



FARINGDON PEACE GROUP

SEPTEMBER 2021

Newsletter 17

FOSSIL FUELS AND THEIR EFFECT plus other environmental issues

There is to be an Exhibition in

THE FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

Showing the effect of Fossil Fuel use on the Earth and other effects that man-made activity has on the environment. (See last page for advert, which you might be able to display). Will also include other environmental issues.

The exhibition is ready-made by Extinction Rebellion, and I shall hope to add some things from Christian Aid and other sources. If *you* have anything else relevant to display, let me know.

Hopefully it will run on Tuesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from September 28th until the weekend of 9/10th October. from 10am, and on more days if possible, but that will depend on how many people are able to be sitters. These dates follow immediately after Green Week; it was unfortunately already booked for Green Week.

If you are able to help us man the exhibition for a session or two, please do let Jenny (240929) know.

Jenny

Nothing to do with Peace Group, but



Would anyone of retirement-ish age like to learn to play the Ukulele? I am holding an Outdoor Beginners Workshop on Tuesday 14th September in my garden in Faringdon.

We have Ukes to borrow, make a good cup of coffee, and it's undercover if wet.

It's a U3A group, so you would have to join in due course if you are not a member already.

or, we could also form a FPG Uke Group??

Please ring Jenny on 01367 240929

MONTHLY MEETING A LOSING BATTLE: THE UK ARMS TRADE AND GLOBAL POLITICS

WED SEPT 1st - 7.30pm

Our speaker is **Kirsten Bayes**, a Local Outreach Coordinator for Campaign Against Arms Trade's (CAAT). She has been involved in CAAT's work as a volunteer and staff member for some ten years, including organising against the DSEI arms fair in London. She is also Vice Chair of Nuclear Information Service, which provides information and analysis about the UK's nuclear weapons.

Kirsten's talk will include:

- *UK arms trade: what it is, its role in UK power politics*
- *Integrated Defence Review, changing military strategy and equipment*
- *Afghanistan: reflections*

JOIN ZOOM MEETING

Meeting ID: 891 2737 5455

Passcode: 512477

**WAR
CAUSES CLIMATE
CHANGE
CLIMATE CHANGE
CAUSES**

NEW REPORT FROM SAVE THE CHILDREN

Save the Children have published a report 'Hope Under the Rubble' on the impact of demolitions on the Palestinian people.

The report states, "Demolitions should not be seen in isolation, but as a pillar of the coercive environment confronting Palestinians in parts of the West Bank, along with service deprivation, seizure of land and property, settlement construction, exposure to violence and excessive force, and discriminatory policies. These actions stall the development of Palestinian communities, forcing many to leave the area in search of more dignified living and safe conditions."

Michael Lynk, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory, writes in the Foreword, 'Integral to the right to a home is the well-being of children. Their happiness and emotional growth are closely linked to the security of home and family. As this report amply illustrates, Palestinian children and their families have lived for decades in a coercive environment, under military rules that they did not create or consent to, and that are applied harshly and discriminatorily. This 54-year-old occupation – which is governed by a rich body of international law that the international community is remarkably reluctant to enforce – generates a climate of fear and despair that no child should live with. If hope is to be found under the rubble, it will come from the courage of Palestinian children demanding their right to live as equals under our common sky.'

Read the full report here:

https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/sites/default/files/documents/hope_under_the_rubble_final.pdf



The Guardian 05.08.21

Without permission, but with thanks

FARINGDON BRANCHES OUT PLANT TREES FOR THE PLANET

in November '21

Organised jointly by Earth & Faith
and Faringdon Town Council.

More info on Facebook, www.faringdon.org,
Mustard Seed, and on poster attached.

Save the date!
Faringdon's Big Green Day
25th September 2021
Corn Exchange
from - 10am to 2pm

We are looking for local community groups and ethical green businesses to take part.

If you would like to get involved please contact:
office@faringdowntowncouncil.gov.uk

CTIF
Cherches Together in Faringdon
EARTH&FAITH

STOP BEING OFFENDED

by Facebook posts,
by a piece of art,
by people displaying
their affection,
by what someone
said to you.

BE OFFENDED
by war, poverty,
greed, injustice.



The Celtic Christian Tradition

CAMPAIGN AGAINST ARMS TRADE CALL FOR INVESTIGATION INTO IF UK ARMS HAVE BEEN USED IN THE BOMBING OF GAZA

Campaign Against Arms Trade has called for the UK government to investigate if UK-made arms have been used in the ongoing bombardment of Gaza. This follows seven days of bombing, including the bombing of homes and the offices of media organisations. Amnesty International has said it is likely that war crimes are being committed in the conflict.

Many of the weapons and components licensed by the UK are the kind of arms that are likely to be used in this sort of bombing campaign. It would not be the first time. A review by the government at the time found 12 licences for arms which are likely to have been used in the 2014 bombardment of Gaza. Likewise, in 2010 the then Foreign Secretary David Miliband said that UK-made arms had “almost certainly” been used in the 2009 bombing campaign.

Since 2015 the UK has licensed over £400 million worth of arms to Israeli forces, including:

- £183 million worth of ML22 licences (military technology)
- £104 million worth of ML10 licences (Aircraft, helicopters, drones)
- £20 million worth of ML4 licences (Grenades, bombs, missiles, countermeasures)
- £4.6 million worth of ML6 licences (Armoured vehicles, tanks)
- £1.9 million worth of ML3 licences (ammunition)
- £1 million worth of ML1 licences (small arms)

The actual level of exports will be significantly higher, as there have also been 43 Open Licences in this period. These are mainly for aircraft equipment. Open Licences allow for an unlimited quantity and value of exports. The UK also produces 15% of the value of each F-35 stealth combat aircraft produced, of which 27 have been delivered to Israel so far.

Andrew Smith of CAAT said

“There can be no justification and no excuses for the brutality of the bombardment we have seen. Hundreds of Palestinians have been killed, including many children. The suffering will only intensify the longer the bombing continues.

We know that UK made arms have been used against Palestinians before, but that has done nothing to halt the flow of weapons. There must be a suspension of arms sales, and a full review into whether UK weapons have been used and if they are implicated in possible war crimes.

- For decades now, successive governments have talked about their commitment to peace - building, while continuing to arm and support Israeli forces. These arms sales do not just provide military support, they also send a clear sign of political support for the occupation and blockade, and the violence that is being inflicted.”

Number of personnel in UK armed forces 1900-2020 (Published by D. Clark, 9 July 2021)

In 2020 there were over 145,000 personnel serving in the British Armed Forces, the second-fewest of any year since 1900, with just 144,000 serving in 2019. In the first half of the twentieth century, there are two huge spikes in the number of personnel which represent the final years of World War One and World War Two, with the British Armed Forces numbering 4.58 million and 4.69 million in 1918 and 1945 respectively. Ever since 1945 the size of the UK Armed Forces has been in almost constant decline, with the noticeable exception of the early 1950s, where Britain's armed forces increased by almost 200,000 because of the Korean War.

There are several reasons why the number of personnel in Britain's armed forces has declined. Britain is involved in a far fewer conventional military conflicts today than it was in the past. As the size of Britain's empire declined rapidly after 1945, so too did the its global military commitments. There are also more recent developments such as the UK government's Strategic Defence and Security Review of 2010, which outlined personnel would be cut throughout the 2010s in order to modernize the UK's armed forces.

There are four branches of the UK armed forces, the British Army, the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force, and the Royal Marines. Of the 149,000 people serving in the UK's armed forces in 2021, over half of them were in the British Army, which had 82,000 personnel. The next largest branch was the RAF at 33,200 followed by the Royal Navy at 27,210 and finally the Royal Marines, which was the smallest branch in terms of personnel, at 6,400

AFGHANISTAN

STOP THE WAR

Despite a 20 year occupation by two of the worlds largest militaries it took the Taliban just a number of days to regroup and regain control of Afghanistan. By anyone's standards this is a humiliating defeat both politically and militarily for the western invasion. As the chaos unfolded President Biden was forced to admit in his speech on Monday night that "no amount of military force would ever deliver a stable, united and secure Afghanistan" something that we in the anti-war movement have been shouting for 20 years

The US spent an estimated \$1 trillion on the war and for what? Hundreds of thousands of lives lost, Afghanistan's infrastructure decimated and it's economy destroyed. Twenty years ago we warned against a rush to war and argued that military occupation could not lead to stable governance. We were right. If even a fraction of the \$1 trillion spent on trying to bomb democracy into the country had been spent on education, health care and development the situation would be infinitely different from that which we are seeing now.

As parliament and the media focus on the disaster of the withdrawal it is important to remember that it was the starting of the war not its ending that is the root cause of today's crisis.

AFGHANISTAN: MAW STATEMENT

20 AUG '21

MAW views with great concern the situation in Afghanistan, now that the Taliban have seized power. We hope against hope that the people of Afghanistan will not have to suffer again the cruelties previously meted out by the fundamentalist regime. But even before the takeover, there has been evidence of Taliban brutality and murder of Afghan civilians and surrendered soldiers.

Large sections of Afghan civil society are under grave threat and deserve support. There is much that the UK can do, without resorting to the military yet again. Diplomacy, economic sanctions, and the influence of moderate Muslim opinion can all be brought to bear on the situation.

We call on the UK government to suspend the 'hostile environment' it is so proud of, and to provide genuine support for refugees from Afghanistan, recognising that that substantial numbers will be seeking asylum, however they arrive here. Serious resources need to be devoted to this issue.

Whatever gloss is put on the situation, yet again, going to war has failed.

A Clear Message from Stop the War

No More Foreign Wars in Afghanistan and no more Western Aggression in the Middle East

The disaster now unfolding in Afghanistan is the consequence of a twenty-year long failed military intervention. The responsibility rests with the US, British and other NATO governments which plunged into a war that was always doomed to fail. The starting of the conflict, not the manner of the ending of it, was the problem.

Twenty years ago, at the moment of its foundation, the Stop the War Coalition, representing a broad range of political and social movements and organisations, warned against the rush to war and urged other ways of responding to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In particular, we argued that military occupation of Afghanistan could not lead to stable governance, and would be rejected as a foreign imposition by many Afghans.

We asserted then and believe now that democracy and human rights can rarely be imposed externally, and must be the product of the efforts of the peoples themselves if it is to prove durable.

The defeat of the US and British militaries in Afghanistan means that this intervention joins those in Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen as a calamity that has cost tens of thousands of lives and vast resources to no purpose. It is time that the "war on terror", the pretext for these interventions, is declared over.

The British government should take a lead in offering a refugee programme and reparations to rebuild Afghanistan, an act which would go a great deal further in advancing the rights of the Afghan people, women in particular, than continued military or economic intervention in the fate of Afghanistan.

A REPORT FROM OUR JUNE MONTHLY MEETING

‘Grappling with the past to Build a Peaceful Future’

John Cooper, director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOE) and former Faringdon resident, spoke to Faringdon Peace Group in June about his visit to Fiji last year with the World Council of Churches to explore the legacy of British nuclear testing in the Kiribati islands after World War II. His talk, entitled **‘Grappling with the past to Build a Peaceful Future’**, focused on the treatment of British Armed Forces veterans and the indigenous population at the time of the tests and to the present day, which he linked to the wider issues of climate change, Black Lives Matter and the environment. He posed the question ‘If black lives matter, does that mean recognising the real impact of the nuclear testing when calling for a nuclear free future?’ He went on to discuss that impact.

Britain carried out ‘Operation Grapple’, a series of 4 nuclear tests, during 1957/8 before the nuclear test ban treaty came into operation. The Kiribati islands, which include Christmas Island, were viewed as an uninhabited wilderness, despite being populated. The tests caused great fear among the local people, who were not told what was happening, and who on occasions were put on ships and moved to other islands. Some of the service personnel were provided with rudimentary protective equipment but no-one else. All sorts of military waste including nuclear waste was left behind. This, added to exposure to radiation during testing, has led to a legacy of birth defects, illnesses and contamination of land and sea which continues to this day. (John was advised not to eat shellfish from the bottom of the sea when he visited Fiji!) With the Pacific islanders’ dependence on the sea for their food and livelihoods this has been devastating for them.

also have a history of cancers and birth defects.

John believes that the Black Lives Matter movement should challenge us to question our military history: Why did we think it was ok to set off weapons on the other side of the world? Why did we consider the islands to be uninhabited, ignoring the indigenous population? In 1945 these considerations were as nothing compared to Britain’s ambition to keep its seat at the top table. Testing and developing nuclear weapons demonstrated our strength and power. John asked whether the ‘nuclear peace’ was built on the suffering of others in places we had never heard of? The expulsion of the Chagos Islanders from their home in the 60s shows a similar disregard for indigenous people. Historic injustices are still felt today and states must try to put it right. The new Treaty on the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons challenges states to acknowledge the real impact of their nuclear past and offer social, economic and medical support to those who have suffered.

Climate Change and the environment are also affected by military activity. The COP 26 climate conference later in the year provides an opportunity for the world to rid itself of fossil fuels, but the carbon footprint of the military is not included, even though it equates to 6 million cars on the road in the UK! In Kiribati, John saw the effects of sea level rise caused by climate change forcing people to abandon lower lying islands and move to Fiji, losing their culture and sense of community.

So in ‘grappling with the past’ and taking responsibility for the consequences of nuclear testing we can begin to build a peaceful future for everyone on the planet.

GREENHAM 40 YEARS AGO *from The Guardian 22/08/21*



From Rhondda to Greenham and the US Supreme Court

Mothers, Missiles and the American President
Forty Years on, the story of Sue, Christine and
Lesley Brinkworth.

Shown on BBC1 Wales on 25th August, and
to be repeated on BBC2Wales on
Saturday 28th Aug at 20.30
and on BBC i-player

QUIZ

Match the word "Peace"
in different European languages

- | | | |
|----|-------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | Béke | Czech, Croatian |
| 2 | Fred | Danish, Norwegian, Swedish |
| 3 | Friede | Dutch |
| 4 | Friur | French |
| 5 | Heddwch | German |
| 6 | Mir | Hungarian |
| 7 | Pace | Italian, Romanian |
| 8 | Paci | Maltese |
| 9 | Paix | Polish |
| 10 | Paz | Portuguese, Spanish |
| 11 | Pokoj | Welsh |
| 12 | Vrede | Icelandic |

Answers

10 Portuguese etc 11 Polish 12 Dutch
7 Italian etc 8 Maltese 9 French
4 Icelandic 5 Welsh 6 Czech etc
1 Hungarian 2 Danish etc 3 German

Next copy date 23rd Sept **at the latest**
jennyridd@yahoo.co.uk

BIG RIDE FOR PALESTINE

**'WE WILL CYCLE IN THE RAIN
TILL PALESTINE IS FREE AGAIN!'**

Karen writes:

This was the chant inspired by FPG's show of support for around 200 riders passing through Shellingford on the 'Big Ride for Palestine' on 30th July. Eight of us (and also the local vicar who happened to be passing!) turned out with flags, scarves, banners etc. on a very wet day to cheer them on their way from Swindon to Oxford on the 2nd day of their ride from Bristol to London raising funds for children's play facilities in Gaza. We collected over £120 for the cause. The riders really appreciated our efforts, saying it was a 'fantastic boost' to see us, and spoke of the 'incredible atmosphere of solidarity and friendship and outstanding support' that they experienced throughout their 4 day challenge.

We all found it very moving to see so many ordinary people on ordinary bikes trying to make a difference in the world.



Atmospheric photos courtesy of Al Cane



Plant trees
for the
Planet

ORDER A TREE NOW
for winter planting

SEE HOW:

www.faringdon.org



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - SEPTEMBER 2021

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

FPG Dates from Coronavirus

Events organised by Faringdon Peace Group as well as by other groups.

For further information please contact Jennie - castle@myphone.coop

or Helen - helen.holly007@gmail.com or Dave **01367 240808**

Wed 1 Sep FPG Monthly Meeting Zoom 7.30pm. Speaker Kirsten Bayes from Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT)
'A Losing Battle: the UK Arms Trade and Global Politics'
To include: UK Arms Trade: what it is, its role in UK power politics, the Integrated Defence Review: changing military strategy and equipment
Afghanistan: reflections

Fri 3 Sep to Sun 5 Sep

Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp and 40th Anniversary of Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp. A weekend of celebration at AWE Aldermaston. Guided tours of the weapons bases. With craft workshops and talks. Events happening at Orange Gate, the control tower and Aldermaston. Disabled toilets nearby.

Info at acronym.org.uk or phone 07852 293386

<https://www.facebook.com/ScaryLittleGirls/>

Fri 10 Sep Oxfordshire Peace Campaign meeting (OPC) 4pm on Zoom.
Our representatives are Helen, Phil, Jennie.
Topic – organising the Croughton Rally.

Sat 11 Sep Fund raiser for Oxford CND. Nick Gill Jazz.

Tues 14 Sep DSEI Arms Fair begins in London

Fri 17 Sep DSEI Arms Fair ends (for good??!!)

Sat 18 Sep Oxon Great Big Green Week begins.

Sun 25 Sep Big Green Day (Faringdon Town Council and Earth and Faith)

Sun 6 Sep Oxon Big Green Week ends.

Tue 28 Sep to Sun 10 Oct

Climate Change Exhibition in Friends Meeting House (see poster for times)

Sun 2 Oct Annual 'Rally' publicising USAF Croughton. A brief vigil at the base in the morning then a Zoom rally in the late afternoon.

Wed 6 Oct FPG Monthly Meeting. AGM and 41st Birthday of Faringdon Peace Group.

Should this be on Zoom, or in person at the Friends' Meeting House as normal??

EXHIBITION

CLIMATE CHANGE

**FOSSIL FUELS AND THEIR EFFECTS
ON **YOUR** WORLD, WASTE OF RESOURCES
AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

OPEN

September Tuesday 28th 10-4pm

October Saturday 2nd 10am-4pm

Sunday 3rd 2-4pm

Tuesday 5th 10am-4pm

Saturday 9th 10am-4pm

Sunday 10th 2-4pm

and at other times by arrangement - 01367 240929

at **THE FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE**

4 Lechlade Road, Faringdon

Come in and have a look!