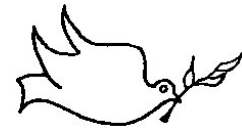


The Peace Board



Peace news and views for, from and about Quakers in the North of Britain
Issue no: 21 Winter 2006/7

Reflecting on people power

Northern Friends Peace Board met in Glasgow in September and in Southport in November. The following is just some of what we have heard about and considered in the course of these meetings.

Blockading Faslane

At each of these meetings we heard news of preparations for and participation in the Faslane 365 blockading actions. A group of Quakers from the south of Britain south undertook the first Quaker blockade, at the end of October. On Sunday 12 to Monday 13 November a northern Quaker group, with a theme of white poppies for remembrance Sunday, were at the gates of Faslane. Beginning with a Meeting for Worship - which was attended by a wider group of Friends - the action consisted of Friends undertaking non-arrestable and arrestable actions. For many it was their first experience of being at Faslane or of being arrested. Most seem to have found it tremendously empowering to act with other Friends in this way.

Faslane 365 is due to run until the end of September 2007 and Friends involved in this and other contributions (such as those organised by local or regionally-based peace networks) are keen to travel to Faslane again. (www.faslane365.org)

Speaking with adversaries

In September, Alistair McIntosh of Glasgow Meeting talked to NFPB members about his experiences or giving talks at the Army's staff training college. He challenged us to think about how we present ourselves to the outside world and to recognise the value of honest dialogue. Information and writings available online at: <http://www.alastairmcintosh.com/>

In November, we heard a suggestion from Geoffrey Carnall of South East Scotland MM.

With the decision about the possible Trident nuclear-weapons-system replacement being in the pipeline, we were urged to consider the possibility of finding sceptical allies amongst Conservative members of parliament, as well as the more predictable ones amongst Labour and Lib Dem MPs. He has produced a short briefing paper suggesting how Friends might raise these issues in the light of a rather different tone from the current Tory leadership. Contact the NFPB office if you would like a copy.

Building bridges

Our project group on "Peace, faith and race" is planning a gathering to take place in Bolton on 10 March on "**Tackling racism: Building Peace**". We have also heard at our meetings about activities that Friends are undertaking to build stronger links with people from minority groups, particularly in supporting refugees and asylum seekers. For more information about the Bolton event contact the NFPB office.

In November, Maureen Miller gave a short presentation about the origins and more recent activities of "Women to Women for Peace", formally known as "Mothers for Peace". Its work to bring women together from different parts of the world and from different perspectives continues, with links with the Middle East, Northern Ireland, the Balkans and Japan being amongst those it has built.

Looking forward

With the receipt of continuing support from Meetings generally, and a particularly generous legacy gift, we have been looking forward at ways in which we might develop our work in the future. A short summary of this process is given as a separate insert and readers are invited to send us their responses.

Education for Peace

- some reflections

Hilary Topp is a Representative from Young Friends General Meeting to NFPB. In September she began working for Pax Christi on peace education.

Before taking on my job, family, friends and colleagues were asking me what it is I would be doing. I have come to the conclusion that it is almost impossible to explain what peace education is in one sentence. I was met with blank faces, smiles, "well you've certainly got your work cut out haven't you?", "that sounds interesting", and, "well that's just your sort of thing isn't it". It is generally accepted to be 'a good thing', but no-one seems to be sure exactly what it is or how it happens.



My job is to promote peace education in schools and elsewhere with the cooperation of volunteers and teachers. I believe that to promote peace education the idea of hope is very useful. For me education for peace means holding onto the vision at the same time as engaging with reality. This is not an easy task, even for those of us committed to working for peace.

From despair to hope

I believe that young children are intrinsically hopeful in their outlook, but as they grow up this hope decays into despondency, apathy, and a feeling of powerlessness to make a difference in the world.

I see part of the role of education for peace as helping to nurture that intrinsic hope on many levels. We need to ensure that children feel safe and secure. They need the skills to talk through and resolve negative emotions of anger, fear and low self-esteem which can so often be damaging to themselves and others.

Hope can be best sustained within supportive communities. Schools can provide that sense of community, and for some children school is where they feel most secure. But community is much wider than individual schools or neighbourhoods. Many of us are members of

communities spread across countries or across the world. Children need to learn the skills to relate to each other and need the encouragement, friendship and advice that communities in their widest sense can provide.

At a global level we need to promote positive alternatives. Young people are all too aware of what war and violence look and feel like. This needs to be balanced with stories of people working for peace and creating a better world, and with the experience of resolving conflicts and working with others for change.

Finally, hope is spiritual. We can only remain hopeful if we get the balance right between nurturing ourselves and working with others to create a better world. We need to enable children to develop as young people with a strong sense of their own self worth and their place in the wider world, and with the inner strength to be able to sustain this.

A way of doing things differently

Something that I will take from my teaching experience is that it is the detail of life which is important. During a training session on managing difficult behaviour in the classroom, one of my colleagues asserted that all of us had had the experience of seeing someone's face light up as we walked into a room. Some of the children in the classes we taught might never have had that experience. Education for peace is not a new subject, something to be learnt and then forgotten. It is a way of doing things differently, where the detail of life is just as important as big ideas and where all of us can do something.

Hilary Topp, YFGM rep to NFPB

John Hamilton

As we go to press, we are sad to hear news of the death on 14 December of John Hamilton, of Liverpool Meeting, who for many years has been Hardshaw East Monthly Meeting's representative to NFPB. He saw many phases of the Board's work over the years and was active as a local politician and educator in his home city. We are grateful for all that John has given us - his insights, passion for peace, humour and friendship - over the years.

Online directory launched

October saw the launch of a new electronic resource, "Be the Change", compiled by the Ethical Property Foundation. It consists of listings of a large number of social change groups in the UK, under the headings of: Environment, Globalisation, Overseas Development, Peace, Refugee/Minority issues, Rights and UK Poverty.

View it here:
www.socialchange.org.uk/directory

Unwanted goods and services

Two publications arrived at the NFPB office recently. "**Corporate Mercenaries: The threat of private military and security companies**" is a report produced by War on want, with support of Campaign Against the Arms Trade. It points out that 'the explosion of mercenary activity in Iraq has effectively rewritten the sector's role in contemporary conflict', and makes five key recommendations for effective government control.

'**Forseeable harm**' is a report from Landmine Action on the use and impact of cluster munitions in Lebanon, 2006. The detailed report is backed by their 'Product Recall' campaigning materials.

Reports available from...

<http://www.waronwant.org> - 020 7549 0555

<http://www.landmineaction.org> - 020 7820 0222

Peace Studies on both sides of the Pennines

Beginning with the smaller sibling, the **Richardson Institute at Lancaster University** recently put on the Inaugural Richardson Institute Peace Studies Lecture, with Robert Fisk, middle-east correspondent for The Independent. For those with a good internet connection, the lecture can be viewed online via:

www.lancs.ac.uk/depts/richinst.

As part of its new phase of development and expansion the *Institute* has recently established a three-year Postgraduate Research Studentship in the field of Peace Studies/Conflict Resolution.

In Bradford, the **Department of Peace Studies'** latest newsletter carries several pieces written in appreciation of Adam Curle, who died in September and was the founding professor of the Department in 1973. Tom Woodhouse writes in that newsletter...

Despite the escalating violence in many parts of the world, we can detect the still faint outline of a possible world community in which genuine cosmopolitan values prevail, suitable instruments of global governance have evolved, international justice is widely accepted as an overarching

organising principle, and the values of a culture of peace are still being asserted by vibrant civil society networks. As Adam Curle reminds us: "We are all of us linked, our ancestors and ourselves, just as all living human beings and indeed all living things are linked and interdependent. The better we understand this, the richer our lives will be."

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<http://www.bradford.ac.uk/acad/peace/>

Some events in 2007

Northern Friends Peace Board meetings

Our four NFPB meetings during 2007 are as follows

- 17 February, Scarborough
- 23 June, Birkenhead
- 22 September, Edinburgh
- 17 November, Lancaster

We are always very pleased to welcome interested Friends and attenders from the area in which we meet to join us. Please get in touch with the NFPB office for further details.

Meetings for Worship at Menwith Hill and Fylingdales

These are held outside these bases in North Yorkshire, both connected with the US missile defence system, on the following dates. The Menwith Hill meetings are from 2 until 3 pm and at Fylingdales from 12 - 1pm.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 6 Jan - Fylingdales | 7 July - Fylingdales |
| 3 Feb - Menwith Hill | 4 Aug - Menwith Hill |
| 3 Mar - Fylingdales | 1 Sep - Fylingdales |
| 7 Apr - Menwith Hill | 6 Oct - Menwith Hill |
| 5 May - Fylingdales | 3 Nov - Fylingdales |
| 2 June - Menwith Hill | 1 Dec - Menwith Hill |

“Looking back at anger”

A series of seminars organised by the Blackburn-based ecumenical Racial Justice worker.

- 26 January, Preston “Youth in a changing climate”
- 16 March, Blackpool, White Flight vs Asian Flight
- 25 May, Blackburn, Community Cohesion - What is meant and understood.

For details, phone: 01282 692350

Northern Friends Peace Board event...

Tackling Racism: Building Peace

10th March at Bolton Friends Meeting House
A one-day event of speakers, workshops, discussion etc. on the theme from a peace, racial justice and inter-faith perspective.

For details, contact Philip Austin at the NFPB office, details to the right --->

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.

Conflict Resolution training resources

Materials prepared for the Australian Conflict Resolution Network by its director, Stella Cornelius, have been donated to the ‘ministry for peace’ project and are available from their website at:

<http://www.ministryforpeace.org/content/view/76/15>

Woodbrooke Courses

The Birmingham-based Quaker study centre has a rich and varied programme as usual. Coming up next year courses include: “Art and Conflict: personal conflict” on 2-4 March and “Simplicity, Integrity and Peace: the life and writings of John Woolman” on 13-15 April and “Engaging with Testimony: from inner leadings to prophetic witness” 20 April - 22 April

Www.woodbrooke.org.uk 0161 472 5171

Faslane 365 in 2007

Friends in West Yorkshire who have already been involved in contributing to the blockade are keen to do so again to help the government make its mind up about replacing Trident. If you'd like to join them ...

contact Ann Bettys on: 01484 851998

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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Please send any news, views, letters, reviews etc. to the above address.