



ABINGDON PEACE GROUP

Newsletter

November 2021

Next meeting: Tuesday, 16th November 2021, at 8pm (online)

(RE)IMAGINE OUR WORLD

ACTIONS FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

Emma Pritchard

reflections from the World IPB Congress

The Glorious Art of Peace in Didcot

Early in 2022 the Cornerstone Arts Centre will be presenting an exhibition 'The Glorious Art Of Peace'. You may remember John Gittings, who wrote a book under that title and spoke to us about it. John will be giving a talk at the Cornerstone and we will publish the date as soon we can.

In that general connection we have recently made contact with Rana Ibrahim, who is the founder and Director of the Iraqi Women Art and War (IWAW) project. We have made contact with her and are hoping/planning to welcome her as a speaker in the new year. (<https://www.iwaw19.com/>)

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In September we mentioned Emma, pictured below, now a masters student in Oxford, who is a youth volunteer with the International Peace Bureau and was planning to go to Barcelona for the October IPB (International Peace Bureau) Peace Congress, at which she helped organise the youth gathering.

She coordinates the IPB Youth Network – a global network supporting young people working to create a more just and sustainable world and advocating for the active inclusion of young people in the intergenerational project of peace. She is now going to share her reflections on the event.

Speakers at the congress included Noam Chomsky, Vandana Shiva, Jody Williams, Duarte Pacheco, Wada Masako, Beatrice Fihn and Jeremy Corbyn. You can watch the plenary sessions at: <https://youtu.be/-QRRYb40e2M> .the Congress website is at <https://www.ipb2021.barcelona/>



Joining the meeting: Either use the link below or look out for a message with the link on November 15th. If you don't receive it and would like to take part, email us(abingdonpeace@gmail.com)

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91315134101?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91315134101?pwd=RmxHLzBQaXIHjFSRm5nREVzYjdSdz09)
pwd=RmxHLzBQaXIHjFSRm5nREVzYjdSdz09
Meeting ID: 913 1513 4101 Passcode: 015836

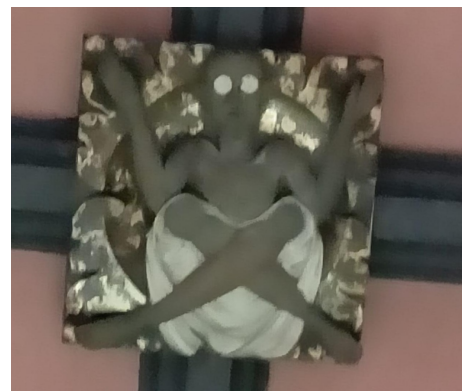
Our last meeting Anne and Peter Dodd on a possible Oxford peace trail



Bonn Square



Olive Gibbs Plaque



The Ghandi boss

Back at the Northcourt Centre Peter and Anne Dodd took us on a virtual walk along the proposed Oxford Peace Trail in preparation for their final version. The walk is going to be an exciting and instructive tour around the city. It will take in sites connected with Gandhi as well as Olive Gibb the inspirational councillor and early chair of CND .Then Bruce Kent's old college. There are many interesting stopping spots including a visit to the Oxford Union building where the famous " King and Country" debate took place..You will find out and enjoy some healthy exercise discovering many interesting facts on peace which you might not know. We hope the Oxford PeaceTrail will be published soon. Thank you, Peter and Anne, for your thorough and enthusiastic research (Tony Godfrey).

Militarism seven times more important than reducing carbon emissions?

GCOMS UK (Global Campaign on Military Spending) reviewed the recent budget figures and concluded that it is so – at least for the UK government. They report that their analysis reveals that "in this parliament the UK government will spend over seven times as much on the military as on reducing national carbon emissions" and that the "impact of the UK's changing foreign policy priorities, with any 'savings' from the 30% cut in overseas aid more than swallowed up by increases in military spending".

The report, extensive but very clear, is at the GCOMS website <https://demilitarize.org.uk/gcoms-uk-briefing-points-on-the-uk-autumn-budget-and-spending-review/>. You can also download a PDF pocket guide entitled *Militarism Fuels Climate Crisis*.



Tell COP26 sponsor NatWest to stop financing nukes

"NatWest Group held investments worth £2 billion in 15 nuclear weapons producers between 2018 and 2020. This includes loans provided to BAE Systems, Thales and General Dynamics – major arms companies that are playing a key role in the current nuclear arms race" – from Don't Bank on the Bomb Scotland (Source: Medact Scotland) (<https://nukedivestmentscotland.org/tell-cop26-sponsor-natwest-to-stop-financing-nukes/>).

New from NIS (Nuclear Information Service)

Nuclear weapons modernisation - Attitudes of non-nuclear weapon states

This is the title of an NIS briefing published in August. "The statements summarised in this briefing show there is significant concern about nuclear modernisation within the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty). In NPT meetings from 2015 onwards, the states behind statements expressing

concerns at modernisation programmes number more than 130 at each meeting" – not exactly surprising, but one's mindset would need to be pretty Natocentric not to think that it matters. After all, we wouldn't have the TPNW (Treaty of the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons) had it not been for the non-nuclear weapon states. But read on.....

Good News from Norway!

Norway recently became the first Nato state -- and first nuclear weapon complicit state -- to commit to participating at the First Meeting of States Parties of the TPNW. The commitment was included in the government's coalition agreement, released on 13 October. The move by Norway breaks the hard line against the TPNW that Nato had sought to exert on its member states, and opens the doors for others in the alliance to follow suit.

(source: https://www.icanw.org/norway_msp_observer)

The Politics of Nuclear Disarmament *Obstacles to and Opportunities for Eliminating Nuclear Weapons*

Written by Tim Street, this was published in April by Routledge. More recently NIS presented a webinar at which the author, together with Prof. Paul Rogers (Peace Studies, University of Bradford), Henrietta Wilson (SOAS), and Alicia Sanders-Zakre (ICAN) discussed the issues. See it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fe72E4au70o>.

Military applications at centre of Britain's plans to be AI superpower

This is the title of a blogpost by Peter Burt which you see at Drone Wars UK website (<https://dronewars.net/2021/10/20/military-applications-at-centre-of-britains-plans-to-be-ai-superpower/>). The post begins: "The UK government published its National AI Strategy in mid-September, billed as a 'ten-year plan to make Britain a global AI superpower'. Despite the hype, the strategy has so far attracted curiously little comment and interest from the mainstream media. This is a cause for concern because if the government's proposals bear fruit, they will dramatically change UK society and the lives of UK citizens. They will also place military applications of AI at the centre of the UK's AI sector". The piece also looks at the important data privacy issue.

On the horizon: drone spies coming to UK skies

Also published (in October) by Drone Wars is this article by Tim Street, beginning: "In the last few months Drone Wars and UK Drone Watch have organised protests outside RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire and RAF Lossiemouth in North East Scotland. We were protesting the decision to allow US arms manufacturer General Atomics to conduct experimental flights of their SkyGuardian drone in UK airspace [...]. As we have shown, the prospect of such large drones regularly flying in UK airspace raises significant safety and accountability concerns.

(<https://dronewars.net/2021/10/26/on-the-horizon-drone-spies-coming-to-uk-skies/>)

UK air strikes in Iraq and Syria since the defeat of ISIS

Another analysis by Drone Wars showing lots of military activity by the UK, hardly mentioned in the main media and not fully announced by the MoD. (<https://dronewars.net/2021/11/01/overview-of-uk-air-strikes-in-iraq-and-syria-since-the-territorial-defeat-of-isis-in-march-2019/>)

Sources of valuable information

Sometimes it feels like too much information, but it isn't really. One has to remember to be selective. Here are two sources we draw on regularly.

The first is the Oxford CND bi-monthly newsletter. It nearly always has a one page article by John Gittings which is invariably worth reading. This month it's 'The Three As of Cilmate Change', in which John shows among other things, that the threat of climate change through overheating was known and understood by scientists in 1978 – yes, 43 years ago! If you would like to have the newsletter sent to you as a PDF, drop a line to Nigel at oxfordcnd@phonecoop.coop to request it.

Secondly the [Salisbury CND website](https://www.cndsalisbury.org.uk/) is a very good place to start out if you are looking for information on a wide range of matters that tend to be at the very least downplayed in our newspapers; and is frequently updated – <https://www.cndsalisbury.org.uk/>.

Finally, we've just heard about a new database that we can all access. Entitled the Anti-War & Pro-Peace Resources Database, it has been created by World Beyond War and can be accessed via: <https://worldbeyondwar.org/resources>. So far we have only taken a cursory look, but it seems to be very easy to use and if not comprehensive (how could it be?) very well stocked. We would be very interested to hear what you think of it.

Annual MAW Remembrance Lecture ‘Walls, Fences and Guns’

This year the lecture will be given by Asad Rehman, Executive Director of War on Want. His title: ‘Walls, Fences and Guns’ – *How militarised and racialised capitalism is destroying the world*. This will be online at 2pm on November 14th. Register etc at abolishwar.net.

White Poppies from 35 Oct St

This year you can get these from 35 Oct St, weekdays 10.30 am - 2pm and on Saturdays 10.30 am - 12.30pm.

LET US KNOW – ETHER OR FUG ON DEC 21?

Our December meeting will as usual be a seasonal celebration. But where? Mince pies and mulled wine while staring at a screen? Or in a select group at the Northcourt Centre? **PLEASE LET US KNOW** by the end of November

A Message from your new Climate Emergency Centre

In order to promote a circular economy, One Planet Abingdon CEC will be holding a Toy Swap Event on Saturday 27th November, from 11-1pm. We are asking for people to bring good quality clean toys and games to swap at the event, please see our website for what type of toys we are accepting. If anyone would like to donate toys rather than swap, please can they drop them off at the One Planet Abingdon CEC (below the museum) on either Thursday or Friday between 10am and 4pm. (Please also see events page on our website for details: oneplanetabingdon.org)

Diary

Sat Nov 13: – Aldermaston Women’s Peace Camp.

Mon Nov 1 until Fri Nov 12: COP 26 – [United Nations Climate Summit](https://www.un.org/en/conferencesandsummits/cop26) in Glasgow

Thu Nov 11: [Armistice Day](https://www.armisticeday.org/)

Sun Nov 14: [Remembrance Sunday](https://www.ppu.org.uk/remembrance-white-poppies) The Peace Pledge Union (PPU) will be distributing white poppies in the run-up to Remembrance Sunday, representing remembrance for all victims of war. <https://www.ppu.org.uk/remembrance-white-poppies>.

Sun Nov 14: [Annual MAW Remembrance Lecture ‘Walls, Fences and Guns’](https://www.abingdonpeacegroup.org/2021/11/14/annual-maw-remembrance-lecture-walls-fences-and-guns/) online at 2pm. Register etc at abolishwar.net and see above.

Mon Nov 22: [TPNW](https://www.tpnw.org/) Faringdon Town Meeting at the Corn Exchange

corrections, contributions etc to this newsletter are very welcome.

Abingdon Peace Group meets on the third Tuesday of each month except August. At present our meetings are taking place online. All who are interested in peace and campaigning for it are welcome to take part. The Group has no party political affiliations.

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