

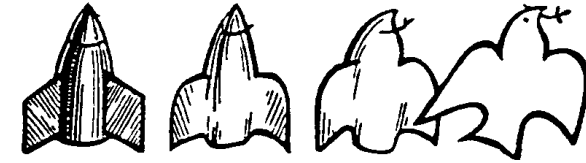
## Resources and action

- ✉ **ORDER** the **Shelling Out** Arms Trade Subsidies campaign pack free from Campaign Against Arms Trade (address below) - information and campaign ideas.
- ✉ **WRITE** to your MP or to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to express concern at the amount of public money that is being used to subsidise the arms trade. Guidance on writing to MPs is included in the "Shelling Out" pack.
- ✉ **ORDER** the **Call to Conversion** Resource Pack @ £2.50, also from CAAT - contains the Call to Conversion Statement, background briefings on Britain's role in the arms trade, liturgy and action ideas.
- ✉ **SUPPORT** the **Stop the Arms Trade week (8<sup>th</sup>- 16<sup>th</sup> June)** and the **Day of Prayer** against the arms trade on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June as a focus for activity - ideas included in the Call to Conversion pack.

### USEFUL ADDRESSES

Campaign Against Arms Trade  
11 Goodwin Street, London, N4 3HQ  
tel: 020 7281 0297 fax: 020 7281 4369  
Email: enquiries@caat.demon.co.uk  
Web: www.caat.org.uk

Oxford Research Group  
51 Plantation Road, Oxford, OX2 6JE  
tel: 01865 242819  
http://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk



Northern Friends Peace Board  
Challenging Militarism Project  
**Signpost leaflet - May 2002**

## "Do Quakers Support The Arms Trade?"

**THIS MAY SEEM LIKE AN ABSURD QUESTION.** But insofar as Friends are taxpayers, then the answer is "Yes!"

Large amounts of public money go to support UK arms exports. A report by Oxford Research Group (ORG) and Saferworld (The Subsidy Trap. 2001) estimates a net subsidy for military exports of £420 million. Others, including Campaign Against Arms Trade, estimate even higher figures.

Ways in which the UK Government supports arms exports include:

- ✉ **Export Credit Guarantees:** taxpayers money is used to provide cheap loans for buyers and insurance for exporting companies to cover defaults by buyers.
- ✉ **Marketing and Promotion:** the Defence Export Services Organisation, part of the Ministry of Defence, has offices and staff around the world through which it sells UK military equipment and services.

ORG/Saferworld give a conservative estimate that each defence export job is annually subsidised by £4,200, and that over the UK defence industry as a whole, the annual subsidy paid by the taxpayer is £12,300 per job.

### Northern Friends Peace Board

Victoria Hall, Knowsley Street, Bolton BL1 2AS  
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**“Even though arms exports only account for around 2% of UK exports, it is the most heavily subsidised sector in the UK economy apart from agriculture. UK tax-payers foot the bill for these subsidies, which amount to around £30 per taxpayer.”**

*Campaign Against Arms Trade*

While one fifth of the world's population subsists on less than \$1 a day, astronomical amounts are spent on preparations for war. In 2000, the UK licensed military exports to 30 of the 40 most repressive regimes in the world. Arms exports fuel wars, support governments that abuse human rights, and increase worldwide problems of poverty and debt.

## So what can we do about arms trade subsidies?

↪ **RAISE AWARENESS** about Government support for arms exports. *“The degree of subsidy ...will surprise most people, and open a more public debate on whether this is an appropriate use of public money.”* (Air Marshal Sir Tim Garden).

**VOICE CONCERN** to politicians and other key people. Northern Friends Peace Board promotes materials and workshops on dialogue with decision-makers, which may assist you in this.

### **Extract of letter from NFPB to Chancellor of the Exchequer. Gordon Brown:**

*“Our concern is fundamentally based on moral grounds, in that we object to the use of public money in promoting arms exports which can fuel armed conflicts and exacerbate problems of poverty and debt in recipient countries. For example we note with alarm the current dramatic increase in the level of UK arms exports to Africa.*

*Northern Friends Peace Board supports the proposal that the Public Accounts Committee should instigate an enquiry into the appropriateness of using public funds to subsidise arms exports.”*

## Church action – “A Call to Conversion”

NFPB, along with other church groups and leaders, has endorsed the **Call to Conversion** statement issued in April by CAAT Christian Network and Pax Christi. This campaign aims to:

↪ encourage Christian Communities to engage in critical reflection and response to the impact of the arms trade on our world

call upon the Government to end economic and industrial dependence on the arms trade and to end financial and political support for the arms trade.

### **Extract from the “Call to Conversion” statement:**

As Christians we are called to be peacemakers. Yet as a nation we are sowing the seeds of war around the world. The proliferation of weapons does not bring security. Scripture tells us that real security comes not from weapons but from justice. *“Integrity will bring peace, justice gives everlasting security.”* (Isaiah 32: 17)

In recent years, our churches have made clear statements on the evils of the arms trade. At the beginning of the UN Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for Children of the World, we believe that this is an opportune moment to begin a process of *conversion*. In particular:

↪ *The UK Government must tighten its export Controls*

↪ *Government subsidies to arms export companies must end*

↪ *The Government should help companies involved in the arms trade re-orient from military to civil production*