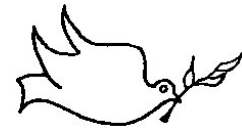


# The Peace Board



Peace news and views for, from and about Quakers in the North of Britain  
Issue no: 20 August 2006

## New faces and nuclear weapons

Our second Northern Friends Peace Board meeting of the year took place in Keswick Friends



Meeting House in mid-June. NFPB members travelled from places as far apart as west Scotland and south Yorkshire, and we were joined by a number of more local Friends and Attenders for different parts of the weekend. Giving ourselves a full weekend gave the opportunity to get to know Friends in the area and to spend more time on peace considerations and community building within the NFPB membership.

With so many new Representatives joining NFPB this year, we included some introductory activities in the early part of our meeting. We look forward to getting to know one another still better in the years ahead.

### British Nuclear Weapons

Another major item on the agenda was Trident. David Gee introduced the resource pack that he and job-share colleague Kat Barton at Quaker Peace & Social Witness have produced on the issue. Copies available from them: [disarm@quaker.org.uk](mailto:disarm@quaker.org.uk) 0207 6631067

We were also told about Faslane 365, the proposed year-long blockade of the Faslane nuclear weapons base on the Clyde. A wide-ranging discussion heard mostly supportive voices from Friends both new to, and more experienced in, nonviolent action. The Board agreed to send a message of support to the

project and that NFPB could help in arranging nonviolence training for those considering taking part in a northern Quakers' blockade.

Individuals wishing to be part of this **blockade on 12-13 November** 2006 should contact Mary Alice Mansell, at: 01505 842380 [maryalice365@gmail.com](mailto:maryalice365@gmail.com).

### Peace in our communities

In considering proposals (which were approved) for further project work on the concern of racism in divided communities, members were reminded of the roots of these proposals in earlier work on the theme of a culture of peace. The work will be designed to support effective networking and learning amongst Friends and between Friends and other parts of our diverse communities

### Speaking peace

Having an extra evening together on the Saturday gave us a chance to participate in a pilot workshop arranged by members of the Speaking our Peace project group. We were challenged to consider those things that help and hinder us in speaking and acting for peace and appreciated times of quiet reflection and worship-sharing on the same theme.

*Meetings interested in hosting a similar or related workshop are encouraged to contact the Speaking our Peace group via the NFPB office (see back page for details).*

## Looking back and forward

*NFPB was sorry to hear in November of the death of long-time supporter, **Muriel Shearer** of Liverpool Meeting, Hardshaw West MM. She lived to the age of 101. One-time Treasurer for the Board, she had also written a fascinating account of the range of Quaker peace work in Merseyside, from the mid 1800s to the late 1970s.*

*We are pleased to reproduce a piece that she wrote in 1997, reflecting on her long association with NFPB.*

Although only serving on the Board for a few years, I have worked with the Secretaries for seventy years. I first met Robert Long in 1926 at a Sunday afternoon meeting in Kirby Stephen, arranged by F W Parrot, and the following year in Liverpool. Robert Long was the first [NFPB] Secretary and (1913) now we have the sixth to serve us.

It was a pleasure in the 1930s to distribute the NFPB posters to Ministers of Religion (Wayside pulpits) and billposters for station hoardings. This was the personal concern of John Hunter of Leeds.

Many NFPB conferences come to mind: Kendal, Manchester (both Dalton and Hulme Halls), Otterburn and Iona, worship at Menwith and weekend committees all helped the peace work to progress.

Things have changed. Large public meetings are a thing of the past. We (FoR and NFPB) have had the Liverpool Meeting House full and an overflow meeting in a city non-conformist church. Not that I heard even one of the four speakers, keeping a taxi running between the two buildings was a full time job!

Peace is no longer simply 'No more war', supporting refugees and conscientious objectors; it is much more. Peace is a way of life, aware of injustices, oppression and suffering and I'm glad the Board continues its life and concerns.

## 2056 – Imagine!

Subtitled "**Picturing a future world at Peace**", this booklet is the work of John Morris and others and published by The Peace Party. In the introduction they write: "We are so often distracted by the violence of the world today that we don't even see how much actual peace-building is taking place. Even worse, we do not imagine how things could be if more of that peace building energy were released into the world." Written as if it were 2056 now, the text describes a world where practices which are now only dreams or seedlings as if they were commonplace. It acknowledges the complexity of such a huge spectrum of changes, but believes it essential for peace builders to have an image of what they are working for.

**Available (at £2.50) from: John Morris, The Peace Party, 39 Sheepfold Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 9TT [john4peace@msn.com](mailto:john4peace@msn.com), [www.peaceparty.org.uk](http://www.peaceparty.org.uk)**

## Money is the root...?

Trevor Marney has written a short discussion paper, exploring some of the relationships between our economic system and 'unpeace' in the world. He writes:

*There is a direct link between un-peaceful behaviour at all levels and the economic compulsion to make enough money to repay debts. In any competition, there are losers. People starve, not because there is not enough food for them, but because they have no numbers written in books called money. The international debt system gives poor people good reason to feel a real sense of injustice which creates the potential for violence. The rich are also driven by debt to behave unpeacefully.*



For a copy of Trevor's two-page paper, contact the NFPB office (address on back page) or read it on the NFPB website at:

[www.nfpb.gn.apc.org/money.htm](http://www.nfpb.gn.apc.org/money.htm)

## Oxford Research Group publications

Several interesting publications have been published by ORG in recent months, among them being:

### **The Future of Britain's Nuclear Weapons: Experts Reframe the Debate**

- a 'Current Decisions Report' with contributors including Liam Fox, Clare Short and Caroline Lucas and General Sir Hugh Beach. A substantial, timely and important document.

### **Global Responses to Global Threats: Sustainable Security for the 21st Century.**

Written by Chris Abbott, Paul Rogers and

John Sloboda, this briefing paper focuses on climate change, competition over resources, economic and political marginalisation and global militarism as the key security concerns. It proposes a move from a 'Control Paradigm' to one of 'Sustainable Security'.

**Iran's Nuclear Threat: Exploring the Politics** by Farhang Jahanapour, a British Iranian academic, is a timely briefing paper giving an insight into the nature of the conflict, of Iranian politics and proposing possible ways forward based on dialogue and disarmament.

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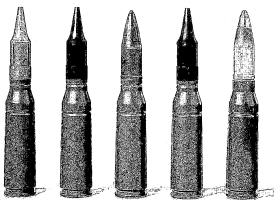
## Economics and Security

**Tanks and Trolleys: Why economic policies matter in security thinking** was written by Alison Prout as part of an 18 month piece of project work for QPSW. She writes about the need for a broader concept of security and focuses on human security as an alternative to militarism, of positive peace rather than 'violent peace'.

In addition, she gives a fairly detailed account of the relevant trade and aid issues and finishes with a series of questions for readers to reflect on. The final one ... *"Political thinking and decisions about economic policy and violent conflict are often made in isolation from each other. Are there any ways in which we can promote the understanding of these issues as connected?"* ... lays down a challenge for Friends to not simply read this booklet but to find ways of promoting

## FoR peace

Continuing its impressive new phase of work, the Fellowship of Reconciliation has produced two useful resources recently. The first of a series of attractively-produced **"Peacemaker briefings"** is on the theme of Iran's nuclear weapons capabilities or ambitions. It is an accessible, single-sheet mix of analysis and opinion on this topical theme.



Rather more sizeable is its new resource **"Living by the sword: A call for the Closure of the Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO)"**.

A helpful document in conjunction to materials already from Campaign Against Arms Trade, the pack concludes... "if we could end the proliferation of weaponry around the globe – particularly the push of weapons from the UK – it could go a long way to reducing the amount of armed conflict in the world and the misery that it generates."

FoR will be collaborating with CAAT in a lobby of parliament on this issue on 16th October.

**Both available from FoR from their office (St James Church Centre, Beauchamp Lane, Oxford OX4 3LF 01865 748796 office@for.org.uk) and from their website at: [www.for.org.uk](http://www.for.org.uk)**

## Two perspectives on people power

Two books have come out recently that provide very different approaches to a similar subject.

Rebecca Solnit is described in her book's blurb as an activist and cultural historian and winner of literary awards to boot. Her book, "**Hope in the dark: the untold history of people power**"<sup>1</sup> weaves a story with many strands. She looks through the lenses of different social and political movements from different corners of the world over recent decades and concludes:

*"I believe in hope as an act of defiance, or rather as the foundations for an ongoing series of acts of defiance, those acts necessary to bring about some of what we hope for while we live by principle in the meantime".*

Such an ongoing series of acts of defiance are documented rather differently in "**People Power and Protest since 1945: A Bibliography of Nonviolent Action**"<sup>2</sup>, compiled by April Carter, Howard Clark and Michael Randle. If Rebecca Solnit's book is the vision and the fuel for change, this book gets right under the bonnet to look at how it all works.

Organised in sections covering such themes as "Introduction to nonviolent action" and "Resist-

ing Oppression, Dictatorship or Military Rule Since 1945", the book contains a helpful summaries of the key aspects of the themes, giving potted histories where appropriate and a total of 934 references to resources.

As a bibliography it is obviously in many ways just a starting point, but it is an extremely thorough and informative guide that should help provide pointers for students, activists and many others looking at ways of working for a better world.

1. Published by Cannongate, 2005
2. Published by Housmans, 2006



## Conference for young people

27-29 October 2006

The Fellowship of Reconciliation is running a second conference in its "Called to be Peacemakers" programme. This year the theme is **Religious Rights and Wrongs in Contemporary Conflict**, for those aged 18 - 30 (ish) and only £35 for the weekend.

Contact [martha@for.org.uk](mailto:martha@for.org.uk), 01865 748 796, [www.for.org.uk](http://www.for.org.uk)

## Peace School

Peace School is a new, national, year-long programme exploring what it means to be a peacemaker in every area of life; personal, local and global. The programme is designed for people to participate in alongside their everyday lives through a combination of residential and web-based activity. Peace School seeks to survey the world through a Christian understanding of peace, while providing a welcoming environment for people of any faith or none. Peace School begins with a week-long summer school in August (11th-20th). More details can be found on the website at [www.peaceschool.org.uk](http://www.peaceschool.org.uk) or feel call on 0113 2574572.



## Northern Friends Peace Board in your area?

If your meeting would like to host us a gathering of Northern Friends Peace Board member in coming years, or have a speaker or workshop, contact us at the address below.

**The Peace Board** is a newsletter of **Northern Friends Peace Board.**

It is sent free to Northern Quaker Meetings and others. If you would like additional copies for your group or yourself, please get in touch. A donation to cover extra postage would help, but is not essential.

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