

# PEACELINKS



News from the Fellowship of Reconciliation, England

Vol.19 no.2

APRIL - MAY 2005

25p

## PEACE - BY - PEACE

In the run up to Annual Council, we are delighted to announce that FoR is to initiate an exciting and innovative new peace project, thanks to a generous grant from the **Allan and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust** and a timely legacy.

**Peace-by-Peace** aims to educate young people within the UK about peace and conflict issues whilst at the same time raising financial support for peacemakers overseas from the UK community. In addition we will enable and encourage communication between young UK peacemakers and overseas peacemakers. The heart of our message is that building international peace with justice is the only way to build real and lasting security for all. FoR will be recruiting two new staff over the summer to help run this project.

### Strength

A real strength of the Fellowship is its links through the International FoR with dozens of small groups working for peace and reconciliation in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. The project will identify key partners and projects through **International FoR** and other networks and support the key peace work that they do by raising funds from Churches, individuals and trusts in the UK. Publicising these projects and raising funds for them not

only help these key peace people directly, supports the infrastructure of international peacemaking but also root FoR's education and public policy work in concrete international peacemaking.

### Education

At the same time that we are supporting peace work overseas, we feel it is important that we also undertake education work with young people within the UK. During 2004, FoR organised a speaking tour of universities and colleges and we are to hold a youth conference on these issue in the Autumn of 2005. From our initial work we know that young people in the UK are very interested in conflict and peace issues at this time. Building on our preliminary work and using the knowledge, understanding and links created through supporting overseas peacemakers, we will reach out to undertake education work on peacemaking, reconciliation and nonviolence to young people at universities, colleges and sixth forms, as well as events such as **Breakout** and **Greenbelt**.

We will of course keep members and supporters informed of developments through *Peacelinks* over the next few months.

Chris Cole

### Annual Council of FoR England

Saturday 23rd April

The Eirene Centre, Clopton

Keynote speaker

**Sir Richard Jolly**

**"Peace & Human Security"**

Sir Richard is Chairperson of UNA, Fellow of the Institute of Development Studies, and a conscientious objector.

**More details from the Eirene Centre**

### Anglican Pacifist Fellowship (APF) annual conference held this year jointly with FoR

**Vulnerability and Security:  
Reflections for Christian Peacemakers  
in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.**

**Friday July 29 – Sunday July 31**  
Bishop Woodford House, Ely

**For more details, see enclosed booking form  
or contact the Eirene Centre**

## DIRECTOR'S DIARY

Last month I had the delightful opportunity to have lunch with **Jennifer Hyman**, Communication Director of **US FoR** as she was in the country on family business. We talked about the work of our respective branches and amongst the many things that Jennifer told me that USFoR were doing, was beginning to bring together a number of groups to build support for military objectors to the war in Iraq.

In Dublin recently to support the **Pitstop Ploughshares**, I attended a meeting addressed by Kelly Dougherty, co-founder of Iraq Veterans Against the War. Kelly spoke about how she joined the National Guard straight from school in order to get a better education. She trained as a medic but was drafted to go to Iraq as a police sergeant. She described how most of her work in Iraq was escorting convoys of fuel or food through the south of the country. However many of the trucks used were old and unsuited to the climate of Iraq and broke down and she and her unit had to burn the trucks – and the fuel and food – in front of Iraqis who were desperately short of these goods. She also explained that their unit participated in numerous raids on houses to arrests suspected insurgents. However their unit didn't have any translators and many people ended up shot or arrested without having an understanding of why.

Kelly also talked about the 'back door draft' whereby many volunteers and recruits were being kept long beyond their time in Iraq. As well as the 1,500 US Military casualties, she said "1000s were returning home seriously wounded and psychologically shattered".

Here in the UK, **Military Families Against the War** ([www.mfaw.org.uk](http://www.mfaw.org.uk)) are a group made up of people with relatives in the armed forces. In February one of their members, George Soloumu, a lance corporal in the Territorial Army announced he was resigning from the TA and called on other reservists to refuse to go to Iraq. The longer this war goes on increasingly more and more soldiers are going to play a part in resisting the war. As an organisation founded by CO's we have our part to play in supporting all those who come to a decision – at whatever stage – to oppose war and violence. Lets us pray that more and more soldiers begin to refuse to fight and speak out against this awful war.

**Chris Cole**

## Prayer Vigil at Downing Street

As part of the **Weekend of Services and Vigils for Peace and Disarmament**, jointly organised this year by **FoR** and the **World Disarmament Campaign**, FoR organised a prayer vigil opposite Downing Street. Although numbers were small, the witness was very powerful. As part of the vigil we handed into Tony Blair the first batch of 1000 signatures of the **Called to be Peacemakers** petition along with a number of peace flags signed with peace messages by students during our university tour (*see photo below*).

The called to be peacemakers petitions, calling for the government to end its support for the arms trade, reduce military spending and withdraw support for BMD programme continues. If you would like a copy of petition you can either download a copy form our website ([www.for.org.uk](http://www.for.org.uk)) or simply call the office. Please send signed petitions into the office.

photo by Tony Compton

## Declarations for a Nuclear-Free World

You may have heard about the **Declarations** through the **World Court Project** newsletter. However you might like to know that they are now available for signing electronically, in several languages, on:-

<http://www.abolition2000europe.org/>.

If you have not got round to signing a Declaration yourself, this is an easy way to do it if you can access the internet.

The declarations will be prominently displayed in New York in May during the **Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference** at the U.N.

In addition could you draw the attention of other people who might be interested in signing a Declaration? If you belong to a Peace Group it could be featured in your next mailing or, if it has a website, linked with above website too. This website also has further information about the Declarations which you might find useful.

**George Farebrother**

# A Day with Christian Peacemaker Teams

The London Mennonite Centre arranged a day's workshop about the Christian Peacemaker Teams. It was led by **William Payne**, a Canadian, who has seen service in Israel (Hebron), Colombia, Mexico (Chiapas), and Canada (Asubpeeschoseewagong Native Americans in Ontario).

His talk was illustrated with slides, video clips and role plays based on real incidents. In this way the workshop group learned about accompaniment, witnessing, intervention and symbolic actions. All are bound together with hope because the basis of the teams is Christian.

The teams were set up as the result of Ron Sider's call in 1984 at the World Mennonite conference:

"I believe the Lord of History wants the small family of Anabaptists scattered across the globe to help shape history in the next two decades. But to do that, we must not only abandon mistaken ideas, but also embrace the full biblical concept of what is needed. We must



## Jack Newport 5th Oct 2004

In November, her presence at the Sharp of Winchester was a blessing. Her words: "More than anything else, I value the words of those who have counted and lived them

Jack's kindness, generosity and sense of humour were much saddened by her death. I echo these words. I attended FoR Annual

Council in recent years, and joined in hymns and songs to her accompaniment, will remember too her infectious sense of humour and fun. Best known for her collaboration with Junior Church children in creating the hymn *Think of a world without any flowers*, Bunty had also a profound depth of concern with all matters central to FoR's commitment. When I asked members this time last year for news of what they had been doing, Bunty told me\* about her involvement with the local Asylum Seekers Group, Winchester Amnesty Group (of which she was Chair), Corrymeela Group, UNA (in Southampton), WDM and the fair trade movement, trying to make Winchester into a Fair Trade City. No mean achievements for

a person well into her 70s, who was still teaching about 20 piano pupils and holding music and movement sessions for toddlers!

Bunty married Jack Newport in 1951 and supported his work in Thames Ditton and Birmingham, while bringing up Donald and Angela and maintaining her own interest in music. They moved to Cambridge in 1959 for a 17-year spell in which many FoR members will remem-

ber their association with Congregationalist students and Jack's within FoR itself, both locally and nationally. Elisabeth and I have fond memories of their hospitality on Sundays, welcoming students to 4, Brookside for an evening of music and conversation.

Sadly, Jack died in 1976, only a year after they moved to Winchester, but Bunty carried on the work they had started together and which brought nearly 400 people to the thanksgiving service for "...a celebration, in prayer and song, of a Christian, a musician, a teacher and a mainstay of many organizations in the city and sure friend to people who were worried, depressed or in despair.†"

† from *The Hampshire Chronicle* 12 Nov 2004.

\*she is BN, Winchester in the web pages you can reach from the bottom of [www.for.org.uk/about\(new\).html](http://www.for.org.uk/about(new).html).

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Currently there are opportunities as members of short term delegations, as trained reservists or full time team members. Peacemaker teams, we learned, are best made up of mixed ages and sexes - youthful zeal and the experience of age. The co-ordinator of CPT UK at the London Mennonite Centre suggests that in addition to challenges from abroad there may be places in Britain where accompaniment programmes would take fear from the lives of some minority group residents.

Now personally it has always worried me that I am a 'cheap' peacemaker (by analogy with Bonhoeffer's concept of 'cheap' grace). Being a CO in Britain, talking, writing, demonstrating about peace is in no way taking risks like young service men in Iraq. I look for excuses why I should not become involved with CPT or EAPPI. Perhaps the readers will supply me with some?

**Norman Kember**

See [www.cpt.org](http://www.cpt.org) and [www.cptuk.org.uk](http://www.cptuk.org.uk)

# PEACELINKS

## Editorial Team:

David Pybus (Editor), Norman Kember  
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If using e-mail, please include a full  
postal address.

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**“We are one in Christ  
and can never be at war.”**

**Fridays weekly: Prayer Vigil for  
Peace**, 12 noon at Windsor Gar-  
dens, Seaton, Devon. Contact  
Arthur & Pat Wright, 40 Townsend  
Avenue, Seaton, Devon EX 12 2BG

**April 1 – 7: Week of Action Against  
Corporate Plunder of Iraq**, tel.07748-  
421-576, [stoptheplunder@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:stoptheplunder@yahoo.co.uk)

**April 9: A Promised Land?** An  
opportunity to reflect on recent  
events in Israel and the Palestinian  
Territories. 2 p.m. at New Road  
Baptist Church in Oxford. With  
Revd John Rackley (ex Baptist  
Union President) and David  
Rowland (EAPPI).

**April 10 – 16: Global Week of  
Action for Trade Justice**, details  
on [www.e-alliance.ch/media/me-  
dia-5270.pdf](http://www.e-alliance.ch/media/media-5270.pdf) - including an open  
air candlelit event in London over-  
night from 10 pm on 15<sup>th</sup> to 8 am  
on 16<sup>th</sup> [www.tjm.org.uk/wakeup](http://www.tjm.org.uk/wakeup)

**April 23: Annual Council** of Fel-  
lowship of Reconciliation, *see p. one*

**May 8 (for 2 weeks +): Tour of  
German Cities** organised by  
Versöhnungsbund (German FoR)  
ending at the Kirchentag in Hano-  
ver. Details from Volker Grotefeld  
(*email*) [vgrotefeld@gmx.net](mailto:vgrotefeld@gmx.net) - or  
Versöhnungsbund, Schwarzer Weg  
8, D-32427 Minden, Germany).  
Both Volker and Holger Klee at the  
Minden Office have good English.

## Methodist Peace Fellowship

**The AGM and Annual Public Meeting  
Newton Abbot Methodist Church  
Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June.**

AGM at 4.30 p.m. followed by tea  
and then the public meeting.

To support and help with publicity  
in the area, please. contact:  
Maurice Wright 01743 873633

**May 13: Nuclear Non-Prolifera-  
tion Review Conference** opens in  
New York. Details from Christian  
CND about going to the event.

**May 15: International  
Conscientious Objectors Day**,  
ceremony at CO commemorative  
stone, Tavistock Square, London, 12  
noon. Details: Peace Pledge Union,  
tel. 020-7424-9444

**May 20: Regeneration Carnival  
+ Blockade**, Devonport. Details  
from Trident Ploughshares, tel.  
01822-832815 for more information.

**May 24: International Women's  
Day for Peace & Disarmament:**  
contact International F.o.R., 38  
Spoonstrat, 1815 BK Alkmaar, The  
Netherlands, *e:* [office@ifor.org](mailto:office@ifor.org)

**June 4 – 11: Stop the Arms Trade  
Week** – details from Campaign  
Against the Arms Trade, 11 Goodwin  
Street, London N4 3HQ, tel.020-  
7281-0297.

**July 2: Make Poverty History**  
events in Edinburgh. More details:  
[www.MakePovertyHistory.org](http://www.MakePovertyHistory.org)

**July 4: Anti-Trident and G8  
Demonstration**, Faslane, Scotland.  
Details from Scottish CND tel.0141-423-  
1222 [www.banthebomb.org/index.shtml](http://www.banthebomb.org/index.shtml)

**July 6 – 8: G8 Summit at Gleneagles,  
Perthshire, Scotland.** Action website:  
[http://www.word-power.co.uk/events/  
EventStyle-73](http://www.word-power.co.uk/events/EventStyle-73) On 6<sup>th</sup> there is a Global  
Day of Action - [www.agp.org](http://www.agp.org) and  
[www.dissent.org.uk](http://www.dissent.org.uk)

**July 29 -31: Vulnerability and  
Security**, Ely - *see front page*

**To: Fellowship of Reconciliation, The Eirene Centre, Clopton,  
Kettering, Northants NN14 3DZ** (*Tick boxes which apply*)

Please send details about:

- Membership of the Fellowship
- Booking the Eirene Centre for events
- Publications stocked by the Fellowship.
- Volunteering
- Peace in the 21st Century briefings

**Name(s) and postal address + email address (if any)** *Please print*

Date

Signed

# The Wall of Separation

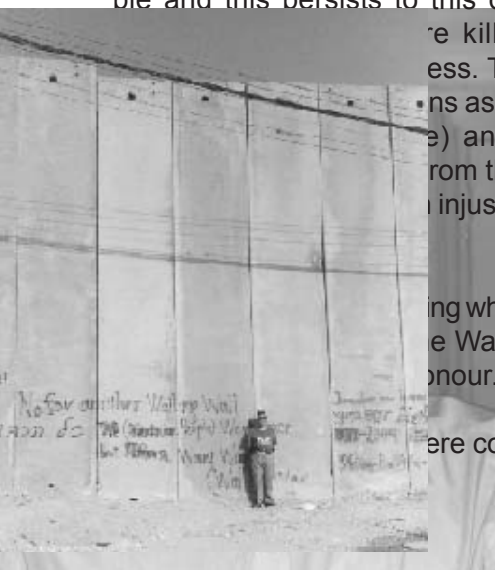
URC Minister and FoR Trustee **John Johansen-berg** believes that the peace movement needs to address urgently the situation in Israel-Palestine.

I have led two Pilgrimages of Reconciliation to the Holy Land, to see the religious sites and also to meet with people, the living stones who live out their religious faith in this setting.

In Jerusalem, we visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum, which gives a graphic and chilling account of the suffering of the Jews under the Nazis in Europe, known to the Jewish people as the Shoah, an historical event we should not forget. If you go there, you will surely go to the Children's Memorial, a deeply moving experience where the names of child victims are read out under the blackness of a dome with points of light all round.

When you come out from there, look across the valley and you will see the site of Deir Yassin, the Arab village, where a grim massacre

took place in 1948 when a couple of hundred men, women and children were killed by irregular Zionist troops, the Irgun and the Stern Gang. The result of this and other incidents was a great exodus of terrified villagers from many Arab villages creating a refugee problem for three quarters of a million people and this persists to this day.



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be two States living side by side with mutual goodwill; instead we have a community torn by conflict and increasingly separated by a wall. As the international community encourages Israel and Palestine to search for a just peace we should remember the offers that have been made over the years. Before and during the World Wars both Jews and Arabs were made promises by western nations and both expected to establish a State in the Holy Land. In 1947 Jews owned 6 % of the land and the Palestinians 93%.

When the British Government announced that it was giving up the Mandate, the United Nations put forward its Partition Plan offering 45% to the Palestinians and 55% to the Jews. The Jewish State, Israel, would have roughly half a million Jews and half a million Arabs with a slight majority of Arabs. The Palestinians State would have 749,101 Arabs and 9,520 Jews ( see Colin Chapman. "Whose Promised Land" Lion. 2002 and Christian Aid "Losing Ground".2003 ) Jerusalem was to be an international zone.

The proposal was accepted by a majority in the international community but rejected by the Arabs as unfair. The conflict between Arab nations and Zionist troops followed.

The 1967 pre-Occupation border offered 22% of historic Palestine to the Arabs. The Wall of Separation built by Israel takes more land, leaving the Palestinians with 12% of historic Palestine; it is the final indignity, separating people from their families and their orchards and denying access to hospitals and churches except through checkpoints.

If you look at a picture on the front of one of the FOR's Peacelinks (July 2004 - see the photo on this page) you will see the scale of the wall as it shows Denis Beaumont standing in front of it. The Wall is 8 metres high and 1000 kilometres long. Why is it there? It is there to take more land; to make life impossible for the Palestinians; to prevent the return of refugees; to contain suicide bombers; to limit the possibility of resistance; possibly to prepare for a One State Israel with Palestinian enclaves. It is a wall of shame and must be dismantled.

But why speak of walls when there is a window of opportunity for peace ? Surely with the election of Mahmoud Abbas and the cease-fire and the prospect of negotiations, there is no point in looking to the past; we need to look to the future.

*continued overleaf*

# The Wall of Shame

*continued from overleaf*

It is good that there is an opportunity for peace and we give thanks for those who have prayed and worked for peace; these include Jews in peace and justice groups, Israeli soldiers who reject the Occupation as unjust and Rabbis who say it is contrary to the teaching of the Torah. There are Muslim and Christian Arabs who speak courageously for a non-violent approach to peace-building. There are those from other countries who stand alongside them. They are indeed on a roll of honour and include martyrs who lost their lives standing up for justice and peace.

Are we about to see their efforts rewarded? Perhaps so – and then violence used by extremists on both sides could become a thing of the past; however, there can be no lasting peace unless there is justice.

There are numerous problems; theft of land, destruction of trees, taking away of water supply, building settlements on Palestinian land, destroying houses and killing people. The Wall will not stop violence but a truly just agreement will do so.

The people can live together, two communities side by side, if the promises made to the Arabs and the Israelis are kept, if they are each given a viable State.

Read the text of UN Security Council Resolution 242 which emphasizes “ the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace”. Look at the 1947 UN Partition Plan and you will see two proposed States, Palestine and Israel, with roughly half of the land given to each and the various parts of each State potentially joined together so that the residents of each State would be able to travel the breadth and length of their land without road blocks and check points.

Resources could be fairly shared, all settlements removed from Palestinian territory and refugees allowed to return. Negotiations based on the 1947 Plan could give the solution which can satisfy those in each community who long for justice, security and peace.

Yes, there is an opportunity for peace and it will come if a just sharing of the Land is offered to Palestinians and Israelis but if there is a betrayal of the Palestinians that prospect of peace will be lost and extremists on both sides will again take the initiative for violence.

Now is a time for peacemakers across the world to pray, speak and work for the taking down of walls and the building up of trust so that there can be a just peace for all the people of the Holy Land.

**John Johansen-Berg.**

*Readers are invited to send in their thought on what the peace movement should be doing about this subject.*

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## An amazing book for busy peacemakers

If you are searching for a cool critique of the Just War Theory, of patriotism and of the human effects of violence, along with an overview of how war is treated in the Bible, and how we can move on from the vicious cycle of violence, all in just 137 pages, then *Axis of Peace* is the book for you. Its author, a Sri Lankan pastor and theologian working at Drew University, New Jersey, describes it as a ‘tool for reflection’.

Though **Dr S. Wesley Ariarajah** is not an ideological pacifist, he accepts that modern scientific warfare is insupportable. He takes the reader step by step through the Just War Theory, shows how the Iraq invasion was in complete violation of it and wonders whether a just war is any longer conceivable. He reminds us that even the Just War Theory never justified or encouraged war.

In an excellent chapter on war, patriotism and democracy, the author unravels difficult ideas like ‘in what sense should we support our troops in an unjustified war?’ and the often deep connection between national identity and religion. Ariarajah does not avoid the problem of why many people find violence attractive, and how the media take advantage of this. A discussion on religion and violence follows, tracing threads of violence and religious identity in the Old Testament and expressing profound regret that monotheistic religions, who should see the unity of God most clearly, instead appropriate God as unique to their own revelation.

Hints of an alternative approach grow throughout the book and come to flower in the final chapter. It starts with a graffiti quotation - *Be realistic – attempt the impossible!* – and suggests how Justice, Reconciliation and Nonviolence can be used to

overcome violence and the real Axis of Evil, which he quotes as ‘endemic poverty, devastation of the environment and the weapons of mass destruction’. Ariarajah has no illusions about the difficulties, but the clarity of his thinking leads the reader to see how, with hard work and realism, a peaceful future could be won for our fractured world.

In such a concentrated volume, the author was forced to express many complex ideas in short phrases. Fortunately, he has a wide repertoire of apposite ‘one-liners’, of which I think my favourite was “Those who cannot forgive become prisoners of other people’s sins”.

Two things only I missed. One was consideration of how to deal with leaders whose position depends on the maintenance of conflict and the propagation of fear, a problem of acute importance in modern democracies. More serious, I felt, was the absence of any kind of bibliography - even one or two pages could have helped the reader to plunge deeper into the issues raised so effectively and so passionately. There is no index either, but that forces you to read the whole book and not be tempted just to dip, so I present it as an advantage!

This is a superb book. My advice is to get it, and read it – you’ve got the time!

**Tony Compton**

*Axis of Peace: Christian faith in times of violence and war* by **S Wesley Ariarajah**; WCC Publications 2004 ISBN 2-8254-1394-1. Obtainable in the UK from Gazelle (0152 468765 and online); my copy was £8.40 online on 05/01/05.