



FARINGDON PEACE GROUP

NEWSLETTER 22

MARCH 2022

OUR NEXT MONTHLY MEETING
via Zoom

**UKRAINE - WHAT'S BEHIND
THE CONFLICT?**

WEDNESDAY 2nd MARCH at 7.30pm
Speaker : Lindsey German

Lindsey German is a socialist writer and campaigner. She is convenor of the Stop the War Coalition which she helped establish in 2001 following the events of 9/11. The organisation built the largest demo in British history on February 15th 2003 against the Iraq war. It has thousands of members, groups around the UK, and many trade union and other affiliates. It continues to campaign against British government policies on war, militarism, civil liberties and against Islamophobia.

Lyndsey says *"I will cover very briefly why there is conflict, then go on to looking at Nato expansion and the nature of Nato, the role of US imperialism (I also think Russia has imperialist role but think as campaigners in Britain we have to concentrate our main effort on our own government and its allies). I would also look at the British government and the main opposition, which as Keir Starmer has made clear this week is completely committed to a belligerent agenda."*

SHARE YOUR NEWS!

Items for the next newsletter by 23rd March
at the latest to jennyridd@yahoo.co.uk

Please ensure that your contribution is ready to be taken directly from your email to the newsletter. Word is probably the best program to use.

**THE NEXT NEWSLETTER IS FOR
TWO MONTHS i.e. APRIL & MAY**

and after this it will be produced bi-monthly until it is no longer required.

For further info contact Jennie 01367 710308
Karen 01367 241707 or Dave 01367 240808

33rd Oxford International Women's Festival
Tues 1 Mar to Monday 14th March

Just a few of the many talks and exhibitions to celebrate women. More info: Jennie

1st March at 5.30pm. Memorial Lecture.
'What has Particle Physics ever done for me?'
Celebrating Nobel Laureate Dorothy Hodgkin

5th March at 2.30pm. Celebration of two inspirational Oxford Women Margaret Stanton/ Anne Mobbs, Political Campaigners and feminists

8th March 6.30pm
Celebration of Sustainable Fashion Art & Textiles inc Exhibition 'Iraqi Women Art & War'

10th March 7pm
Alexandra Kollantai 'Her Life & Work' 1872-1952. Celebration of her revolutionary life

Thu 8th March International Women's Day
www.ppu.org.uk/events

GREEN OUR TOWN ENORMOUS PLANT GIVEAWAY AND SEED SWAP

on SATURDAY 9th APRIL

from 9.30am 'til everything's gone

This will be a similar format as last year, when several residents put plants outside their front gates for people to take away free, in an attempt to green our town.

If you would like to take part or have seedlings or cuttings that you would like to contribute to another person's stall, please email faringdonplants@btinternet.com

Maybe you could print a poster and display it?
(on the last page)

And now is the time to plant a tree if you have space, or a shrub if you don't have space

A GOOD NEWS STORY: DISARM OXFORD *copied via Abingdon Peace Group newsletter*

**OXFORD DOESN'T INVEST
IN TOBACCO BECAUSE
IT PUTS LIVES AT RISK**

**BUT IT'S HAPPY TO
WORK**

WITH THE ARMS TRADE

**ENOUGH
CONTRADICTION**

DISARM OXFORD NOW

On 4 November, students and residents of Oxford found city and University buildings dotted with posters criticising the University's alleged "complicity with the arms trade." The posters were placed by the relatively new group Disarm Oxford, which seeks to "[lobby] the University - departments and colleges - to sever ties with arms companies, to stop taking research funding from such companies and to cease Careers Service advertising for them". One such poster features the image of Wafic Saïd, the namesake of Oxford's Saïd Business School, referring to him as a "world famous arms dealer." Saïd, one of Britain's wealthiest men, fixed the Saudi purchase of British arms in 1985, known as the Al-Yamamah deal, considered one of the largest-ever arms deals in history. "Having a business school after someone called an arms dealer honours an industry we think deserves nothing but dishonour," said Matt Rosen, a student activist with Disarm Oxford.

They are not only criticising the names of buildings. Another poster read, "Oxford doesn't invest in tobacco because it puts lives at risk. But it's happy to work with the arms trade. Enough contradiction. Disarm Oxford now."

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT IN FARINGDON: 'CHOOSE THE WORLD YOU WANT'

The Mustard Seed Fairtrade and Christian bookshop in Faringdon invites you to join them in celebrating

Fairtrade Fortnight this year from
21st February to 6th March.



There will be Fairtrade stalls at Faringdon Farmers' Market on Tuesday 1st March and at the Saturday Market on the 5th.

The theme of Fairtrade Fortnight this year is '**Choose the World you Want**' and by choosing to buy Fairtrade you can do just that! Buying Fairtrade food means that farmers and workers have more power and money to tackle the climate crisis which is affecting them so badly: They have done the least to cause it yet are paying the highest price. Fairtrade campaigns for the wealthy nations responsible to urgently deliver the funding they have promised to help these communities adapt to climate change. Fairtrade standards also ensure environmental protection and sustainable farming practices, safeguarding forests and biodiversity.

Learn more, meet the farmers themselves and be inspired at www.fairtrade.org.uk/festival . The Mustard Seed is open 9 – 1, Monday to Saturday.

STOP HIJACKING AID

The government will soon publish a new aid strategy that looks set to prioritise trade and investment over poverty reduction

Next month the foreign secretary Liz Truss is set to publish a new International Development Strategy which will set the direction of UK aid spending for years to come.

For too long, we have seen this government redirecting aid away from the world's most marginalised communities and into the pockets of the private sector.

In December, the foreign secretary gave an indication that the new strategy will focus on trade, investment and "economic partnerships". Not one mention of climate change, global public health or food security.

Global Justice campaigns for a development budget that supports the needs of the many, rather creating more opportunities for the wealthiest few. As the government prepares to go further in the wrong direction, it's vital we keep standing up for what's right.

The corporate hijack of aid

Global Justice has reported regularly on the many ways in which aid has been used in recent years to divert funds to the private sector and support the needs of British businesses over the world's most marginalised communities.

This includes:

- Billions given to the UK development bank CDC Group to invest in private businesses and equity funds
- Support for unaffordable, for-profit schools and hospitals that exclude lower income groups
- Money spent in countries and sectors which UK businesses hope to profit from
- Hundreds of millions spent in consultancy and research fees with big accountancy firms

An example? The UK was diverting aid to Malaysia to construct a hugely costly dam on the condition that the Malaysian military would buy arms from UK companies. After numerous protests and a court case, the funding was deemed unlawful.

We need to keep fighting and raising our voices to oppose this misuse of aid together.

Rather than tackling these issues with the existing use of aid, this new strategy seems set to make them worse. Go to the

Global Justice website - and sign the petition.

.....

US B-52 BOMBERS ARRIVE IN BRITAIN FOR EXERCISES

The US Air Force announced Thursday a set of B-52 strategic bombers had landed in Britain for scheduled NATO exercises, amid heightened tensions between the bloc and Russia over Ukraine.

The North Dakota-based aircraft, support equipment, and personnel touched down at a Royal Air Force base 150 kilometers (90 miles) west of London, in Fairford, England, the command of US Air Forces in Europe said in a statement.



It did not specify how many US aircraft would be participating in the exercises.

The statement explained that the "long-planned" Bomber Task Force mission aims to improve "cooperation and operational capacity, capability and interoperability" among allies.

"Bomber rotations reinforce the US commitment to NATO allies and coalition partners to maintain our collective safety and sovereignty," it added.

The deployment comes amid fears that Russia is planning to invade its pro-Western neighbour Ukraine, with ten of thousands of Russian troops mobilized along the border.

The US Navy meanwhile said on Thursday that four of its destroyers had deployed last month to take part in exercises in the zone covered by the Sixth Fleet, which includes the Mediterranean.

Russia also said on Thursday that four of its warships had arrived off the Crimean peninsula for upcoming exercises in the Black Sea, off the southern coast of Ukraine.

.....

NO TO WAR IN UKRAINE

Stop the War statement

The danger of conflict between major powers is greater now than for many years. The Russian invasion in Ukraine cannot be justified and the troops must withdraw. There must be an immediate ceasefire. We send our solidarity to the Ukrainian people and the brave demonstrators in Russia campaigning for peace.

The danger of war is already there for the Ukrainian people but there is also a fear that it can escalate still further. The urgent need now is to end this war. Instead Boris Johnson's government continues to send military hardware to the region and there is talk of further intervention.

All the more reason then to maintain a strong anti-war voice. Stop the War has been on the receiving end of many attacks in recent days and weeks, including from the leaders of both major parties, accused of being the 'enemy within'. We have always opposed war over Ukraine, but we have also criticised our government and its allies, especially the role of Nato. We stand by those positions and we know that many of you do as well.

We need your support now. There is a strong anti-war sentiment among British people - in the last week alone over 10,000 people have [signed our statement](#) and thousands have signed up to our newsletter. But we need this support to be translated into action so that we can step up our campaigning in this dangerous situation.

QUAKER STATEMENT ON UKRAINE

Quakers in Britain urge all sides to engage in urgent de-escalation and commit to resolving the stand-off over Ukraine peacefully

A new war between Russia and Ukraine would have disastrous effects, both for those directly affected by the military conflict and for global peace and security. The world does not need the misery and devastation which would follow from a new war in Ukraine.

Instead, we need to work to build a culture of peace and dialogue, based on strengthening arms control, peacebuilding and respect for international law. Peaceful cooperation and friendship between the peoples of the world are the only true path towards achieving security and well-being of all.

Taken from:-

CONSCIENCE

TAXES FOR PEACE NOT WAR

"As we write this newsletter, the horrifying prospect of armed conflict in Ukraine is dangerously close. Any such conflict could escalate into nuclear warfare and provoke a humanitarian disaster unlike that ever seen.

Instead of continually talking up the prospect of war, as governments seem to be doing of late, the current crisis in Ukraine should be resolved through purely peaceful and diplomatic means.

This dangerous crisis simply highlights the importance of campaigning for a world where taxes are spent on peace and not war. It is with this mission that we continue to work.

As part of our work to present a new Peace Tax Bill in parliament, we are working to produce a FAQ document to aid our campaigning work.

We would like to invite you to submit any answers you may have to the questions outlined in the FAQ document, helping to widen our knowledge and inform the narrative around military taxation.

This is a unique opportunity to help shape an important stage in our campaign work, ahead of a parliamentary bill.

Please respond to as many or as few, questions as you wish. We are grateful for each answer and they will be useful in our continued research. Your opinion is important to us!"

Please go to the Conscience website

Over the last year and a half, our Voices of Conscientious Objection has seen us produce a number of successful webinars. The webinar series has brought people together from a range of backgrounds to discuss the experiences of conscientious objectors, both now and historically. All our webinars are available to watch on our YouTube channel and we invite you to catch up on any you may have missed since we began in 2020.

It is rare that I spout a bit of Latin, but I make this exception as it seems quite appropriate, currently. This was taken from William Keegan's piece in the Observer last Sunday. "How much longer do we have to pretend that Brexit might work?". He quotes the Roman poet Juvenal "Hoc volo, sic iubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas" ("I want this done, so I order it done, let my wish replace rational judgement")

PALESTINE ACTION TO DISRUPT ISRAELI WEAPONS FACTORIES

It is easy to think that in spite of all our efforts in our work for peace, we don't get many successes. That's why we must recognise our achievements - and I think this one definitely counts as a success that we can all share in because we did play a small part in it.



We supported the 'Elbit Out of Oldham' campaign (part of 'Palestine Action') by inviting Jacqui Greenfield to speak to us in July last year. Those who watched her presentation will remember a very lively and enthusiastic presentation - and their campaign has succeeded! Elbit IS out of Oldham. The factory is closing down, and all those involved in any way at all are celebrating. So we can celebrate too.

Factories in Runcorn and Reading supply Israeli-owned Elbit Systems in Britain with components for pilotless aircraft for the Israeli military. Elbit promotes its drones as 'battle-tested' meaning they have been used in attacks on Palestinians. The Oldham site is closing - so there are nine more British sites to go!! Perhaps we should invite Jacqui back again to tell us how they are going to continue their campaigning, but meanwhile we can share in their success!

from Jennie, with thanks to the Morning Star

CHAGOS ISLANDERS

Here's another story that should cheer us up.

It seems an age ago but the last live meeting of our Peace Group, March 2020, was based on the plight of the Chagos Islanders and the unlawful eviction from their homeland in order to allow the United States to build their strategic air base on the Island of Diego Garcia..

It was good to hear recently of the symbolic visit of the Mauritius expedition to the Chagos archipelago and the raising of their flag in a ceremony led by the country's ambassador to the United Nations.. Perhaps the end of the beginning of a successful campaign to restore the Chagos to their rightful population. Wishful thinking perhaps, but numerous successful campaigns have had a very modest start.

I can think of the Suffragettes: the Greenham Women: the TPNW* There are many more..

Phil

FARINGDON FOOD BANK

The following are needed:-

Fray Bentos pies (we have tins of minced beef and onions but very few alternatives)
mashed potatoes, kidney beans, cheese sauce,
fruit pie fillings, crumble mixes, microwavable
sponge puddings, porridge, rice, lasagne, jam
shampoo, deodorants, toilet rolls, cat food

Please take to the Food Bank in the Pump House

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

MEETINGS AND EVENTS organised by
Faringdon Peace Group and other groups.

Thursday 3rd Mar. No War in Ukraine.

VIGIL at Main Gate USAF Fairford noon-1pm
Bring placards. Let Jennie know for car sharing.

Thu 3rd Mar. Nuclear Convoys online 6.30pm

Sat 5th Mar. Another World is Possible

An Internationalist agenda for the left and
labour. Jeremy Corbyn, Murad Qureshi (Stop
the War) Organised by 'Arise' 1pm on Zoom

Wed 9 Mar. Crisis in Ukraine. 7pm on Zoom

Launch of a Morning Star Readers & Supporters Gp
Speakers Kate Hudson CND Gen Sec. & Steve
Sweeney, International Editor Morning Star.
All welcome. Contact Jennie for registration.

Tues 15th Mar Iraqi Women, Art and War.

Abingdon Peace Group 8pm online
Speaker: Rana Ibrahim.

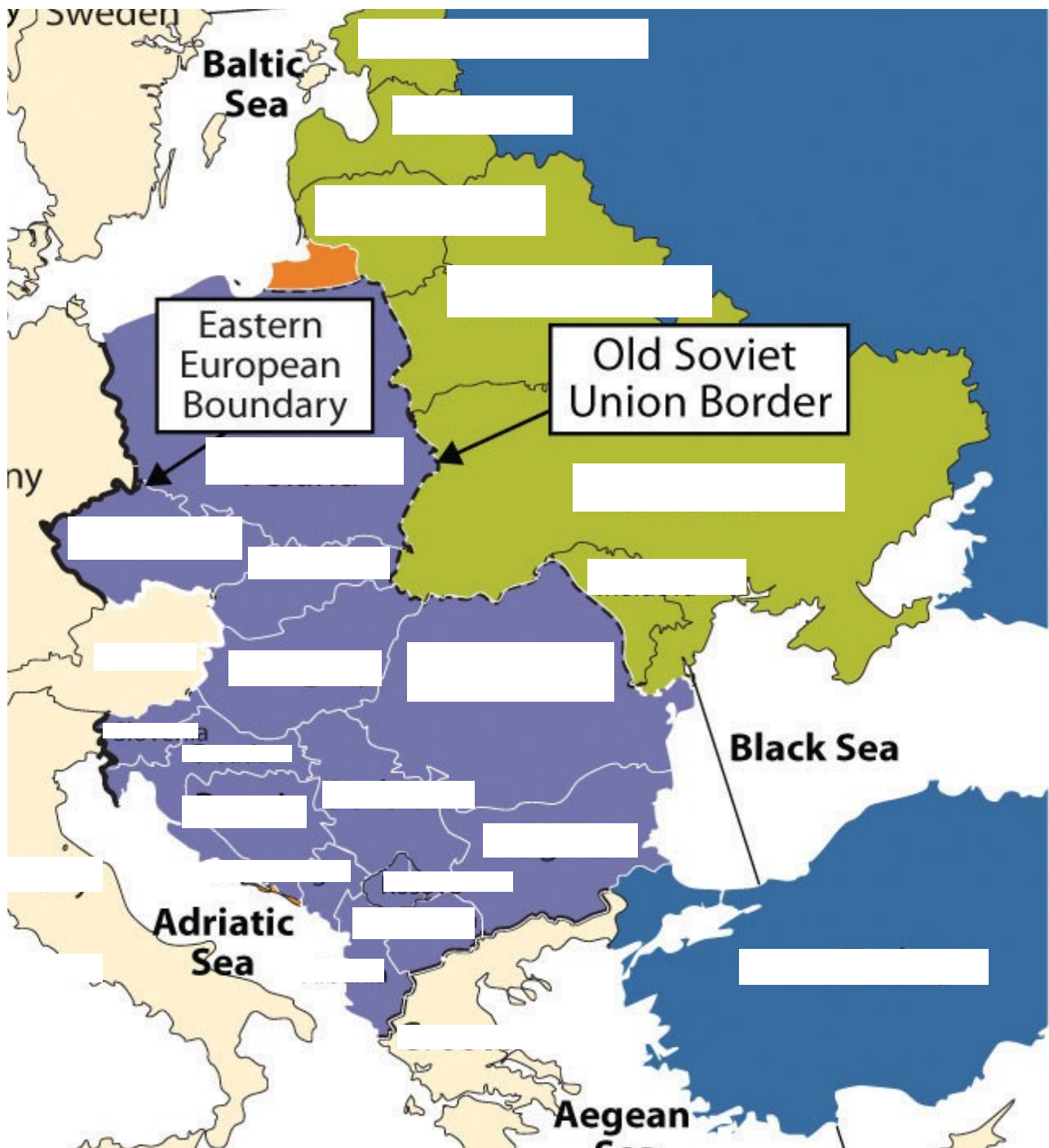
To register: abingdonpeace@gmail.com

Wed 6 Apr. Our Monthly Meeting. 7.30pm

Speaker: local historian Ciaran Walsh

'The Otmoor Riots in the Wider Context'
i.e what about the new police and courts bill??)

..And to finish, I'll leave you with a completely
Ghastly Thought! Boris Johnson calls on
west to 'speak with one 'voice'. (Guardian 19
Feb) All Europe speaking like him? Ughh!



CAN YOU NAME ALL THE COUNTRIES AROUND OR NEAR UKRAINE?

Refugees are pouring into
neighbouring countries such as
Poland, Romania...

where else?



ENORMOUS PLANT GIVEAWAY AND SEED SWAP

Outside many houses in Faringdon
(more details in due course)

SATURDAY 9th APRIL
from 9.30am
until everything's gone!

**If *you* would like to host a stall, please
email:**

faringdonplants@btinternet.com

Organised by Earth & Faith Group

GREEN FARINGDON