

working for peace since 1934
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peace matters

WORKING FOR PEACE WITHOUT VIOLENCE



'Crosses' such as this at Knowlton were erected as aids to recruitment and awarded as prizes to communities who had the highest proportion in their county of eligible men enlisted in the early days of WW1.

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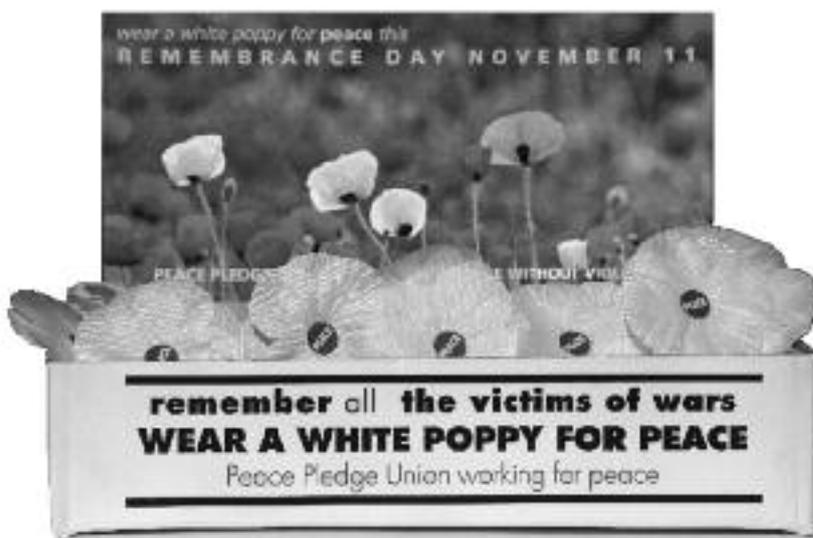
The *Peace Pledge Union* is the oldest non-sectarian pacifist organisation in Britain. Through the War Resisters' International it links with similar groups throughout the world. It is one of the original sponsors of Campaign Against Arms Trade, a member of Liberty and a co operating organisation of Landmine Action

For information about the Peace Pledge Union contact: Annie, PPU 1 Peace Passage London N7 0BT. or see www.ppu.org.uk

The next PPU Council meeting will be held on 6th March 2008 at 2.30pm

'War is a crime against humanity. I renounce war, and am therefore determined not to support any kind of war. I am also determined to work for the removal of all causes of war.'

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In Istanbul, Bulent Ersoy was charged with attempting to 'turn the public against military service'. The prosecutor described military service as the sacred duty of every Turkish male, citing the proverb, 'Every Turk is born a soldier'. Here in Britain, a recommendation on Gordon Brown's desk proposed that shops, hospitals and other public institutions should be prosecuted if they refuse to serve military personnel in uniform.

Earlier this year Quentin Davies, former Conservative MP turned Labour MP, was asked by Gordon Brown to undertake a study, for reasons that are not altogether clear. The aim of the study: to 'identify ways of encouraging greater understanding and appreciation of the Armed Forces by the British public'. In his foreword Brown notes that 'the whole of Britain understands and appreciates the work the armed forces do in our name, and are fully behind them'. So what is the point of the 29 pages between the Foreword and the Appendix of this report? That is not at all clear.

A large number of the British public are scarily attached to the military. Though this year 65% thought the invasion of Iraq to be wrong and over 90% thought the establishment of a democracy in Iraq to be unlikely, nevertheless, undeterred by that woeful outcome, some 42% now have a greater respect

for the conduct of the armed forces. Indeed, 77% think that we should have 'an Armed Forces Day on which we celebrate the work of our servicemen and women'.

There are several theories circulating as to why promotion of the armed forces is going on. Whichever you find most convincing makes little difference: whatever the case, militarism is on the march in Britain.

Of course, there is nothing new about the military promoting itself. For many years the PPU has rubbed shoulders with army recruiters at fairs and exhibitions around the country, sometimes quietly 'liberating' their recruiting leaflets and on one occasion beating the army and air force at a Scalextric competition! The difference now is

that the new militarism has become a major political concern. It is an ideological assault on those corners of society which do not fully subscribe heart and soul to the military ethos.

It is also, despite Davies' denial, an effort to recruit more youngsters. Last year the MoD spent £89 million to get 12,700 new recruits; 14,500 left. Not surprisingly, therefore, young people are a major target for Davies' attention.

The MoD has already had a bruising exchange with the NUT about the 'defence dynamic', a free teaching resource consisting of an 'interactive library of defence-based material for lessons on many subjects in the core national curriculum, including English, Maths, Geography and PSHE/PSD resources'. Strictly speaking this may not be recruiting material; but it is disingenuous of the MoD to pretend that to present military matters in a positive light is not its primary aim. Why else should an institution strapped for cash be providing such lavish teaching resources?

Commenting on this issue, a delegate at the NUT conference said: 'Let's just try to imagine what recruitment material would have to say if it were not to be misleading. We would have material saying, "Join the Army and we will send you to carry out the imperialist occupation of other people's countries. Join the Army and we will send you to bomb, shoot and possibly torture fellow human beings."' The conference voted in favour of a motion opposing military recruitment activities 'based upon misleading propaganda'. The motion defended the rights of teachers 'not to take part in activ-



ARMISTICE DAY
SMALL CHILD (excitedly): "Oh, Mother, what do you think? They've given us a whole holiday today in aid of the war."

drip, drip, drip

Jan Melichar

'We take a ten-year span,' says Colonel David Allfrey, head of army recruitment strategy. 'It starts with a seven-year-old boy seeing a parachutist at an air show and thinking, 'That looks great.' From then on the army is trying to build interest by drip, drip, drip.'



The sands run out (on Prussian militarism) Has it resurfaced in Britain?

A 1918 cartoon in *Punch*

NEWS

"All said and done, Bournemouth School CCF is great fun and should be considered a 'must do' for any student at the school."

"Hereford Cathedral School has one of the largest and longest established CCF of any school in the country. Since the advent of coeducation in the 1970s the CCF has grown and continued to thrive. The contribution which the CCF plays is an important part of the general education offered at Hereford Cathedral School"



Despite volumes of evidence to the contrary, we cling to a belief in the efficacy of violence, whether it's a clip over the ear or a laser-guided precision bomb. The PPU's **Saying no to violence** casts a critical look at the way we teach children to accept violence as natural and inevitable. It suggests alternative strategies for bringing up children not only to act nonviolently but think nonviolently. **Saying no to violence** is an essential tool for parents and teachers, particularly of young children, who want resist the creeping militarisation. By post, phone or online. £7.00 + £2.00p&p

ities promoting military recruitment, or which they feel present a partisan view of war and life in the military'. It said that young people should be able to 'hear a speaker promoting alternative points of view' and to have 'education for peace embedded in the curriculum along with education about the military'.

Davies denies that the material represents an attempt to recruit young people into the armed forces, but his and others' protestations are not very believable. In any case, despite its weasel words the MoD Youth policy is clear: 'The challenge to recruit sufficient numbers is increasing and the provision of recruits represents the only impact that youth policies and activities have on operational effectiveness. MOD youth policies therefore need to ... "cultivate" potential recruits.'

In recent years concern has also increased that the MoD is focusing on vulnerable teenagers from deprived backgrounds, using misleading information that glamorised war. There have been repeated visits to some targeted schools. Though the MoD unsurprisingly denies this, the anecdotal evidence, not to mention common sense, endorses this concern.

A few days after Charlton Heston's 'cold dead hand' ceased to hold his rifle for National Rifle Association rallies, Davies proposed appointing a 'Cadet Ambassador'. This person would encourage a greater participation in Cadet Forces, so that more young people would have an opportunity to play with guns. So much for the laudable and urgent efforts to discourage gun crime among teenagers.

There are some 42,500 schoolchildren in the Combined Cadet Force. The Force dates from the 1850s, when a number of schools formed units attached to Rifle Volunteer Battalions for Home Defence. There are also a further 88,000 cadets outside schools. The government is clearly keen to increase this number, arguing that membership 'goes far beyond their military training values'. Hmm. 'We received evidence, for example, that Cadets are significantly less likely to be involved in a chargeable offence than other young people of the same age group.' Apart from some (unverifiable) figures none of that evidence is offered to support this unlikely correlation.

The bizarre notion that the military has some special principled and ethical values to impart to the rest of society continues to linger

in certain quarters. It seems to be firmly lodged in Davies' and the Prime Minister's minds. The trend can also be found in the growing number of programmes in which the military are responsible for managing unruly youngsters. It should be a matter of concern for everyone that mythic military values are being promoted not only as good for delinquents or for impressionable youngsters, but also as superior, in some way, to what the rest of society can manage. In view of the military treatment of prisoners at Abu Ghraib or the 'beasting' of new recruits, or the appalling events at Deepcut or ex-officers attempting coups in Africa, or the inability of thousands of soldiers to cope with life after they leave the army, it is hard to see it as an institution imbued with desirable values.

Schools and youth clubs occasionally have visits from former criminal gang members, who talk to the pupils about their experiences and try to discourage any of them following in their anti-social path. Ambassador Davies now proposes that serving sailors, soldiers and airmen should be given a day off and travel expenses so that they can revisit their old schools, to meet with teachers and current students and (unlike former gang members) entice teenagers to consider trying to join their own 'gangs', (aka regiments). What's more, 'every secondary school should be circularised by the senior military chain of command with the offer of an hour or so's pres-



CADET "Really from the way that the College Authorities make themselves at home you'd think the place belonged to them."

PUNCH 1918

entation.' To cement all this: 'We believe that gaining some understanding of the Armed Forces, as part of education on our national institutions, should be an essential element of the Citizenship Agenda and civic education in schools.'

continue on page 6

open day at peaceworks

Today the majority of European male citizens are liable to be called up for military service. Of the 29 European countries enforcing conscription 26 recognise conscientious objection in some form. As Britain abandoned military conscription many years ago why is the PPU and PRET opening a conscientious objection resource centre today?

There are a number of reasons but the central one is that the root 'cause' of conscientious objection – the institution of war is - still with us and, despite all the hand wringing by the military hierarchy, is flourishing.

The introduction of compulsory military service in Britain in 1916 was a major assault on civil liberties; criticised by some and approved by many. As with most laws that curb civil liberties, the usefulness of legal compulsion in early 1916 over mere vigorous recruiting was doubtful. The values that motivate the steady erosion of civil liberties today owe something to the draconian Military Service Act of 1916. In contrast, the values, which enabled conscientious objectors to refuse to bow to the military will and spend many years in jail, are now widespread. The conscientious objectors of World War One were the pioneers of today's non-violent protest movement. Their struggle against a domineering state and for a less violent world should be better known. Like so much of the past their struggle has lessons for us today.

The Resource Centre has a unique collection of video interviews with Second World War conscientious objectors which it has commissioned. Many will be used to produce teaching resources for pupils and teachers and all are available to researchers.

The Centre has a collection of original documents, letters, photographs, diaries etc as well as books on conscientious objection and related issues. Videos and films about conscientious objection can be viewed and a database of conscientious objectors in Britain can be accessed. All of these are available for public use.

The Centre's work is funded entirely by donations and of course more are needed and welcome.

We were pleased to welcome members and friends to the open day. Visitors were able to see the new exhibition, explore digital resources and view recently recorded video interviews.

Amongst the visitors were two of the oldest World War Two conscientious objectors – Geoffrey and Leo.

Leo gave us a glimpse of his time as a CO in the war and had previously given us his prison diary. A part of it – on government issue lavatory paper - is on display.

The exhibition is now open to the public and the various resources are available for research.

can you help?

A number of readers have responded to a previous request but many more would be welcome. Scattered around the country in local history museums and archives is a wealth of information about conscientious objectors. Readers' help in finding out what is available in their locality would be very welcome. If you can help or simply want to know more please contact Jan Melichar [jan@ppu.org.uk]



Part of the new exhibition about conscientious objection at Peaceworks getting close attention from visitors to the Open Day. More at www.ppu.org.uk



1000 peace activist from 17 European countries converged on NATO headquarters in Brussels at the Easter weekend; many were met with aggressive guards and police, dogs and water cannons. 500 people were arrested and 50 managed to get inside the base despite massive police presence.

Abutting the NATO compound is the home to Belgium's deminers who 90 years after WW1 still collect and destroy tons of unexploded munitions unearthed by farmers and building activity. Across the road is Brussels main cemetery; here are the 'usual' war memorials plus many that British school children don't get taught about.

NATO agreements make Europe logistical hubs for the US military. Through its ports, airports and highways the US war machine is transported to Iraq.

continues from page 4

Nothing escapes Davies' eye. Military museums, he believes, are highly neglected 'educational' resources; he thinks this is regrettable, given that they are 'currently making considerable effort to project the present as well as the past in their displays'. What contribution Halle Berry's skimpy bikini, currently on show at the Imperial War Museum, makes is unclear.

Next to a biggish naval gun in the Museum's main hall, is a notice showing a picture of young Jack Cornwell VC, which tells us that he died bravely when his ship was shelled. The truth is that there was nothing significantly brave about his death, just another sad waste of life; the notice has nothing to say about the inglorious action of Britain's Grand Fleet, nor of the naval arms

race that was a major factor in the tensions that finally led to WW1. Any lessons for today? The notice is also silent about the way that 16-year-old Jack's death was used in recruiting propaganda and successful fundraising throughout English schools. So it was then, and so it is now. Very educational. More on this at tinyurl.com/y3rbph

Early in June, several dozen pacifists gathered on Istanbul's main pedestrian street and unfurled posters of Mehmet Bal, a conscien-

tious objector who was detained for refusing military service and beaten while in custody. The civil action did not last long: the protesters were quickly bundled away by the police. In Britain we can (mostly) protest about any particular war to our hearts' content; protesting about the institution of war is much

harder. The 'educational' Imperial War Museum, for example, will not allow the only significant resource on conscientious objection (designed particularly for teachers and pupils) to darken its bookshop shelves.

Quentin Davies, a former pupil at a prestigious Quaker school, clearly missed out on what Peace Matters readers might think the most valuable part of the Quaker tradition. We can only hope that pupils exposed to the pernicious propaganda he proposes – should

he and others have their way – will be equally impervious to its blandishments. Better than that, let's try to put a stop to this. We have no way of knowing whether any of the proposals in Davies' report will be implemented, but at least we know the way the wind is blowing. If you would like to contribute to and/or take part in work to undermine these proposals, please get in touch with me.

References etc at www.ppu.org.uk/ref

£10,000,000,000

is the amount the British government has spent in Afghanistan and Iraq since invading Iraq five years ago, according to the House of Commons defence committee.

We know what this money did buy, but what could we have had for it instead?

For this we could have built 40 hospitals or employed 45,454 extra nurses.

For that sum Alistair Darling could extend the benefit to low-income families and those with disabilities for the next 28 and a half years. Or he could double the UK's spending on flood defences for the next 20 years. Or double drug-treatment spending for 25. Or if the government wanted to court popularity it could write 17 million cheques of £584.80 for each family in the UK or 60.5 million cheques of 165 to every individual.

TRUSTEES NEEDED

The Peace Research and Education Trust needs at least one new Trustee to help in its work, owing to the resignation of Elnora Ferguson due to the pressure of her other commitments especially to the Peace Museum. We are most grateful for her work and support over the years.

Trustees meet three or four times a year for a couple of hours, on a weekday afternoon. The post would suit those who are retired or who can have flexible working hours. The job is not paid, but normal travel expenses will be covered.

An interest in peace education would be an obvious advantage and some teaching experience would be welcome but is not essential. Experience in fundraising would also be welcomed.

Further details of the work of the Trust can be supplied.

Please contact Annie Bebington, Secretary, PRET, 1 Peace Passage, London N7 0BT if you are interested or ring 020 7424 9444.

Annual report etc available at www.pret.org.uk

BRIEFING NOTES

PACIFISM

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Over 200 million children women and men have been killed in wars and armed conflicts in the last century. Several times that number have been injured, bereaved and displaced. The start of the 21st century sees no let up in the cycle of premeditated large-scale violence. While all our moral and legal codes prohibit killing, today spending on war and the development of ever more efficient weapons, some capable of incinerating whole cities, exceeds \$1.2 trillion. Millions of men and women, many of them highly skilled scientists and engineers, are engaged in war-related activities ostensibly carried out for our security. But instead of providing security, much of this activity actually creates tensions and insecurity. It also represents a massive drain on natural, financial, intellectual and human resources - resources urgently needed to reduce and manage the very real threats confronting us as natural resources grow scarce and the changing climate begins to disrupt existing patterns of living.

IN THE BEGINNING

Are wars inevitable? How much value do we attach to the lives of others? How many people is it acceptable to kill, or maim, or chase out of their homes, so that we can live in comfort? These may not be questions that exercise the drinkers in the Queen Vic, or anywhere else for that matter, but unacknowledged they lie unanswered behind many decisions in the modern world. Since you probably don't want to kill anyone, should you be bothered by such questions? And can we do anything about them, anyway?

Violent skirmishes and wars have been a grim and fearful feature of humanity's past. By the end of the 19th century years of relative peace in Europe were being disturbed by competitive tensions and an accelerating arms race. Pacifism is a term which came into being in the opening year of the 20th century following a major international peace conference. It referred to those who opposed war and worked to create systems which could maintain peace between nations. The word's Latin root is the combination of 'make' and 'peace'. As such, a pacifist was someone who makes peace, rather than one who holds a particular view about peace.

Until it was dismantled a few years ago the US Air Force called its MX nuclear missile the 'Peacemaker': a naming that illustrates the two poles of 'peacemaking'. Pacifism is not about passivity but its mode of peacemaking, unlike that of the US Air Force or



indeed of Britain's own military, is not through killing or threatening to kill.

In Britain and America the experience of the First World War led to a development of pacifism. Previously the efforts of peace societies had focused mainly on issues such as establishing forums for arbitration between hostile states, while accepting the need for occasional hostility. Now the failure to prevent war, despite considerable efforts by many, persuaded some that a personal refusal to take part in war or activities that support its execution was also important. After all, without men who were willing to fight there could be no war. For many people, refusal to participate in making war became an essential element of peacemaking. These people were the first conscientious objectors – the forerunners of today's protest movements.

The intellectual origins of Western pacifism are

Pacifism, which literally refers to making peace (from pace and facere) is often mistakenly understood as passivity.

rooted in the beliefs of Christian sects for whom the Sermon on the Mount was a key text and whose members refused military service. When in 312 AD Christianity became the official religion of Rome the North African theologian Augustine devised the 'just war' doctrine; this justified war, enabled Christians to be soldiers, and prevented any embarrassment for the Christian Emperor Constantine as he marched off to war. Not all Christians agreed, and for over a thousand years dissident sects across Europe were persecuted for resisting the call to arms.

The pacifism of the dissenting sects eroded over the years. Mennonites in post-Napoleonic France, for example, succumbed to the rise of conscript armies and by the Second World War even the majority of military age Quakers, the most peace-oriented of the sects, participated in the war.

From the early 16th century humanitarian rather than religious objections to war began to emerge across Europe and were shared by many thinkers of

the Enlightenment. They saw war as irrational and contradicting the ideal of human brotherhood. Nevertheless, it took nearly three centuries and the horrors of the Napoleonic War for an organised peace movement to finally emerge. Peace Societies urging arbitration as a means of resolving conflicts spread from Britain to Europe and to America; the Red Cross came into being with the aim to mitigate the worst excesses of war. Proposals for a body representing all states, which would provide a forum for discussion and hopefully settlement of disputes were widely discussed, and in the dying days of the 19th century a Permanent Court of Arbitration was established: today it is the oldest institution for international resolution of disputes.

Despite considerable efforts to prevent it, by individuals and groups across Europe, fear (caused by international rivalry for overseas possessions), an escalating arms race, blinkered judgement and sheer incompetence on the part of national and military leaders together signed the death warrant of 10 million men across Europe and beyond; worse still the 1914-18 war created the conditions in which the Second World War and the Cold War would happen.

This grim legacy did little to dent the popularity of war-making. By the end of the 20th century the belief in war as a laudable and essential institution had become deeply embedded in all modern states – liberal, theocratic or authoritarian. Today, liberals, tyrants, terrorists and common criminals are united in the belief that being tooled up to the teeth is essential to the success of their enterprises. They all share a willingness to maim and kill other people to get what they want; all have their own justifications; and many say they have God on their side.

TALKING AND DOING

Many people believe that violence is necessary for survival or to defend oneself; but the fruits of violence overwhelmingly consist of pain, suffering and devastation. Despite this, people go on believing in its efficacy.

Some say that human beings are naturally aggres-

'War is a crime against humanity. I renounce war, and am therefore determined not to support any kind of war. I am also determined to work for the removal of all causes of war.'

To come to terms, one must understand what fear means: what it implies and what it rejects. It implies and rejects the same fact: a world where murder is legitimate, and where human life is considered trifling. This is the great political question of our times, and before dealing with other issues one must take a position on it. Before anything can be done two questions must be put: "Do you, or do you not, directly or indirectly, want to be killed or assaulted? Do you, or do you not, directly or indirectly want to kill or assault? All who say No to both questions are automatically committed to a series of consequences, which must modify their way of posing the problem.

Albert Camus

sive and that wars are therefore inevitable: it's in our genes. This is a deeply fatalistic and unsupported view of human nature. While it is clear that our genetic history plays a part in making us the people we are, the interplay between our genes and our environment is infinitely variable. Co-operation is the dominant feature in human relations, even in the construction of nuclear weapons. Construction of nuclear weapons, or indeed any other weapons, has little to do with aggression, innate or otherwise. The workers at Aldermaston – Britain's nuclear bomb factory – are not foaming at the mouth ready to tear an enemy from limb to limb; they don't even have an enemy in sight. They are there as a direct result of political decisions taken, mostly in secret, over the course of 60 years and which underpin much of Britain's international relations.

The way in which we understand violence and aggression, explain it to ourselves and come to believe we know what is going on in a violent event, comes from our culture. It is our culture that enables us to imbue violence and violent conflict with significance; it shows us what it 'means' and what it implies for us. Violence is not an irrational outburst of instinct, not something undertaken blindly under genetic orders. By and large people engaging in violence need to give themselves reasons to do so; they have to see their act of violence as worthy of them, or have the excuse of being coerced. The anxiety shown by politicians and military leaders about the growing public disenchantment with Britain's military adventures and the effect this is having on soldiers' morale and on retention and recruiting of personnel, is a

small example of this need. This disenchantment, however, comes from failure to 'win', rather than from an objection to destroying lives; after all, who wants to support a losing project?

From our parents and later at school, from TV, books and games, many children have learned that violence can be both good and bad. This ambiguous template can accompany many of us through life. We also learn about the 'others', whose key features are that they are not like us and can be troublesome. Putting it together it's easy to see ourselves as the good guys, and believe that our use of violence, however regrettable, is necessary. 'The others', on the other hand, have no such justification in our eyes, and have no business using violence against us.

PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES

Wars and violent conflicts have long histories. Their origins have many sources – large and small, new and old. They also have many players who in turn have their own interests – which may mean preferring not to resolve the conflict. Wars are devastating to many – but they are also highly profitable to those who

What is called the utopian dream of pacifism is in fact a practical policy – indeed the only practical, the only realistic policy that there is.

Aldous Huxley

supply the weaponry. Today's 'merchants of death' roam the corridors of Whitehall and sell their wares at exhibitions in London's Docklands. Most of us have little awareness of the forces that make up a con-

flict, and when in need of a point of view we reach for those ready-made templates to give it form. Between lack of knowledge about the nature of conflict, internalised values that predispose one to accept virtually any level of violence in support of one's group, tribe, religion or country, and an almost total lack of knowledge about conflict-prevention and conflict resolution, making peace without violence continues to be a challenging project.

To be sure there are plenty of villains and murderous megalomaniacs around (some of whom are Britain's 'best friends'), but 'enemies' are in large part a social construct. This does not make them harmless, but it reminds us that they did not come into the world ready-made. Just as we nurture friends, so we, in part, nurture enemies.

THE WAY AHEAD

In the post-Cold War era, and particularly after the tragedies of Rwanda and Yugoslavia, there has been a growing consensus about the importance of prevention. The realisation of the cost effectiveness of prevention, when compared with the exorbitant cost of subsequent relief, protection and reconstruction, is a powerful incentive. Cost effectiveness may not be the best reason for doing good but it is a reason; coupled with a determination to reduce the world's arsenals this can be a powerful force for good.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Most importantly: inform yourself. In the aftermath of World War Two the French writer Albert Camus posed what he called the great political question of our time: 'Do you or do you not, directly or indirectly, want to be killed or assaulted? Do you, or do you not, directly or indirectly, want to kill or assault?' Camus said that it's necessary to understand what fear means: 'Fear implies and rejects the same fact: a world where murder is legitimate, and where human life is considered trifling.' As for his questions, he

says, 'All who say No to both these questions are automatically committed to a series of consequences which must modify their way of posing problems.' And, he said, you have to know your position on this before you can deal with any other issues.

Pacifism is the belief that violent conflicts are by and large preventable without recourse to armed violence, and that major wars are entirely preventable. It is also a commitment not to partake in war or preparations for war, and to help make the world a less violent place.

Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that. Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction.... The chain reaction of evil — hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars — must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation.

Martin Luther King

Further reading

Contemporary Conflict Resolution. Mail, Ramsbotham, Woodhouse. Polity.

Twentieth Century Pacifism. Peter Brock. Syracuse University Press.

Pacifism in Europe to 1914. Peter Brock. Princeton University Press.

Saying No To Violence - children and peace. Jan Melichar. PPU.

The Lucifer Effect: How Good People Turn Evil. Phillip Zimbardo. Rider&Co.

Obedience to Authority. Stanley Milgram. Pinter & Martin.

Voices for Peace. interactive CD. PPU

Details of the above, copy of this document and related resources at ppu.org.uk/details

REMEMBRANCE 2008

Red poppies tend to self-seed and flower for most of the year. Unfortunately the PPU's white poppies are not so obliging and only make their appearance once a year. They have to be bought, packed, posted and finally distributed by you. Promotion and distribution is our major difficulty and we would very much welcome help from members to promote and help distribute the poppies in your locality. If you would like to help with this, do some media work in your area or perhaps arrange a wreath lying then we would like to hear from you. If you cannot help with that but would still like to help we always welcome contributions of the monetary kind.

PAGE 4 **REMEMBRANCE**
the first remembrance day

Many strands contributed to the form that Armistice and later Remembrance Day took.

Long before the end of the war was in sight, let alone plans for a victory parade, thinking and planning was already underway about how to mark its ending and what to do with the ever-growing number of dead. In a sense the shape of post-war commemorations was already taking place just a few months after the war's beginning. Post-war commemorations drew on the practices that had become widespread during the war itself - some for propaganda purposes, some as an element of wartime pastoral and evangelising work by, in particular, the Church of England and the Catholic Church.

In an age without radio, much less television, public meetings and mass open-air rallies of various kinds provided important sources of information about what was happening in the world beyond people's immediate locality. Churches played a prominent role during the war in this and in the commemoration of the dead. The latter was often combined with prayers for the safety of the living and the promotion of patriotic sentiments.

The first 'Remembrance Day' took place on the 4th August 1915, the anniversary of Britain's entry into the war. Remembrance Days were large patriotic rallies designed to inspire more people to join the army; they were suspended after 11 November 1919. At the first anniversary the crowd declared its 'inflexible determination to continue to a victorious end'; by 1918 the tone had changed to 'silently paying tribute to the Empire's sons who have fallen... on the scattered battlefields of the world war.'

[| Roll of Honour >](#)

From the PPU's **Voices for Peace** interactive CD. £20.00

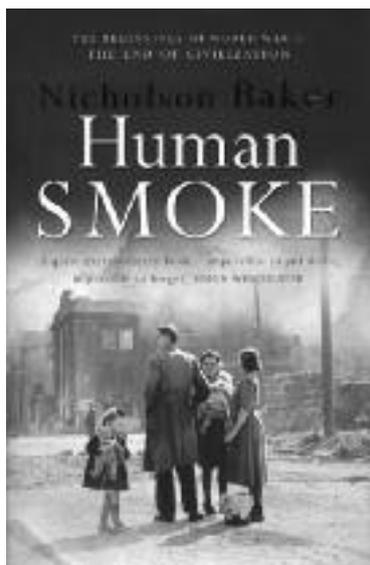
The untold story of Remembrance - from a last minute ceremony, through a ritual of consolation for grieving families to today's lead event in the British Legion's fundraising calendar. The story of Remembrance is just a small part of the fact packed **Voices for Peace CD**.

descent into madness

A book dedicated to the memory of American and British pacifists, is unusual, and one suspects that it is probably this more than anything else, which got up the nose of commentators and reviewers. The title *Human Smoke* comes from a comment by Franz Halder – Nazi General who nevertheless ended up in a concentration camp. There when the wind blew in a certain direction smoke from the crematorium drifted his way – human smoke is what he called it.

There is little new in this book as critics have been at pains to say but it's the book's sub text which perhaps enrages them most since there is no quarrel with the facts. The view, despite all, that World War Two was a 'good war' is hard to shelve.

The book ends on December 31 1941.



'Most of the people who died in the Second World War were at that moment still alive,' writes Baker. The next day Churchill and Roosevelt finalized the United Nations Declaration and 20 days later Heydrich outlined the 'final solution' at Wansee. Here is the clue to the book's interest as it moved to the 'end of civilization' the subtitle of book.

Throughout the book there is a feeling of a growing momentum to something awful but all the way there are moments when, maybe, things could have been different. Some resistance, reluctant armies, voices counselling reason. The leaders' pronouncements, in contrast, are designed to inflame.

In January 1940 Harold Nicolson notes that there was a faction in the war cabinet that was in negotiation with former German chancellor. The aim was to make peace with the German high command on condition that they 'eliminate' Hitler. 'We discussed the means by which this intrigue can be countered,' Nicolson wrote.

In June when six members of the PPU

financing development

Rene Wadlow

In a world society in which economic forces are already well structured to act globally, political structures are still largely national in scope. Transnational enterprises as well as financial speculators operate in the global marketplace with staffs which have been recruited for their ability to work transnationally and whose tenure is usually longer than that of the leaders of elected governments. The transnational economic elite know each other, and while in competition are able to keep their competition within the bounds of self-interest.

There are limits to the ability of private economic interests to keep the economic system stable. There have been periodic crises in Latin America in the 1980s, in Mexico in 1994, in Asia in 1997, in Russia in 1998 and in the United States in 2001 and again today, starting in 2007. While there are people who are hurt in these crises, it is rarely the key firms or the leaders, who, if shown the exit doors are usually given a

"golden parachute".

It is national governments and international financial institutions which have less control over economic trends. The International Monetary Fund, created as a result of the downward cycles of the 1930s, has had difficulty moving from its original aim which was to help national economies caught in a balance-of-payment trap to dealing with a highly interdependent global financial system.

National governments have tried to create a world steering committee — the G 8 — with uneven results. The annual Group of Eight summit originated in 1975 as the group of six, called together by France's Giscard d'Estaing at the chateau of Rambouillet. Giscard d'Estaing had been Finance Minister before becoming President and always had a technocratic approach depending on a small group of well-informed people to make policy. At Rambouillet, each country had only three participants, the president/prime minister and two aides

he chose — either a minister or advisors. The Rambouillet meeting, designed to deal primarily with the oil crisis begun in 1972, went well, and it was decided to turn the summit into a yearly event. Canada was added in 1976 as a part of the US economy yet a separate State and Russia in 1998.

Now, once a year, the G 8, a club for the rich and well armed get together to praise each other. Like all exclusive clubs, there are those who would like to join, but if you let in the Chinese and the Indians, exclusiveness may go by the board. Thus, as clubs in colonial times when the natives were let in for a garden party on special days, selected members of other countries are invited for one day to a special session of the G 8. The list of those invited, presidents, UN and EU officials has grown in recent years as resentment has grown over the potential power of an unelected world steering committee. The G 8 does feed into the conspiracy theories that the illuminate or the Elders of Zion or the World Economic Forum are pulling, out of sight, the strings of the world society.

were arrested and tried for publishing a poster 'War will cease when men refuse to fight. What are YOU going to do about it?' in Germany Dr Hermann Stöhr, secretary of the German Fellowship of reconciliation, refused to join the army. He was shot.

December 10 1940, House of Commons 'The security of the State comes before anything else' said Herbert Morrison, the minister of home security in reply to criticism by Peace Pledge Union member and MP Richard Stokes. Stokes was asking why several hundred British fascists were held in prison without trial or representation. Sounds familiar?

Human Smoke. Nicholson Baker. Simon & Schuster.

The strengths and the limits of the G 8 are well set out in this study of the Gleneagles Summit of 2005 on the theme of making poverty history. All the authors agree that Gleneagles was the most successful summit since the earlier period in the late 1970s. The 1980-1988 era of Ronald Reagan's US presidency was a rather dead period during which the US lack of motion was not compensated for by strong leadership from others. A 'wind of change' began with the 1998 Birmingham Summit organized by Tony Blair. Blair is one of the only leaders to have organized two summits, and this analysis of the Gleneagles is a good portrait of Blair's organizational skills and the high altitudes of the UK government. As John Kirton writes of Blair "With nine years of continuous summit experience, he was determined and well positioned to mount an unusually strategic, self-confident and ambitious plan for Gleneagles in 2005."

Blair brought back the summit to a narrow focus of two topics from the previous agenda's that had started to resemble that of the UN General Assembly.

Blair chose to deal with one issue — Africa — and added climate change because he knew the issue important but could not really invest time and energy on two issues. All summit meetings depend on the quality of preparation by key staff members. The G 8 have developed a pattern of having one person per country in charge of preparations — called a sherpa after the Nepalese guides who lead up Mt Everest. Blair was well served by his sherpa, Sir Michael Jay who had much diplomatic experience. Blair was also fortunate to have Gordon Brown as his chancellor of the exchequer, for whatever the personal relations of the two men by that time, both Blair and Brown were in agreement on policy toward Africa. Often there is tension between the pledges that leaders make at summit conferences and the budget managers of the different countries, resulting that pledged funds are often never paid out.

Blair and Brown were also in agreement that there should be large public support for the African policy and encouraged a dynamic NGO coalition

"Make Poverty History" along with concerts in each of the G 8 countries — the Live Eight — led by Bob Geldof and Bono. On the policy front, Blair helped to organize a top-level Commission for Africa of 17 members which held hearings with many groups in Africa as well as having interviews with African political leaders. The 427-page report *Our Common Interest* remains a good overview of African issues and difficulties.

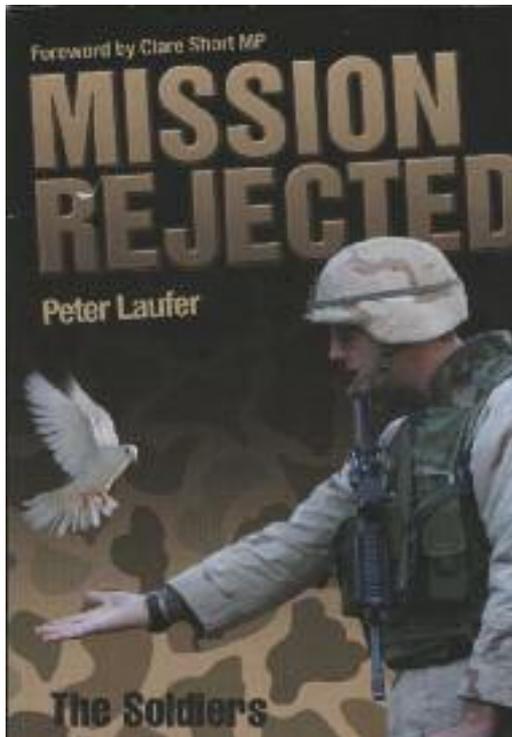
As we know from recent hunger riots, poverty has not been made history, and there are still deep structural issues in any sustained development in Africa. There are weaknesses in any self-selected steering committee of the world society, but no alternative has yet come into place. Thus because they are not yet fully institutionalized, the G 8 meetings merit attention. This study, which is part of a series on global finance, is a good guide and merits close reading.

Financing Development The G8 and UN Contribution. Michele Fratianni, John Kirton, Paolo Savona (Eds). Ashgate 2007

mission rejected

Mission Rejected is about the lives and motivations of US soldiers who have refused to serve in Iraq. The book tells the story of soldiers who have gone AWOL, many fleeing to Canada as well as of those who have found other ways of being released from their commitment to fighting, such as becoming Conscientious Objectors.

'I was told in basic training that, if I'm given an illegal or immoral order, it is my duty to disobey it. I feel that invading and occupying Iraq is an illegal and immoral thing to do.' Specialist Jeremy Hinzman, chose Canada over his military career.

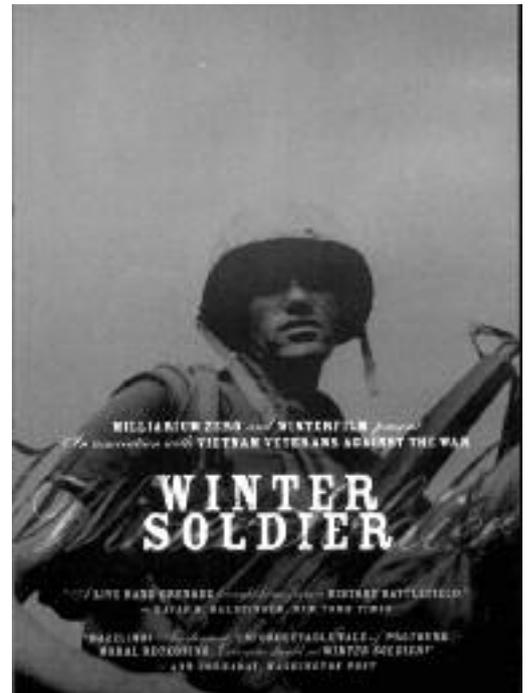


Meanwhile Sergeant Camilo Mejía, is in prison, 'Behind these bars I sit a free man because I listened to a higher power: the voice of my conscience.'

The common theme among the soldiers who did serve is that once they were in Iraq, they saw the futility of the war and felt as if they were just there killing innocent civilians for no reason at all. One of the most disturbing elements of the soldiers' accounts is how similar they are. The soldiers were sent to Iraq where they saw their fellow 'freedom fighters' killing innocent civilians without compunction. They saw right away that there were no weapons of mass destruction, or even many weapons at all. They saw that the US-led coalition was there raping and pillaging a very

"I just want to say that I'm sorry for the hate and destruction that I've inflicted on innocent people... I am no longer the monster that I once was."

Jon Turner



poor country that has virtually no means to defend itself. They saw the futility, the rage and the hopelessness in the Iraqi people we were supposedly liberating, so they variously and for various reasons decided to get out.

Mission Rejected U.S. Soldiers Who Say No to Iraq. Peter Laufer.

In 1971 some 125 Vietnam veterans representing every major combat unit to see action gathered at a hotel in Detroit. For many this was a risky event; they came to talk about the atrocities they had committed or witnessed in the presence of officers in southeast Asia. They spoke against the wrongs of the war and the brutal training that had made them capable of unthinking violence. They were spurred on by the court martial of Lt William Calley, who had ordered the infamous My Lai massacre, and wanted to change public opinion, and demonstrate that the execution of hundreds of innocent villagers in 1968 was not an isolated incident as so many believed.

A collective of filmmakers captured their testimony and some of it is still available on DVD. A few months after that meeting and following protest in Washington, John Kerry (Presidential nominee of the Democratic Party in 2004) accused the United States military of committing massive numbers of war crimes in Vietnam before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This was cited as one of the many reasons why he was not fit to be President.

In March this year there was a second Winter

Soldier gathering. Organised by the protest group 'Iraq Veterans Against the War' and 'US veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan since the 9/11' servicemen will testify about their experiences. They will present photographs and videos, recorded with mobile phones and digital cameras, to back up their allegations – of brutality, torture and murder.

The veterans are not against the military but they aim to shine a light on what they see as the bigger picture: that the Abu Ghraib prison regime and the Haditha massacre of innocent Iraqis are not isolated incidents perpetrated by 'bad seeds' as the military suggests, but evidence of an endemic problem. They will say they were tasked to do terrible things and point the finger up the chain of command, which ignores, diminishes or covers up routine abuse and atrocities.

While we should welcome this testimony we should note that there is an even bigger picture, which such a process inadvertently perhaps, obscures. Namely that it is the institution of war that allows such things to happen and that none of this is new. In the final attack on Germany, (the best and noblest of all war we are often told) for example 500 American servicemen a week were charged with rape while torture was routinely practiced on German POWs at the secret interrogation centre in the heary of London.

The original Winter Soldiers and a dramatization of the Battle for Haditha can be seen at CO Resource Center (call to make an appointment). The Winter Soldiers: Iraq and Afghanistan testimony can be seen at ivaw.org

Thousands of US military personnel have deserted since the Iraq war began in 2003, according to figures issued last year by the US army.

Some, as others did during the Vietnam war, sought refuge in Canada, which while not being part of the coalition of the willing has been, unlike during the Vietnam war, willing to return deserters to the US.

Following a recent campaign the Canadian Parliament passed an historic motion on June 3, that calls on the Canadian government to make a program to allow US war resisters to apply for permanent resident status in Canada and to cease all deportation and removal proceedings against US war resisters. We will have to wait to see if this will come to pass.

Some US military personnel who have refused

to go to Iraq or Afghanistan due to their conscientious objection to US policy and practice in the 'war on terror' have been imprisoned solely for their beliefs.

Some of these conscientious objectors have been court-martialled and sentenced despite pending applications for conscientious objector status; others were imprisoned after their applications were turned down on the basis that they were objecting to particular wars rather than to war in general.

Resistance to any war is good and should be applauded but resistance to war is really what we need. Given the grim experiences and views expressed by many military personnel particularly those who refuse to participate in any further military activity it is surprising that so few appear to develop an objection to the institution of war and become truly anti-war. Conscientious objectors appear to be an endangered species. A reason for this, in Britain at least, may be that so few know that the right to conscientious objection exist for Britain's military personnel.

Despite £89 million having been spent on recruiting in 2006 the army continues to shrink as more leave than the MoD is able to recruit. We can guess at some of the reasons why 25,000 personnel left in 2007 but is it likely that none of them developed a 'conscience' against war? Does it matter if we do not know? For those of us working to rid the world of war surely it does. It matters for the same reason that the PPU has the CO project; it matters because such knowledge challenges the dominant view that a state must have the capacity to destroy, maim and kill any number it deems necessary.

Most of us are brought up to believe in a self-contained 'war package' containing both a generalised problem to which there is a generalised solution. Inbuilt is a template for an 'enemy' which is readily activated and invariably calls up a plan of attack. A public rejection of war such as conscientious objection from within the military could be is not going to cause the MoD to collapse but it will surely encourage a few more people to countenance the possibility of managing without £40 billion institution devoted to destruction.

The Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objectors has not sat during the period of Britain's latest wars; it might be instructive to find out why.

You can write to HH Judge M.Harris, Chair of ACCO c/o Main Building, Whitehall London, SW1A 2HB and ask for his view on this surprising matter. Let us know of any answer you might get.

US law recognizes the right to conscientious objection only on grounds of opposition to war in any form. Many are therefore unable to seek discharge from the army on grounds of objection to the Iraq War. Other similar cases where US soldiers have sought to register their conscientious objection and apply for non-combatant status have been turned down.

the struggle for freedom

The terrorist threat and the turn to authoritarianism in some Western governments are not the only threats either to human rights or civil liberties.

There are many other pressures in the world whose tendency is to restrict and circumscribe the freedom and privacy of individuals. More assertive religious organisations impose limitations on the free speech of others by claiming to be 'offended' by criticisms of them or 'insults' to aspects of their faith. In response, and with a desire generally to be concessive and polite, people impose censorship on themselves. The demand for 'PC' attitudes and behaviour has been a threat to free speech for some time now, having started on campuses in America and spread to other countries and other areas of social life. The motives behind it – the desire to see equality and respect reign – are good; some of the effects are bad.

The technology of our age is itself a threat to freedoms. The British government, in choosing to go down the route of biometric data identity cards, has accepted the fallacious argument that because one *can* do a thing, one *must* do it. Its use of surveillance cameras and electronic monitoring of internet traffic has already made true the prediction that technology will allow for the constant unobtrusive policing of individuals, not just for detecting crime and terror, but for controlling and managing, for keeping watch even over the innocent and the private. Technology is the instrument for the realisation of that bureaucratic despotism against which Max Weber long ago warned.

It is not a large step from surveillance and control of the actions of persons in public space to surveillance and control of the opinions of persons in private space. In part the latter is already happening; personal emails and telephone conversations are being monitored. Circumstances in which opinions, beliefs and attitudes were unacceptable to the authorities abounded in the past, and a number have been surveyed in the foregoing pages as a reason why liberties and rights had to be fought for. It still happens; in strict Muslim countries not only do the Religious Police strike women with their whips for showing an ankle, but also the entire society is geared to preventing unorthodox thought or opinion – the society is itself an agent of policing, forcing conformity. There is no guarantee that what happened in the past in Western countries, and what happens in these strict religious countries now, will not happen again in our societies. And this dismal thought occurs even though we believed our rights and liberties were guaranteed by our human rights conventions and our civil liberties. They are fraying before our eyes; and we have to ask at what point the fraying will stop.

The world has international conventions on human rights – they are far from fully effective but they make a difference at times – and a nascent International Criminal Court as a step towards enforcement of them. In national polities the rights and freedoms of citizens – their civil

liberties – are not an exact mirror of human rights, though there is a large overlap. One main reason why a given country's civil liberties regime is not a straightforward download (so to put it) of one or another standard human rights convention is the margin of discretion taken by states in matters of interpretation. Genuine differences of opinion can exist over what counts as an invasion of privacy, or what comes too close to being a cruel punishment (capital punishment?), or where limits of free speech lie, and what sorts of expression count as speech at all (is pornography speech? Should it be protected by free provisions?). Nuances of policing practice, the handling of race discrimination cases, the degree to which religious observance is in the public sphere, all involve civil liberties considerations too, and societies are in a constant state of negotiation with themselves about them.

There is nevertheless a consensus in Western liberal democracies over what count as the core civil liberties, and since the atrocities of 9/11 these, as we see, are being subjected to persistent and mounting threat under the guise, partly spurious and partly self-deceiving their erosion is a price worth paying for security.

Such a process is hard to stop, and whereas it is easy to pass a hasty law limiting or abolishing a liberty, it is far harder to get that back. Interference with any liberty that a people has should only be allowed after a thorough examination of how long it took to get and at what cost, and why it was needed in the first place. The liberties and rights of modern Western people were bought with such blood, tears and sweat their possession is so precious, that their abrogation is a scandal, worse: a crime.

If there is one thing these pages might do, therefore, it is to remind us of the reasons why we struggled for our liberties, how much it cost our forebears to get them, and therefore why it matters so much **that we should** fight to keep them, now that we are actually in process of losing them. Let us fight, and fight again, to keep them, remembering the much-quoted adjuration of Churchill: 'Never give in, never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense. Never yield to force. never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy.' They were words spoken in the darkest hour of war, in 1941, when this country stood alone against Nazi Germany, and help had not yet come.

For us now the adaptation has to be: never give in to the thieves of our liberties, for possessing them and protecting them is the duty that our rights impose. It is what we owe the dead who bought them for us with their lives, it is what we owe ourselves in our aspiration for good lives, and it is what we owe those whose lives are to come: the inestimable gift of liberty, and security of inalienable rights.

A.C.Grayling. Towards the Light of Liberty – the struggles for freedom and rights that made the modern western world. Walker 2007.