

Peace By Peace

Issue 6
Autumn/Winter 2009

Human security vs military security

Also inside:
Jeremiah on
Reconciliation,
Water by the Hill,
new resources and
much more.





What is FoR?

The Fellowship of Reconciliation began as a response to the challenge of the First World War. While opposing war and militarism it strives to promote those things which make for peace and justice, to build – in the words of our founders – ‘a world order based on love’.

Today FoR:

- Undertakes education work within the Christian and wider community on peace, war and nonviolence;
- Seeks to identify the causes of violent conflict and raises public awareness of them, encouraging supporters and the public to challenge the structures, policies and attitudes that lead to violent conflict
- Supports and affirms all those with a commitment to peace and nonviolence;
- Is committed to developing a spirituality of peace, justice and nonviolence in witness to Christian faith and gospel values.

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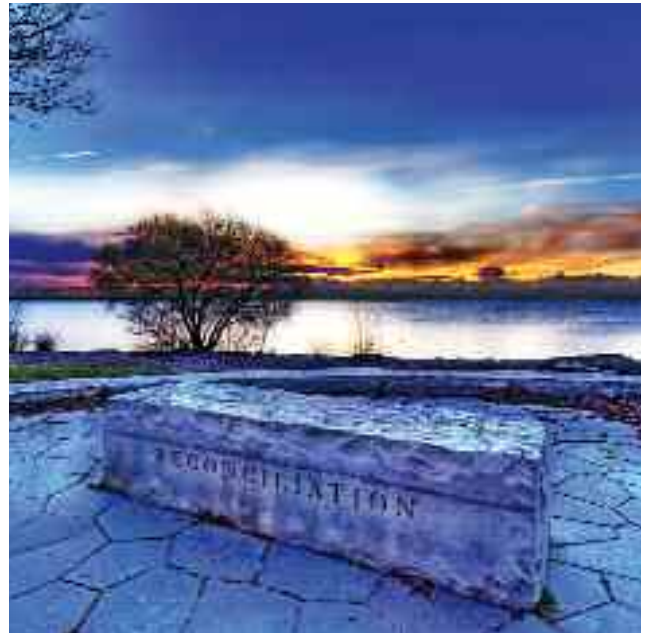
Welcome

Earlier in the summer I had the privilege of taking part in a week-long summer school at the Centre for Reconciliation at Duke University in North Carolina. There I met with, listened to and learned from many people struggling with what it means to be an “ambassador of reconciliation” in our world today. Several themes arose during the week in our thinking on reconciliation: the value of journey and pilgrimage; the importance of living beyond realism; the call to community; and the need for formation of future leaders for peace and reconciliation.

Like many events I have attended, it is the conversations and stories told late at night or between sessions that have real impact. For me, those were talking to a young minister working with American tobacco farmers struggling with the realisation of the harm that their work had caused over generations; listening to a young woman who was working with traumatised children abducted in Northern Uganda; and sharing with an ex-drug dealer turned pastor now working with abandoned teens in Chicago. All of these people and many, many more are working for reconciliation in our broken world and it’s important to remember this when we think that we are alone – or in a very small minority!

This issue has, as you will see, been strongly influenced by my visit to the US and meeting with some wonderful peacemakers. Continuing with our reflections on the theme of reconciliation, we have a superb comment piece by Professor Ellen Davis of Duke University reflecting on the prophet Jeremiah’s letter to Babylonian exiles in the sixth century BC. There is also a long reflection piece by Felton Davis of the Catholic Worker movement who I met in New York and whom I have always greatly admired.

With the announcement by the government of a proposed defence review and possible Green Paper later in the year, we reflect on the need to reduce the resource devoted to military spending – most importantly large scale weapons projects – and devote the funds towards real human security. In addition, we review some new resources, report on our first nonviolence training weekend for young peacemakers and have an update about the International Peacemakers Fund.



As always, if you would like additional copies of Peace by Peace magazine for your church or to pass on to others, please do let us know. We will be happy to provide them.

Chris Cole, FoR Director
chris@for.org.uk

Farewell

Since our last issue, we have said farewell to three members of staff. Rachel Smith our administrator, has become a full-time musician in Oxford, working particularly with older people.

Nick Chavasse has moved on from running the International Peacemakers Fund to become Head of Tourism, Heritage and Visitor Services at Coventry Cathedral.

Lastly Martha Beale, our Education and Campaigns Officer for four years, has moved to become project manager at Oxford Family Mediation Service.

All will be sorely missed. Please see page 14 for details of job vacancies.

Water by the Hill

Felton Davis has been a member of the Catholic Worker movement for 17 years. He lives at Maryhouse Catholic Worker in New York and estimates that he has spent four years of his life in jail for various acts of civil disobedience. This article tells the story of his work at Picatinny Arsenal, which “plays a unique role in the United States’ ability to wage war; it is a one-of-a-kind facility that provides virtually all of the lethal mechanisms used in Army weapon systems and those of the other military services.”

Thirty miles west of Manhattan, in Morris County, New Jersey, there sits the largest weapons research facility in the country, known as Picatinny Arsenal. It occupies an area of land about the size of Manhattan, and employs some 4,600 people, mostly civilians scientists, engineers and technicians. They forged cannon balls for the American Revolution, and played a major part in designing weapons for every American war since. They put together the triggering mechanisms for the atomic bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; designed the small, so-called battlefield nuclear weapons that could be launched with artillery; worked on anti-personnel cluster bombs that were used in the Vietnam War; contributed parts of the Star Wars system, including the electromagnetic railgun; and have most recently been perfecting the uranium-tipped anti-tank shells and other small-arms systems and howitzers for the war against Iraq.

Picatinny is a Lenape name that means “water by the hill.” Perhaps the Lenape were referring to Green Pond Brook, that runs practically the whole length of the arsenal and connects Green Pond, Lake Denmark, and Picatinny Lake. Or perhaps they were referring to the Rockaway River, that runs down on the other side of Green Pond Mountain. In 1990, the Environmental Protection Agency noted that there were 55 toxic waste sites on the arsenal grounds, and extensive water pollution from discarded ordnance

materials, especially to Lake Denmark, and the arsenal was placed on the agency’s Superfund list. The Army pledged to cooperate with investigation and clean-up efforts.

I grew up in Morris County, where the arsenal is the second largest employer, and I met people who worked there, and I had dinner at the Officers Club once with some friends, and I don’t suppose I ever gave the place more than a moment’s thought, until I woke up to the nuclear nightmare in 1979, and began to sense very vividly how much trouble the human race had fallen into. In 1982, I found myself taking Jonathan Schell’s book, *The Fate of the Earth*, and going to Picatinny and reading passages from the book to people in the visitor’s center and at the front entrance, until the security guards told me I would have to leave, which I could not in good conscience do, knowing what I knew, and feeling what I felt. So I was arrested for trespassing and put into jail, and my life has never been the same.

I never really got out of jail, though I have enjoyed several furloughs over the years, and I really never left Picatinny, though I have been forcibly removed ten times by the base police. Investigator Bill Sammon has more often anyone else been responsible for booking me, and Agent Tom Cottone of the FBI has more often than anyone else been responsible for making the arrest and carrying it through to



FoR Director Chris Cole and Felton Davis (right) at Maryhouse Catholic Worker

prosecution. Bill and Tom are conscientious people, who take pride in their work, and I have gotten to know them in the course of all these arrests. They don't just go through the motions, they talk to me and they listen, and they try to convince me that I'm making a big mistake and wasting my life. (Not to mention their time.)

Perhaps it is the wasting of a life, or perhaps it is the kind of foolishness St. Paul urged upon the Corinthians in the Bible. I don't know. I know that although my life has changed, the world has not changed. The planetary violence and sickness rages on, not to be slowed by protests of any kind, its momentum equally secured by so-called victories or so-called defeats. What is the meaning of the war against Iraq? What it means to me is that I have more cross to carry, more protesting to do, and more time in jail to serve. The principalities, the powers — call them what you will — are in charge, and we are all their prisoners. But I will not have my status as a prisoner kept beneath the surface, where it can grow and infect my whole being. If I am to be a prisoner, the walls and the bars and the locked door will all, from time to time, have to be real, and tangible, so that is plain that I am not an accomplice as well as a prisoner.

There are many good things to be done outside of jail, but it is very easy to fall into complicity with slaughter, and not to notice the devastating effect of the violence on people everywhere. I know, because this is what happens to me, and I not only feel it happening, I will it to happen. I put down the cross, and I say, "I won't carry this any longer," and I look around for some middle ground on which to stand. But there is no middle ground. A person is either

carrying the cross or they're letting someone else carry it. I think that is the sword, the division, the clarity, that Jesus said he came to bring.

I returned to Picatinny this past February 25th and painted "STOP THE WAR!" in large letters across the sign at the main entrance. It was at least fifteen minutes before Bill Sammon and two uniformed officers came out to arrest me, and I watched many people slow down as they drove by the sign and looked at the message.

"You could have saved yourself the trouble," said Bill. "The war will be over in a matter of days."

We got in a car and went to the arsenal police headquarters, where I sat handcuffed in a waiting room for about two hours. I was charged with defacement of federal property. The phone in the next room rang over and over, and I could hear Bill explaining to one person after another that the sign could not be cleaned up until it was photographed for evidence.

Then we got back in the car and drove way up through the woods to one of the north entrances to Picatinny, probably near Lake Telemark, and I was un-handcuffed and deposited outside the gate. Bill explained that I would be notified of a court date, and he also offered some directions when I asked him where we were. From there to the Dover train station was a fairly long walk, perhaps ten miles, but it was a nice day for a walk, not too cold, and there was a lot to think about. I was struck by the sight of so many American flags being displayed, in store windows, on bumper stickers, and outside houses.

I never know what is going to happen after an arrest, an uncertainty which is sometimes a blessing, and sometimes a burden. For this particular "incident," to use the word the prosecutors often choose, another six-month sentence is possible, after which I would have spent a total of four years in various jails. This is a tenth of my almost forty years on this planet, a tithe and nothing more than a tithe. There's no extra time there for God, and the longer I live, the less I want to give God even this tithe, and the more I want God to start contributing to the bargain. As though there had actually been a bargain, and God had said to me, "Look, you spend this amount of time in jail, and I'll keep your world from being utterly destroyed. Is it a deal?"

There hasn't been any bargain with God, as Agent Cottone has repeatedly reminded me, and there isn't going to be such a bargain, and I am crazy even to think in such terms. I wish you all could be there to hear some of our intense discussions! After Tom gets tired of fussing and lecturing

Continued on page 13

The Military Spending Debate

In June, after growing clashes between the media, the government and the armed forces on the need to increase frontline military spending, Gordon Brown announced that a defence review would take place in the autumn. The announcement seemed designed to stop further discussion rather than to encourage a genuine attempt to examine how best to devote limited resource to providing real security.

Two months earlier Gordon Brown and Peter Mandelson had committed to buying a third batch of Typhoon combat aircraft at a cost of £1.5bn and, separately, to continue with the procurement of the A400 Heavy Transport Aircraft despite the necessity of both programmes being seriously questioned. Given the current severe economic crisis, this decision surprised and alarmed many.

In the days leading up to the decision, the government came under immense pressure from the defence industry, who predictably argued that not only would thousands of jobs be lost (one analyst going so far as to argue that 45,000 UK jobs were at risk, whereas in fact, official MoD figures show that a total of 18,000 direct and indirect jobs are supported by the programme) but that Britain's long-term defence industrial capacity would be put at risk. These arguments are often deployed by those with vested interests in continued military spending as a way to end any discussion of the merits of ever increasing military spending. Whatever qualms one has about military spending, they say, must surely be secondary to the prospect of increased unemployment and a threat to the security of the realm.

For many Christians in the UK, the huge amounts of resources devoted to military spending seem scandalous, particularly at this time of national economic turmoil. According to the National Audit Office (NAO), the top 20 UK military projects currently under construction will cost the taxpayer around £40 billion. This huge figure does not include the cost of the proposed replacement for the UK's nuclear deterrent, Trident, currently estimated at between £20 - £25bn. In fact the UK has the highest per capita spending on the military in Europe and is second in the world only to the United States.

In addition, each year the UK exports a further £5 billion of military equipment around the globe, often to countries



with poor human rights records or serious development problems. Many of these sales take place to the very same countries that church groups up and down the country are supporting financially through donations to aid agencies like Christian Aid, CAFOD and Tearfund. For example, India is ranked 128th out of 177 countries on the Human Development Index with an estimated 40% of the country living in abject poverty with intra-communal violence a serious problem. Nevertheless, the UK exported £90m of military equipment to India in 2006 and £130m in 2007. And that figure seems likely to increase as BAE Systems, the UK's largest arms manufacturer, sees India as a key market which it will target, according to the Chairman, Dick Olver, "remorselessly". The relentless machine of military spending seems to be unstoppable and unquestionable. But there is another way and perhaps this time of economic crisis is the perfect time to step off the military spending merry-go-round.

2000 years ago, the Roman military commander Flavius Vegetius Renatus wrote 'If you want peace, prepare for war'. In contrast and at roughly the same time, Jesus and the early Christians were urging people to love their enemies (Matt 5:44-45) and extolling the virtues of what we now call nonviolent peacemaking (Matt 5: 4-12). Whilst one 'philosophy' hailed armed might as a means of security, the other suggested that real peace and security live in the practice of love and justice. This 'debate' over how to achieve real security in our world is as valid today as it was 2000 years ago. After decades of ever increasing military spending, perhaps it's time to take Jesus' message seriously

and focus our resources and talents on human security rather than military security.

Human security puts the defence of individuals rather than the nation state at its core and seeks to address threats to security not by attacking the symptoms, but by attempting to tackle the root causes in a pro-active way, thereby curing the disease. For example rather than investing £300m in developing a new armoured earth moving vehicle, as we are currently doing, we could be investing in technologies to tackle climate change, which is a real and serious threat to the planet. Rather than spending £2.6bn in purchasing 25 heavy lift aircraft to transport tanks around the globe, we could be increasing poverty reduction measures to tackle socio-economic division in the world and rather than spending £3.6bn on 12 Nimrod

The top 20 UK military projects currently under construction will cost the taxpayer around £40 billion

reconnaissance aircraft we could be investing in a genuine conflict prevention strategy.

The time has come for a genuine rethink about security. For decades the discussion on security has been dominated by proponents of the 'might is right' school, arguing that national self-interest is all that matters. Today, in the midst of a global economic crisis and with climate change threatening humanity as a whole, we need to jettison national self-interest and ever-increasing military spending in favour of a sustainable security strategy that puts the individual – and especially the poor – at its centre.

Expenditure on Top 10 Major Military projects (£millions)

Project name	Brief description and amount being built	Year approved	Budget cost at approval	Estimated total cost to complete
Typhoon (aka Eurofighter)	232 combat aircraft	1987	16,671	Classified
Type 45	6 anti-air war destroyers	2006	5,000	6,464
Aircraft carrier	2 aircraft carriers	2007	3,900	–
Nimrod Aircraft Mk4	12 reconnaissance aircraft	1996	2,813	3,602
A400M	25 heavy lift transport aircraft	2000	2,628	2,632
Astute	3 nuclear-powered attack submarines	1997	2,578	3,806
Joint Combat Aircraft	Joint Strike Fighter (Lockheed F35 II)	2001	2,034	1,834
Future Lynx	80 helicopters	2006	1,901	1,911
Support vehicle	5,000 heavy cargo vehicles	2001	1,367	1,272
Meteor	Air-to-air missile	2000	1,240	1,279
Watchkeeper	54 unmanned aircraft	2005	907	898
Merlin capacity programme	Avionics upgrade to 30 helicopters	2006	837	832

Reconciliation: the future of hope

Just at the start of the sixth century BC (about 596), the Judean exiles in Babylon received a letter from Jerusalem, from the prophet Jeremiah. This must have generated tremendous excitement and anticipation within that desperate group, and we can imagine how eagerly they gathered to hear the messenger read aloud – the letter that had traveled hundreds of miles and some months to bring them the Word of the Lord.

“Thus says the Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, to the whole exiled community that I exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and settle down, and plant gardens, and eat their fruit. Take wives and have sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so they may bear sons and daughters. Multiply there; do not decrease. And seek the wellbeing, the shalom of the city to which I have exiled you, and pray for it to the Lord, for with its shalom lies your own shalom. . . For thus says the Lord: When seventy years have passed in Babylon, I will take note of you and fulfill for you my promise to bring you back to this place. For I myself know the thoughts that I am thinking concerning you – an utterance of YHWH – thoughts of shalom, wellbeing, and not of evil to give you a future of hope” (Jeremiah 29:4-7, 10-11)

Surely this is not the message the exiles were hoping for: “Settle down in Babylon; make yourselves content. You will live and die in that place. So seek the welfare of the Babylonians, pray for them, because your welfare is linked inextricably with theirs.” We can imagine what they must have said after hearing that letter from home. “This is prophetic encouragement? What kind of phoney hope is this? Jeremiah has sold out to the Babylonians. We always knew he was a Babylonian collaborator,” some would have said. “We exiles are the true Judeans. We may be stuck in Babylon, but we’ll make no peace with our captivity. We may be here a long time – God forbid – but if so, then we will live by our seething hatred for every living Babylonian.” Happy are those who take their little ones and dash them against the rocks,” someone shouted, and it became a chant, a spiritual of sorts; we know that enraged song as Psalm 137.

Abiding hatred for Judah’s Babylonian captors is well represented in the Bible and even in the book of Jeremiah itself. True, in his letter to the exiles Jeremiah speaks a reconciling word; he envisions Babylonians and Judeans prospering together. But reconciliation is not the final word in the book of Jeremiah, which concludes with two long chapters (chps. 50 and 51) of rage against Babylon, prophetic poetry declaring that Babylon is doomed by God, utterly damned and marked for destruction. So in the book of Jeremiah as we have it, the commitment to abiding hatred of Judah’s worst enemy trumps the great vision of reconciliation that we have just heard. And just in case the book of Jeremiah is not enough, the book of Revelation celebrates Babylon’s fall all over again, although this time “Babylon” is a stand-in for Judah’s new Great Enemy, Rome.

What we see in the Bible is what we see in every religious community perhaps, in every place in the church, and also in our own hearts a profound tension between a vision of reconciliation on the one hand, and committed hatred on the other. There are good reasons for both reconciliation and hatred, even good religious reasons for both; that is why the tension is so deep and often seems impossible to resolve. The religious imperative for reconciliation may be obvious enough to us, but hatred may be just as principled – and the operative principle is Divine Justice. From a sixth-century Judean perspective, the strong denunciation of Babylon is an appeal to God’s Judgment on those who wreaked havoc on the holy city of Jerusalem, toppled the eternal throne of David and exiled the king, along with thousands of the best workers orders and leading citizens, force-marching them across the top of the Syrian desert to labor camps in Babylon. Why would Judeans not believe that God hated their powerful and vicious enemies as much as they did? The evidence from the book of Jeremiah suggests that even the prophet himself was torn between two messages both of which seemed to come from God: on the one hand, seek shalom for Babylon; on the other, wicked, godless Babylon will surely be destroyed.

The problem for people of faith has not changed in the 2,600 years since Jeremiah spoke and wrote. We are still



The Prophet Jeremiah Mourning over the Destruction of Jerusalem by Rembrandt

torn in our churches and in our hearts, between the impulse toward reconciliation with our enemies and the conviction that God's justice must be upheld. American Christians are still torn between the two in the long wake of 9/11; Christians are torn between the two every time we fight a war, believing it is just. I dare say that many of us here feel that tension also in intimate situations: how do we relate to someone who is profoundly destructive, in our family, in the church, in the neighborhood? Do we keep reaching out, keep trying to work with her, or at a certain point do we cut our losses and treat him as (in Matthews words) "a pagan and a tax-collector" (Matt 18 : 17)?

It should be clear by now that Scripture Offers no final resolution to our dilemma. It does not suggest that we can in every case make community with the Babylonian oppressor so we may prosper together. But if the Bible does not deliver us from the tension we feel, nonetheless it does offer guidance for living in it, a kind of guidance that was not available even to the prophet Jeremiah. In calling the exiles to seek God's peace for Babylon, Jeremiah was writing something completely unprecedented; no one in history, as far as we know, had ever said, "Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you." Obviously many in Jeremiah's time thought that was absurd; maybe Jeremiah himself wondered if he had gone too far.

But six centuries later, the last and greatest of the prophets said the very same thing that Jeremiah had said "Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you" (Matt. 5:44) and with that reiteration, something changed. What

has changed is not that Christians are now disposed to love our enemies and pray for them assiduously, since Jesus said we should. With few exceptions, we feel just the same about our enemies as the Judeans felt about the Babylonians. What has changed is that we can no longer say that seeking their shalom is absurd, a figment of an overheated prophetic imagination, perhaps, or a sell-out to the oppressor. Because now that Jesus has spoken, we know for sure that actively seeking shalom for our enemies is exactly what God expects of us. That is what "a future of hope" (Jer. 29:11) looks like in God's own white-hot imagination: people praying without ceasing for their enemies, appealing to God for the godless, putting all their hope in God's ability to craft shalom well-being, peace, true prosperity out of our own misery, suffering, and profound spiritual poverty.

Further, we dare not say that God cannot turn enmity and present misery to shalom because often enough God has done it. There is hard historical evidence of this, including from the Judean community in Babylon. In time Babylonian Jews lived in relative peace alongside their former captors; the archaeological data suggests that Jews intermarried with Babylonians and did business with them. The Jewish community survived and even thrived in Babylon for more than 2500 years, until the last century. A thousand years after Jeremiah, it produced the Talmud, to this day the greatest work of Jewish faith and culture, apart from the Bible itself. The prophet's vision for the exiles, "a future of hope," was fulfilled, perhaps far beyond his own imagining.

Our work, as I understand it, is to attend seriously to God's own heated imagination. It takes courage to let that shape our life. What wild visions - extravagant, demanding, yet not absurd - what wild visions occupy God this day concerning each of us and our communities? If any one of us is able to pose that question, and stand still long enough to hear the answer, that will be because we have managed to encourage each other to do something bold and otherwise unimaginable. It will be because we have sought to strengthen each other, as Jeremiah tried to strengthen the exiles, to hear what God imagines. "For I myself know the thoughts that I am thinking concerning you - an utterance of YHWH - thoughts of shalom and not of evil, to give you a future of hope" (Jer. 29: 11).

This is the beginning of the church's ministry of reconciliation, and thus our task : to stand together in a listening place, an envisioning place, strengthening each other to share God's thoughts of shalom and move together into a future of hope. May it be so.

Ellen Davis is Professor of Bible and Practical Theology at Duke Divinity School

International Peacemakers Fund

FoR's International Peacemakers Fund (IPF) supports grassroots peacemakers in areas of conflict around the world. All money raised for the IPF goes directly to these projects, as costs and overheads are covered by UK Charitable Trusts. Thanks to the generosity of FoR members and supporters, we have been able to support the following projects over the past few months:

India

The Anglican Diocese of Madurai and Ramnad in South India has launched a programme to tackle the ethnic and religious violence that has plagued the area over the past three decades. The three year programme aims to bring together the ethnic and religious groups within the region in a series of peace forums.

Pakistan

Spado works to promote tolerance and nonviolence in the North West Frontier province of Pakistan. The IPF is supporting their Islamic Nonviolence Education Programme, by providing funds to produce an Islamic nonviolence training manual and to train fifty Imams in nonviolence. The project also includes an essay contest on peace and nonviolence.

North Ossetia

North Ossetia is in the process of recovery after the Russian-Georgian war of 2008. IPF is supporting a small peace group called the Civic Assistance Committee to bring together teachers, parents, young people and children from some of the worst affected and segregated villages in the area. The project will support the young people and children to make a documentary about their lives and their homes.

South Sudan

South Sudan has experienced 21 years of terrible civil war. The IPF is supporting a small grassroots group to focus on community reconciliation and the re-integration of ex-combatants returning to the region.

The IPF has also recently made available grants to groups in **Burma, Uganda and Palestine**. However there are many more peace and reconciliation projects needing funding than we have funds to support. Can your Church or Quaker meeting undertake a collection to support peacemaking through the International Peacemakers Fund? We would be happy to send a speaker and to provide information for a display. Please contact office@for.org.uk



Young Peacemakers Network

In July members of FoR's Young Peacemakers Network met together in North London for a weekend. The weekend was a chance for those both new to the subject and old-time campaigners, to learn new skills and practices and to discuss nonviolence as a tool for social change. A good time was had by all. FoR details of future events contact office@for.org.uk

Resources

Franz Jagerstatter: Letters and Writings from Prison, edited by Erna Putz, Orbis Books, £16.99

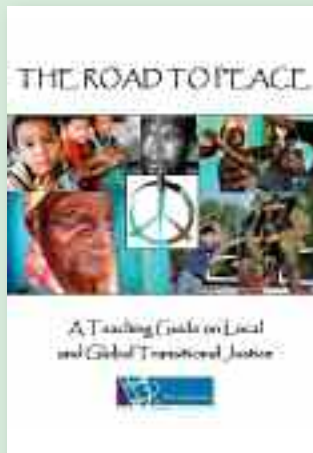
Many people will already know the story of Franz Jagerstatter, the Austrian farmer who was executed in 1943 for refusing to fight for Hitler. Franz was beatified by the Catholic Church in 2007 in a step towards sainthood. This book publishes for



the first time in English all of Franz's prison writings, together with the letters between Franz and his still surviving wife, Franziska. The letters movingly tell the story of the couple's stand and show the relationship between the couple and how they supported each other. Available from good bookshops.

The Road to Peace: A Teaching Guide on Local and Global Transitional Justice, published by The Advocates for Human Rights

A comprehensive teaching guide to help those interested in teaching social justice, providing the resources to explore transitional justice, peace



and conflict, human rights and justice through case studies, lesson plans and a range of activities. Aimed at secondary school students and adults, the activities within the guide can be used independently or together as part of a programme. "The Road to Peace, as its title suggests, does not just teach about justice, but seeks to advance justice. The lessons are planned to encourage creative thinking about conflict resolution and restoration of justice, so that students feel empowered to promote justice in their own communities as well as around the world." (p. viii).

It is available to download for free from <http://discoverhumanrights.org>

Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns, published by War Resisters' International

A fantastic handbook for anyone who is interested in nonviolence as a tool for social campaigning, this book provides background information on what nonviolence is, how its tactics have been used to achieve social change, the different elements of



nonviolent campaigning which need to be considered, and provides a range of activities for groups who are thinking of taking nonviolent actions. Drawing on the experiences and knowledge of their friends and partners world wide, this handbook provides a comprehensive study of the potential of nonviolence and is written in a very accessible style.

Available from WRI on their website or by ringing 020 7278 4040.

Gandhi on Non-Violence, Edited by Thomas Merton, A New Directions Paperback

Bringing together a selection of Gandhi's writings, this little book helps readers explore Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence (Ahimsa) and nonviolent action (Satyagraha). Introduced with an essay by Thomas Merton, this book is fantastic for dipping into to gain inspiration and insight into one of the world leaders of nonviolent action. Its chapters cover nonviolent principles, the spiritual dimension, the political scope and the purity of nonviolence and also draw upon sections of Gandhi's essay "Nonviolence in Peace and War". Available from Fellowship of Reconciliation, email office@for.org.uk or ring 01865 250 781.

Some coming peace events

Events courtesy of Network for Peace. For up-to-date listings see www.networkforpeace.org.uk

1-2 September, London. And Still They Don't Listen - The Citizen and the law of armed conflict

A conference organised by the Institute of Law Accountability and Peace (INLAP) and World Court Project UK at Friends House, Euston Road, London. The conference is a response to the difficulties experienced in communicating with Government on issues of international law. Registration and further info: George Farebrother, 01323 844 269. www.peacebourne.serifweb.com/lawpeace/index.html

8-11 September, London. DSEi Arms Fair

Join Campaign Against Arms Trade and others at the ExCeL centre at 11am, to protest at the fair's opening - then hitch a ride on the CAAT bus to take the message into central London. From 1pm there will a CAAT fair on the doorstep of UKTI DSO, the government department that supports DSEi. Contact CAAT on 020 7281 0297. www.caat.org.uk

18 September, Cardiff. Peace Day, Temple of Peace

A commemorative event to mark the International Day of Peace, bringing together children from different cultural and religious background. Children will explore their ideas of peace through performance, art and philosophy. Event open to schools in Cardiff and surrounding areas. Contact: Ona Flindall, UNA Wales t: 02920 228 549 e: onaflindall@wcia.org.uk

20-21 September, country-wide. Services & Events for Peace on International Prayer for Peace Day (20 Sept) and UN International Peace Day (21 Sept).

Resources for services and events from: Peace Services, World Disarmament Campaign, PO Box 28209, Edinburgh, EH9 1ZR. 0131 446 9545.

2 October, worldwide. UN International Day of Non-Violence (Gandhi's birthday).

3 October, Menwith Hill. Protest against Missile Defense at the American base at NSA Menwith Hill

Part of the annual international week of protest called for by the Global Network Against Nuclear Weapons and Power in Space: www.space4peace.org

9-11 October, Whitby. Anglican Pacifist Fellowship annual conference and AGM

Contact 01908 510642 for details and booking.

31 October, London. CAAT National Gathering 2009

Book online at www.caat.org.uk or contact julia@caat.org.uk or 020 7281 0297.

7 November, Coventry. The Annual Conference of the Peace Education Network

Entitled "Creative approaches to conflict: teaching peace, human rights and reconciliation". A day for teachers and those who work with young people to explore creative approaches to teaching and learning about conflict resolution, human rights and reconciliation. www.peaceeducation.org.uk

27-28 November, Pembrokeshire. Cymdeithas y Cymod (Welsh For) Vigil

Ffald y Brenin Centre,
e: cymdeithasycymod@btinternet.com



'Water by the Hill', continued from page 5

and scolding me and decides to let me get a word in edgewise, about the only thing I can think of to say is,

“... because I believe in God.”

And then he says, “Why do you keep bringing God into it?”

And I try to say, “Because I want to know why the world has to be this way. I want an answer, and I think you want an answer too. You do your job, and you believe in it, and you can’t understand why you have to take time out to arrest me and drive me to Newark and fill out all the paperwork and swear the complaint before Magistrate Haneke. You want an answer for that, and I believe you will get an answer one day. You and I will probably stand before our Maker together, like co-defendants, and we will both get an answer. Who else but God could explain why we have to go through all this?”

I know that Tom has some God-fearing bones in his body. I know that he listens and thinks about all this, because he remembers, and can tell me what I said to him on a previous arrest. And I know that Bill thinks about it, because he digs out his file on me, and tells me what he thinks of some of the newspaper articles that have been written. And I know that prisoners who I have met think about all this, because some of the most incredible experiences of my life have been conversations in jail,

‘Pyrotechnics Team’ in action at Picatinny

usually late at night, after the clamor of the day has died down somewhat, when we’re locked in our cells, and conversations have a chance to focus.

Five years ago I spent several weeks in a cell with an Iraqi soldier who had been arrested as soon as he arrived in the United States, and I listened to him try to make sense of what was happening in the Middle East. He had been fighting in the war between Iraq and Iran, but became disillusioned about it, and increasingly worried about what would become of his family after his death.

“I would be glad to die,” he said, “I would let myself be killed in battle, if I knew that my wife and sons would be taken care of. Everything I do, it is for them. I go to school and learn to speak English so I can make a better way in the world — it is for them. I become officer — it is for them. All the fighting and killing — for them. You must try to understand this when you go to protest war.”

I do try, and I remember his next words as though it were yesterday he had spoken them:

“The old men in my country, and I think the old men in Iran too, they do not want sons. Grandsons maybe, but not sons. We see too many things that people have in other countries, and we want too many things, and so they would get rid of us. That is why there was a war with Iran. The

only way for them to stop us from thinking about what we want is to make us kill each other. So off we must go to battle, year after year, and shoot our brothers. And even though I know this, I would do it, if my family would be taken care of. But they will be beggars! This is something I cannot stand. So I leave the war and look for some other way to support my family. I become even more of a fool and let men with money take advantage of me. 'You speak English well,' they say. 'Here, I will send you to the United States. Take this package for me. Be very careful. Here is five thousand dollars. I will pay you more when you come back.' What a fool I am to do this, and now my family will not even get this money. Your government takes it, and I must lie here in a prison bunk, and curse all the powerful men and the governments everywhere. Except, I cannot put all the blame on them. Most of it is my fault. I should curse myself as well. And then,... I don't know what."

I could not bring myself to tell him that it is better to be a beggar than to be a soldier, but I did tell him that I was glad he left the war, and glad that we had the chance to meet and the time to consider together what a horrible mess the world is in. Then he took out pictures of his son and showed them to me, and I showed him a picture of my niece, who was about the same age as his sons, and somehow I managed not to spoil the moment the way I usually would, that is, by starting up a big lecture on how this kind of sharing is what life is all about. I was thinking that, and I wanted to say it, but I know that it almost always

ruins the moment to start talking about it. Some things you just have to appreciate quietly and thank God for, and that is what we did.

*I did not lose my heart in summer's even,
When roses to the moonrise burst apart:
When plumes were under heel and lead was flying,
In blood and smoke and flame I lost my heart.
I lost it to a soldier and a foeman,
A chap that did not kill me, but he tried;
That took the sabre straight and took it striking,
And laughed and kissed his hand to me and died.*

War has changed a great deal since A. E. Housman wrote this poem. Have people changed? Do some soldiers laugh while they are dying, perhaps with relief at the thought of the end of earthly misery? I don't know. I know that although I could never love a man the way I love women, I have lost my heart to many a defeated prisoner, listening to him talk about his family, and how he ended up in jail. I have heard prisoners forgive their judges, even though they hadn't done anything worth punishment. I have heard soldiers forgive their enemies and call them brothers. I have heard homeless people forgive the landlords who drove them out into the cold. I have lost my heart to them, and wish to keep on doing so, as long as I have heart to lose.

Let it all go on, as it says in the last chapter of the Bible. Let those who would do wrong continue their way, and those who would do right continue theirs. (Revelation 22:11) The Water by the Hill still manages to flow, though with great difficulty, and it is the same water as the Water of Life the angel showed to John. (Revelation 22:1) Let it all go on, because there is a God, and God knows what this is all for, and will give an answer, to those who want an answer, when the time is come.

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Postscript

Although this article was first published in 1991, the work goes on. Felton wrote recently: "Thank you for stopping by yesterday on your way to Nyack - I'm glad we had a chance to talk and compare notes about the life of resistance and community. Neither "Water by the Hill" nor any other article I ever wrote led anyone else to volunteer to cross the line there - it was considered my personal obsession. As the judiciary continues to affirm the legality of all weapons research, no matter how depraved, we are continuing our demonstrations against the wars and occupations and against the torture. We wish Fellowship of Reconciliation well with all its work".

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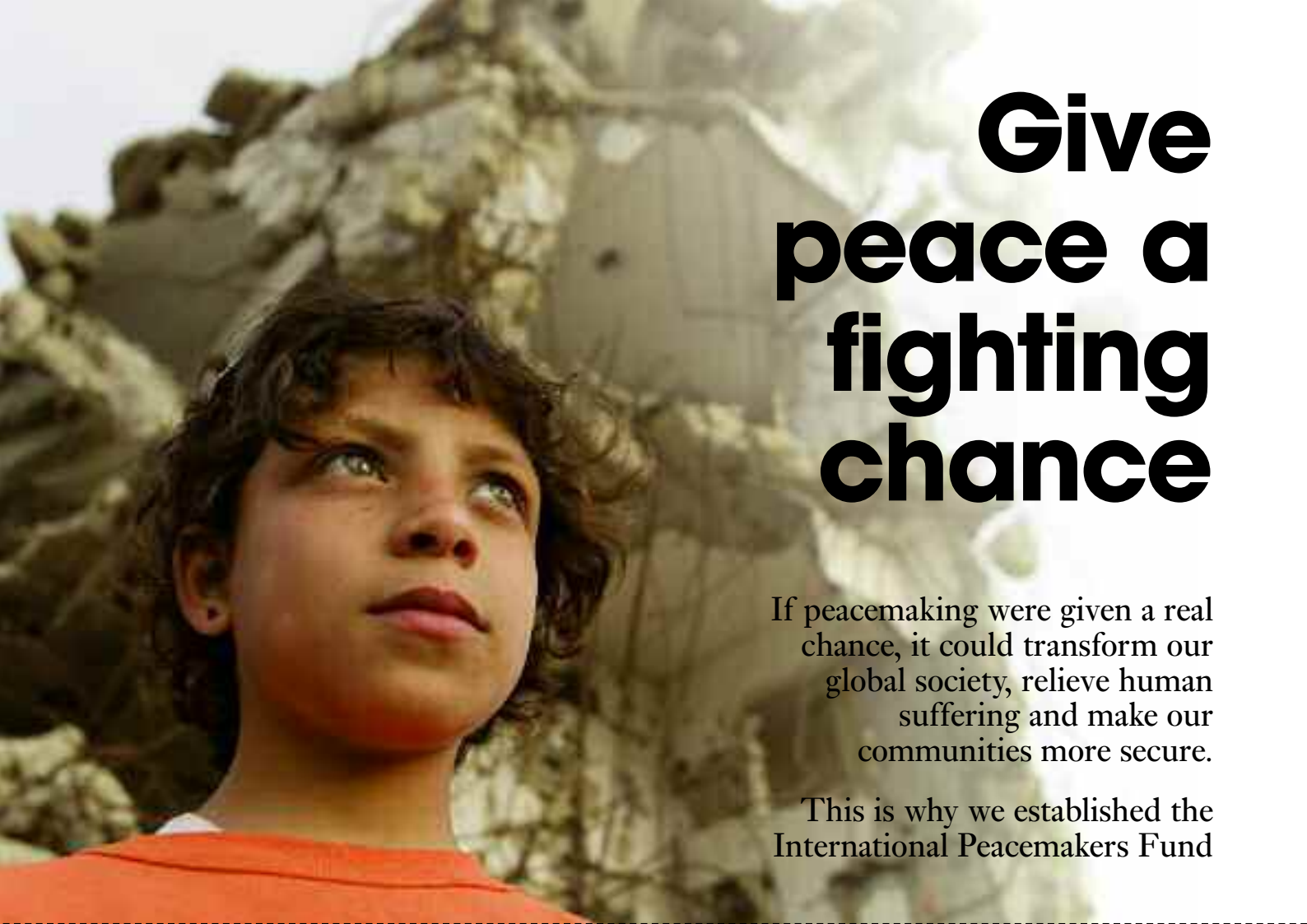
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