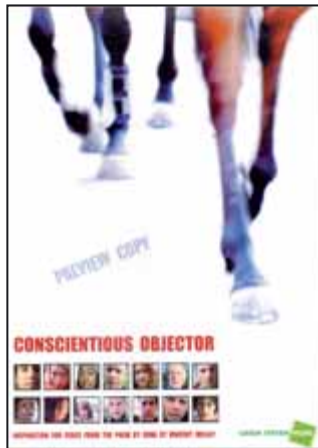
# Film Look

## ► RECENT FILMS REVIEWED

### Conscientious objector (2008)

Directed by Colin Stevens

This is a short (10-minute film) built around the powerful poem by Edna St Vincent Millay's powerful poem, "Conscientious objector" which is adapted to the screen in a montage of faces



and voices united in a simple plea for peace.

Fourteen people are involved including one or two figures that people will recognise.

The film asks a direct question about the roles we all play in our modern troubled times: "What will you do for death?"

The words of the poem, sometimes repeated several times by the speakers, say what "they" would not do if put in the position when they were expected to assist in some way with war or other forms of violence. And the names of some countries experiencing more recent wars are included.

The poem which follows is as relevant today as it was sixty years ago.

I shall die, but that is all that I shall do for Death,

I hear him leading his horse out of the stall;  
I hear the clatter on the barn-floor.  
He is in haste; he has business in Cuba,  
business in the Balkans, many calls to make  
this morning.

But I will not hold the bridle, while he  
clinches the girth.  
And he may mount by himself: I will not give  
him a leg up.

Though he flick my shoulders with his whip,  
I will not tell him which way the fox ran.  
With his hoof on my breast,  
I will not tell him where the black boy hides  
in the swamp.

I shall die, but that is all I shall do for Death; I  
am not on his pay-roll.

I will not tell him the whereabouts of my  
friends nor my enemies either.  
Though he promise me much, I will not map  
him the route to any man's door.  
Am I a spy in the land of the living, that I shall  
deliver men to Death?  
Brother, the password and the plans of our  
city are safe with me;  
Never through me Shall you be overcome.

### The Age of Stupid (2009)

Directed by Franny Armstrong

This is the new movie from Franny Armstrong, who directed *McLibel*, and producer John Battsek. The movie has a semi-fictional framework with a future archivist, played by Pete Postlethwaite, The year is 2055. Most of London is under

water. Sydney is in flames. Las Vegas is being gently swallowed by the desert. The archivist lives alone in a concrete tower in the middle of the oily ocean somewhere around Norway with a museum collection of stuffed animals and priceless works of art. He sits in front of a transparent space-age screen and rifles through genuine newsreel clips, wondering why we failed to fight the 2 degrees of global warming that pushed the planet beyond the critical point in 2015.

The documentary is probably the most imaginative and dramatic assault on the institutional complacency shrouding the issue. Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" was a quietly persuasive documentary on global warming that probably made many converts. "The Age of Stupid", starting with its in-your-face title, is what might be called a hectoring lecture on the same subject which, like a hell-fire sermon, might go beyond fire and brimstone and dismiss the very thought of hell altogether.



The director's aim was to give facts and figures with no exaggeration and, besides the one celebrity, it involves seven real people from seven climate change hotspots.

The point made here is that hindsight is a wonderful thing. *The Age of Stupid* is an attempt to provide that hindsight while there is still time to act. It may not make for riveting blockbuster viewing (or even fringe viewing: the movie was rejected by the Sundance Festival) but the idea is good. No doubt campaigners will like it and several NGOs are now promoting it.

The music is outstanding and very varied, ranging from a specially-composed full orchestral score to a Radiohead track and music from a heavy metal band with Eric Clapton.

The power of this shameless campaigning film is that it gives dates and deadlines. It explores options and ideas. It names culprits, such as the businessman with dreams of providing dirt-cheap air travel to every man, woman, and child in India. It is witheringly sharp about the great and the good in rural England who would rather shoot their neighbours than allow them to erect a wind turbine.

### The war of the world: a new history of the twentieth century (2008)

Hosted by Niall Ferguson

In this documentary, historian Niall Ferguson presents a thesis which seeks to explain why the

Twentieth Century was the most bloody and tragic in human history.

Ferguson views the century as one of a continuous, hundred years war. His argument centres upon his belief that he has identified key factors that led to each major conflict and genocide of the century. Notably, he excludes nationalism and class conflict from this list of factors and, instead, looks to racism as the catalyst for many conflicts. In his view, assimilation leads to resentment from those seeking to retain racial/cultural purity, creating these flashpoints. As evidence, he notes that the Jews of Weimar Germany were actually intermarrying with gentile Germans on a more and more frequent basis.

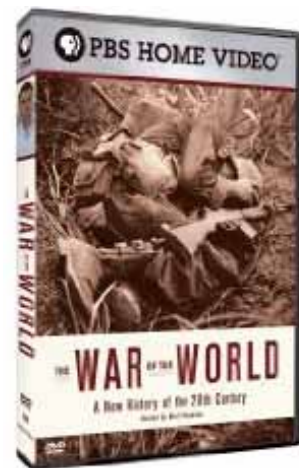
Whilst racial tensions may be the catalyst, a number of other factors must come into play for conflict to erupt. Ferguson

notes that, common to the pattern of each tragedy, they occurred in a time of economic volatility when a major power was in decline. Ferguson's thesis, stated in simple terms above, becomes more convincing as he supplies more and more case study evidence throughout the documentary. As in all theoretical models, he gives more primacy to some evidence than he does to others but it appears, to this reviewer, to make a convincing case.

As per the truism, "those who do not learn from history are bound to repeat it," in which case, it can only be hoped that many people learn from this film, in order to avoid the mistakes of the past century at this dawn.

In other ways, the film is a fairly generic overview of the century, but it does contain a few surprises. For instance, Ferguson identifies the construction of the Trans-Siberian railway as a starting point for his century of conflict, the mass-migration of workers leading to initial ethnic tensions and, ultimately, the Russo-Japanese War. Ferguson also examines the genocide in Cambodia as an indirect outcome of Nixon's political maneuvering in China.

Overall, this film can be depressing to watch as the unrelenting archival footage of conflict and genocide can become overwhelming, even for the jaded viewer. Nevertheless, this has the effect of ramming home the full, horrific nature of the past century and the urgent need to take action to end the cycle of violence. By identifying some of the causes of this cycle, Ferguson has done the proactive pacifist a great service in helping us to prevent such conflict in the future.



Review by  
David Le Sage,  
APF member in Australia

# Abraham under “the teaching oak”: how to embrace ecological insights without the fuzzy new age cosmology

A shortened text of the talk given by Ched Myers of the Bartimaeus Cooperative Ministries at the Greenbelt Arts Festival, “Heaven in the ordinary” held in Cheltenham, July 2007

## The Green Man



For more than a thousand years a strange countenance has haunted European Christianity. It is a carved face that peers down from the ceilings of medieval churches, surrounded by leaves as if peeking out of dense foliage. Sometimes shoots even grow out of its mouth and eyes. The roots of this figure are in deep antiquity and represent a memory.

With the advent of the contemporary environmental movement some Christians have discovered the Green Man as an old symbol whose time has come again. Whatever he may have meant to the wood and stone carvers from the 10th century on, we should apprehend him as a messenger speaking to the profound ecological crisis of our time.

### Christian attitudes to the environment

Christians come to ecological activism with a double liability. On one hand, our Churches have long been at best ambivalent toward environmentalism. On the other, secular environmentalism tends to have the same ambivalence to our faith tradition. Certainly, Christian theologies are starting to reject the notion of domination in favour of stewardship of the earth, recovering the inherent value of creation over its utility, but old attitudes die hard.

But, the Bible that is not the problem. I believe it is the culture of modernity, the belief that nature has no intrinsic value except what man's ingenuity can exploit for gain.

Unfortunately, the culture of modernity has shaped how we read the Bible. It is our own alienation from nature which makes us unable to see in our scriptures an old wisdom more attuned to nature than we are. I will illustrate this with some core Bible samples concerned with nature.

### The Bible's green theme

In the beginning we have an account of creation that portrays human beings intimately embedded in a Gaia that is alive and ecstatic, all meanings of the Hebrew 'toff' – it is good! The old Genesis tale does not place the world at the disposal of

human beings for purposes of exploitation. Rather, it asserts that the true vocation of humans is to serve and preserve the gift of creation. The warning story of the fall actually defines human sin fundamentally as alienation from the earth. Not content with living interdependently and symbiotically “with everything that has the breath of life”, human beings lusted after the Tree of Knowledge, which I believe is a metaphor for our compulsion to re-engineer the good creation into something we consider better.

Modern society has taken this ethos of control and instrumentality to unimaginable lengths as we re-make the gene pool and destroy earth's infrastructure of ozone, aquifers and rain forests. Today the reach of Babel, which we euphemistically call civilization, extends to every corner of the globe and has become lethal on a historic scale. Our desire for autonomy and power has generated a culture of death exactly what the ancient Genesis tale warned us against.

Then, the real plot of the Bible is about the liberation of both humanity and nature from our folly. God's voice does not come through the centre of civil power but from an imperial defector in Moses, through a burning bush and from a dissident prophet Elijah in the wilderness. These ancient traditions portray a God who needs to be encountered through nature. The Bible also offers numerous peons to creation as a mirror of the creator's glory.

There is a lot of talk these days about our need to rediscover enchantment in nature. Let us take Abraham's first encounter with God which occurred under the oak tree of Moreh, an “oracle giver” which taps into an apparently universal tradition of the Tree of Life. Then God appears to Abraham as certain strangers under the oaks of Mamre; and later in Judges, the warrior Gideon is given courage by an angel under the oak at Ophrah.

References are also made to sacred rocks. Jacob has a vision when sleeping out in the desert with his head on a dreaming stone. Like the tree this mystical rock seems to open a cosmic link and he exclaims that the wilderness is alive with Yahweh. He then goes on to set up a sacred standing stone, something which would make sense to early peoples because older than the Green Man are the dolmans and the standing stones scattered across Eurasia.

Our samples about trees and stones come together in a fascinating passage from Joshua 24. Joshua seals the covenant of the Israelite people not only with a recitation of the law but also by erecting a standing stone under an oak tree. He says this stone shall be a witness because it too has heard all the words of Yahweh.

Finally, here are a couple of relevant pieces from the Jesus story. The Nazarene begins his ministry by receiving his commission, not in church but through ritual emersion into a wilderness river. This grounds his work and his identity firmly in the Biblical tradition of earth spirituality.

Significant Gospel moments in Jesus' mission also occur among nature: atop of a mountain, on the sea and in open fields. Jesus is forever inviting us to learn about reality from seeds and trees and birds and rain. In fact he intensifies the ancient dichotomy between nature and civilisation in his subversive observation in Luke 12. “Consider the lilies”, he says, ‘how they neither toil nor spin, and I tell you that even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.’ He is in effect claiming that, in the eyes of God, the apex of Israelite civilization is, of less consequence than a wild flower.

Returning to the Green Man, I would like to suggest that this motif should be recovered as a prophetic reminder to the



church of two truths. First, that we humans come from the earth; we are deeply interrelated with all forms of organic life just as the Green Man is embedded in foliage.

And secondly that native peoples have always peered out from nature at the spectacle of civilization, observing it with a mixture of pity and fear; feelings that have only intensified as our history becomes more murderous and tenuous. So we would do well to listen to these elder sisters and brothers who might well hold the key to survival. Could I also suggest that that Green Man symbolises the Biblical God of the wilderness peering down on us with the same mix of compassion and dread. This God calls us to come out of Babel long enough to learn from teaching trees, to listen to dreaming stones and to recentre our Christian baptism in the wild river of life. If our churches respond we might be able to back out of the historical dead end that we are in.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWO



The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams has moved beyond stewardship in several of his recent addresses. He has argued that the world is not merely a warehouse of resources to serve human selfishness and urges people to treat each other and nature with "reverence". He says that the whole point of creation was that there should be people "capable of intimacy with God – not so that God can gain something, but so that these created beings may live in joy."

A deeper environmental theology can be found in the Bible. Ched Myers discussed this in a talk at the 2007 Greenbelt Festival in Cheltenham. (An abridged version of this talk is given on page 10.)

### **Putting the Church's house in order and taking action**

Here I speak particularly of the Anglican Church with which I am most familiar; referred to here as the Church. Now is the time for it to find its prophetic voice.

First the Church should put its own environmental house in order. It has not been particularly quick off the mark on environmental issues partly because many people feared that a concern for the natural environment could be a distraction from the needs of the world poor. But now there are encouraging signs since several initiatives underway. The 'Shrinking the Footprint' model which promotes energy-saving practices presents a good opportunity for faith groups of all denominations to come together and share best practice to reduce emissions and take the low carbon path. The campaign has already had a measurable impact.

But the key test of the Church's own commitment to help mitigate climate change is whether it will be able to people focus on climate change in a time of world recession. This is very much an ecumenical matter and millions of Christians caring for the environment in their daily lives could make a huge difference.

Part of the answer will be to reinvigorate ancient spiritual practices. The Church could recover the idea of a Sabbath. It

is also more than a religious principle; it is a life principle which should be seen as built into the whole created order. The land needs it, plants and animals need it, and the Church should appropriately reclaim that principle.

Then there is the Church's respond in the wider arena, particularly to government and the media? I believe that it has an essential role in enlarging the room for manoeuvre of politicians, helping them to introduce effective carbon-control measures without facing electoral suicide. There are parallels here with the valuable role that the Church in helping to create a positive climate for debt reduction in the Jubilee 2000 campaign and again made a decisive contribution to the Make Poverty History Campaign.

Environmental issues are not the most popular because of the cost of imposing ecological restraints which may reduce economic growth. Jonathan Porritt, who until recently led the UK Government's Sustainable Development Commission, highlighted the problem. He said that politicians and particularly senior civil servants get locked into certain ways of acting – the so called "path of dependency" and this can be a real brake on change when something comes along that needs radically new thinking. They need reasons and justification to break free.

The media could be much more helpful in saying what needs to be done rather than simply setting out the science and warnings. With current attitudes this is unlikely when there is so much concern about the breaking its impartiality guidelines. Think of the shows urging us to travel further; drive faster; build bigger; buy more yet none of them deemed to offend the rules, which really means that they do not offend the rules of business. The media, driven by advertising, are very biased towards the consumer economy and against the biosphere. The Church could have a role here in changing attitudes.

### **Rights and responsibilities for individuals to nations**

Human beings are not designed to live alone, we are not individuals first and then members of a community, we are members of community first and our role within it enriches and forms our life as individuals. Yet society has conferred more and more rights on the individual which has tended to create a strong sense of individualism at a time when a more cooperative culture or mindset is needed. It is good to see that the Church might be beginning to add its weight to this argument by emphasising that there are no rights or privileges without responsibilities. It should be understood that communities have rights, not only those here and now but also future communities.

Beyond this there is the national interest which is a more difficult matter. We all assume that Governments work in the best interests of the nations they represent. Although this sounds like a harmless motherhood statement, put in the context of the debate on climate, it can be counterproductive. To selfishly pursue national interests within the context of these challenges is to deny any possibility of a greater good being achieved.

The Church should engage with both Government and civil society encouraging them to be drawn more deeply into global citizenship. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, humankind will flourish together or decline together. Our international Christianity and global citizenship should express itself most clearly in the debates, decisions and targets that will inevitably emerge from the challenge of climate change.

George Browning, until recently Bishop of the Diocese of Canberra, has been a leading thinker on environmental matters and I would like to finish with his words: "The Church has no option but to take up the cause of the environment, not because of what the world says, but because it is inherent in our faith. ...Caring for the environment was theologically our core business."



### “Radical nature: art and architecture for a changing planet” at the Barbican

Art correspondent Liz Else's view of the exhibition  
(*New Scientist*, 15 August, 2009).

This exhibition is at the Barbican Art Gallery until 18 October. This is a very eclectic exhibition. Entering the giant space, you



nearly trip over a stuffed wolf on a trailer. Recovering you spot an upended chunk of rainforest, puzzling trays of crops, a geodesic dome and plastic spheres tethered to the ground and draped with the air-grown plant *Tillandsia*.

Without reading the captions or the fat catalogue (recycled, of course), it is hard to construct a clear, coherent narrative out of this strange landscape. But maybe that is the point. Humans have long been caught up in a dark, often incoherent relationship with the natural world. Nature and Culture came to exist as idealised, pastoral fantasy versus harsh human progress.

Surely the point now should be to offer new answers to the question, what role can art and architecture play in a changing planet? Or are shows like this doomed to end up as beautiful, frustrating and beguiling, and as shot through with contradictions as their subject matter?

#### Wheatfield – a confrontation

Following on from that, ironies and politics pile up in the 1982 work by Agnes Denes (below). She planted wheat on New



York City real estate worth billions. See the twin towers in the dense urban fringe – and note the harvest was fed to police horses. Trying to create the work on a scrap of forgotten land in industrial east end London, however underlines the monumental scale Denes worked with and the vision.

#### The Green Man

My face in the foliage, you've seen that face before  
Carved in the choir by your fathers in days of yore  
I'm the power in the pulse; I'm a sun underneath the soil  
I'm the unseen king of the ditches ragged and royal.

*I'm the Green Man; don't take my name in vain  
I'm The Green man, feel like breaking my chain  
If you cut me down, I'll spring back green again.*

I'm the roots on the stock; I'm the tender shoots on the vine  
I'm the goodness in the bread; I'm the wildness in the wine  
There's power in the place where my smallest tendrils are curled  
And my softest touch is the strongest thing in the world.



The Revd Dr Guite

## The Anglican PEACEMAKER August 2009

I'm the grass at your feet; I'm the leaves that shade your head.  
Be your bower of love, I'll be your green-grass bed  
I'm in the finest flower; I'm the power in the wickedest weed  
And I'll plough your furrow with pleasure and plant your seed.

You can cover me in concrete, staple me down with steel  
Spread your houses, your car parks over my fields  
But I'll still be there keeping everything alive  
And I'll spring back green but you might not survive.

Written and sung by Malcolm Guite on "The Green Man and other songs". Cambridge Riff Records, 2007.

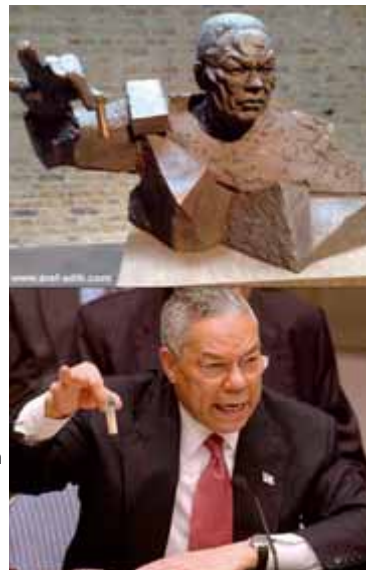
#### “The nature of the beast” at the Whitechapel Gallery

This exhibition by Goshka Macuga is in a new ground-floor gallery. Its centre-piece is a large glass-topped conference table in which one can see reflected, the life-sized tapestry copy of Picasso's *Guernica* (a photo of this was shown in the February issue of TAP).

This is the gallery in which the Movement for the Abolition of War will hold the special seminar in November on quilts and arpilleras referred to earlier (page 5). This will be a live component of the exhibition and open to the public.

On a plinth in the gallery and part of the exhibition is a vaguely cubistic head-and-shoulders sculpture of the former US Secretary of State

Colin Powell. He seems to have a brick on his shoulder, and to be fighting his way out of rubble. The light falls vertically on him, sucked through an angled shaft cut into the building by Belgian architects Paul Robbrecht and Hilde Daem. Powell gesticulates, a phial of anthrax in his hand.



The sculpture is based on a photograph taken when Powell addressed the UN in This tapestry has hung in the Security Council chamber at the UN since 1985. When Powell made his case for invasion to the Security Council, the tapestry was shrouded; it was felt that Picasso's image of death and terror was not a helpful backdrop. The later bombing of Falluja in central Iraq has since been compared to the German bombing of *Guernica*.

It is the editorial policy of  
The Anglican Peacemaker to include a range of articles expressing  
a variety of opinions. The views expressed are not necessarily  
those of the editors nor of the APF.  
The editor for this edition was Tony Kempster.  
Letters and contributions for the next edition should  
be sent to the commissioning editor  
(details on page 8 by October 1st 2009).

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