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WORKING FOR PEACE WITHOUT VIOLENCE

not all warriors are what they seem



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The *Peace Pledge Union* is the oldest
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Britain. Through the War Resisters' Inter-
national it links with similar groups
throughout the world. It is one of the
original sponsors of Campaign Against
Arms Trade, a member of Liberty and a co
operating organisation of Landmine
Action

For information about the Peace Pledge
Union contact: Annie, PPU 1 Peace Pas-
sage London N7 0BT. or www.ppu.org.uk
Next Council meeting 11 am May 21st.

At remembrance time many things are forgotten. Amongst these is the fact that the red poppy was originally a simple fund raising symbol for war orphaned children in France and was subsequently tried out as a fund raising symbol for the Legion in Britain.

Its original success owes to various factors not least the meanness of the post war government to support the tens of thousands of injured soldiers and the wide-spread sympathy for the men most of whom were forced (compulsorily conscripted) to take part in the appalling events of World War One.

Since then the red poppy has 'acquired' meaning and power well beyond a simple fund raising flower and reached a stage where public figures dare not appear on live television without a red poppy pinned to their chest. Fortunately for those anxious for their public image red poppies are in plentiful supply in television studios to those who otherwise would not have thought of wearing one. Remembrance Day had become a corporate event that few in public life dare not visibly acknowledge; it trades on death and misery as it grows its empire in all directions.

'The poppy brand and all it represents,' says the Legion, 'makes The Royal

British Legion an ideal charity partner for cause related marketing initiatives. Partnerships include products such as beer, wine, whisky, batteries, biscuits and CDs. Our trading subsidiaries Royal British Legion Trading and Poppy Direct, can give your company access to a 'warm' target audience.

This British Legion slogan like so many marketing slogans is a fiction. We sort of know what it means even if what it says is plainly nonsense. All marketing and promotions carry meanings (often amorphous and imprecise) beyond the surface one; in the case of the red poppy its years long association with Armistice Day and later Remembrance Day has invested it with a complex of values to do with pain, death, sorrow, bereavements and much more. The once simple fundraising flower has grown in the caring hands of the British Legion into a brand which now many fear not to be associated with, but benefits biscuit and beer manufactures.

Look at the photographs of remembrance ceremonies in earlier

what we forget

Jan Melichar

COMMENT

Last year the UK issued over £200m worth of equipment providing Colonel Gaddafi with tear gas, crowd control equipment, and ammunition for wall and door-breaching projectile launchers. Just the thing for a tyrannical regime. This was just the latest of many arms deals since Tony Blair's infamous 'tent deal'

years and see the variety of wreaths of all shapes and sizes, see the mounds of all kinds flowers and look at today's ceremonies with their carefully stage managed wreath laying and the neat rows of clones of British Legion standard plastic wreaths now available all the year round and for all occasions from dropping in the sea to leaving in cemeteries and outside crematoria across Europe.

The legion's Poppy Travel now takes hundreds of schools on 'educational' trips; much fun no doubt but look at the messages attached to the poppy wreaths that are left behind: 'rest in peace now that you are all in heaven together' is from an English school in a German cemetery. Kind thought perhaps but problematic not only on theological grounds.

what's there to criticise?

This depends on ones view of the institution of war. For those who see war as an outdated practice and time for the military to be mostly abolished the use of the red poppy beyond simple fundraising is deeply problematic. The Legion says it is 'neutral' on war but supports the armed forces which are the instruments without which war would not be possible. Neutrality on war is a non sequiter.



DSEI arms fair, London The irresistible toys for the boys

with Col Gaddafi in the Libyan desert in 2007. The deal also included SAS training of the Khamis Brigade which earlier this year resorted to all out terror in its attempts to crush the uprising. So much for SAS training.

Why not encourage your MP to sign this Early Day motion. see 'arms for peace' Let us know what response you get.

arms for peace

In a speech promoting weapons exports last month, Liam Fox said: 'For too long, export potential has been ignored. That needs to change ... Defence and security exports play a key role in promoting our foreign policy objectives: building relationships and trust, sharing information and spreading values.'

Meanwhile a 1000 arms companies held a jamboree in London's Docklands at which a Pakistan arms manufacturer which advertised an 'arms for peace' exhibition next year with 'gold-plated' submachine guns was unceremoniously turfed out and its stands closed.

The action was taken after it was discovered that company were actively promoting banned cluster bombs. Details of the munitions were in brochures readily available to potential customers. Cluster bombs once high on the list of arms to ban have now been overtaken and drones have



one in a hundred appeal

You will be pleased to learn that we have nearly reached our appeal target of £10,000, including two large donations to our associated charity, PRET. Another £300 will take us over the target, so please do send in anything you can afford towards this. We are very grateful to all those who have contributed so magnificently to this achievement. We will be delighted to go over the target towards the next £10,000, so don't hold back if you haven't contributed yet and want to send a lot more!

citizenship project

A number of you have been kind enough to respond to our appeal in PeaceWorks to let us know why you became a pacifist. Thank you. However we are still looking for further examples (a variety of voices is important). Ideally what we would like is a kind of mini statement: what decided you that you were a pacifist, what implications has that had for you, what do your friends think of your views etc. Send to jan@ppu.org.uk

november 13 - join us

Until some years ago the PPU used to arrange a walk to the London cenotaph and there lay a wreath of white poppies on Remembrance Sunday. There were various reasons why we stopped and many people were disappointed by the decision.

This year we have decided to lay a wreath of white poppies again but not at the cenotaph. Instead we will be laying a wreath at the Conscientious Objectors Memorial Stone in Tavistock Sq on Remembrance Sunday at 12.30 there to reflect on the misery caused by war and it's supporters and inspired by those before us who refused to take part in it come what may.

We hope many of you will join us.



teaching matters

The citizenship project above is only one of number of teaching resources we are working on. We would very much welcome help with research, writing and trialing of new material. If you are a teacher, have experience in producing teaching or related materials and think you might be able to help we would very much like to hear from you. Contact jan@ppu.org.uk

It's that time again.

We have been primed with the heroic exploits of the defenders of democracy in recent months with television show after television show about the strange world of the military. And now as the red poppies begin to bloom on the bosoms of TV presenters the British Legion will begin assaulting us with sentimental tosh and doggy surveys.

As usual we welcome help with local promotion of the white poppy and related issues. If, for example, you have contact with schools in your area you could make them aware of the white poppy and related teaching resources. You might think of responding to articles in the local press or to reports on local radio or TV. If you are planning to lay a wreath of white poppies do let us know in advance so we can tell others who may wish to join you and a photograph of the event would be welcomed.

MILITARISM

taken the number 1 slot of weapons to hate.

The action is unlikely to have much effect on Pakistan which while continuing to be a 'country of concern' is also a lucrative market of UK weapons. British arms exports quickly recovered after the Labour government flirted with a ban on arms sales to Pakistan after the military coup in 1999. Today arm sales to Pakistan are valued at over £49 million.

An early day motion so far signed by only ten MPs said that UK Trade and Investment, the government body responsible for promoting British defence exports, had countries including Algeria, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates as 'arms export priority markets' for 2010-2011.

Caroline Lucas, the primary sponsor of the motion, said it was 'clearer than ever' that there was a 'serious moral conflict' between the government's promotion of exports and a desire to protect human rights.

"If we are truly committed to upholding human rights in the region, then we must urgently review our role in the international arms trade - and stop selling arms to repressive regimes."

And who (repressive regimes apart) would disagree with that? But what exactly is a repressive regime? United States perhaps?

Remember and disarm.



Lessons in Lordswood school

militarising education

Writing recently in the Guardian Francis Gilbert, a teacher, argued against Michael Gove's plans to smooth the path of ex soldiers becoming teachers. Troops to Teachers is a program imported from the United States in name, if not wholly in practice. Gilbert cited his experience with an ex-soldier teacher at his school who struggles to cope with the demands of teaching in a mixed comprehensive. He explained 'We had to train them up to be prepared to die at our command. You simply couldn't allow them to think for them-

selves.' Clearly, Gilbert pointed out, this is not an experience that equips a teacher to manage a class of unruly pupils. An unfortunate situation but a serious argument against ex military becoming teachers; not everyone is suited to teaching. Should pacifists have any objections?

We have drawn attention to the creeping militarisation of British society in previous issues of PeaceMatters over the years. This is a trend that has accelerated during the course of Labour's time in government (Kier Hardy founder of the labour

party and vocal opponent of war or George Lansbury PPU member and leader of the Labour party are no doubt spinning in their graves) Blair's wars have brought the armed forces out of the shadows and their failure which few are willing to acknowledge requires justification. Politicians and the military alike have to appease their constituency and keep up morale and some measure of public quiescence if not support. Politicians insist that the wars they embarked on were necessary and just and for good measure extravagantly praise the

"We warn you to leave your job as a teacher as soon as possible otherwise we will cut the heads off your children"

see p 15

military with Armed Forces Day, Veterans Day and such like wheezes to show how much they care for our heroic warriors. The military meanwhile, more often through proxy voices, blame the MoD or the treasury for not giving them the right kind of boots, helicopters, armoured cars, etc, etc, to do the job. Both need public support and stage managed arrival and transport of flag draped coffins of men who have 'done an exemplary job in the best army in the world' ticks many of the public's boxes and makes it feel good about itself for 'caring'.

Helping ex military into teaching has a long history and comes from two directions. One is help ex-soldiers who might otherwise find it difficult to find work, the other is more ideological. But there may also be a cunning plan? The government is none too keen on teachers and is making big cuts in the armed forces so we may be witnessing an unfortunate example of 'joined up government'. Ex-military as part of Troops to Teachers are now able to apply for £9,000 bursaries to retrain as teachers and some £1.5 million will be awarded to SkillForce, an old Labour Party plan to employ ex military (whose major selling point is said to be their skill at instilling discipline) to teach unruly pupils. According to the

most recent OFSTED report pupils' behaviour was good or outstanding in 86% of schools and over 90% of schools previously judged to be inadequate showed improvement when next inspected so this may not yet be the time to bring in the army.

Barking Sergeant Major types have no place in schools we were told in a recent BBC Panorama program about the ex-military invasion of British schools; a teenager explained: 'They just use their eyes and you're really scared.' The military approach was portrayed as wholly good without supporting evidence except from its supporters.

In Michel Gove's favourite sentence, his plan for getting ex military into schools gives a 'Huge opportunity for people who served their country in uniform to serve their country in our schools'. Neil Mackintosh assistant head of Lordswood school, featured in the program and where 1 in 12 teachers are ex military agrees; he likes to hire teachers with a military background because "they're more resilient. They don't get downhearted after a bad day, they're less likely to take days off sick." He was a former infantry captain. No one actually said that students undergoing teacher training should be sent to Afghanistan for some proper training though one is left won-

dering why not.

Militarism is a cast of mind that accepts war as a beneficial activity and so while we should have no principled objection to ex military becoming teachers, nor should we assume that their view of war is uniform. Plenty of teachers, after all have supported Britain's recent wars. However what we should object to and object strenuously is the fiction that the particularity of the military experience is of any value beyond the narrow confines of their world. There is no reason to believe that military personnel by virtue of the fact that they were in the military, will make better teachers than anyone else. Furthermore it is unfair to give ex-military preferential treatment above other groups by providing them funding and less stringent entry requirements for teacher training and it denigrates teachers by suggesting that they need to call in the military who have been found seriously wanting in their area of 'expertise' to solve the discipline problem in our schools. Why not bursaries for single parents, call centre operatives or cooks to teachers?

The sight of classrooms full of kids in uniform must gladden Michael Gove's heart. He wants to see more after-school uniform parades to instill the 'spirit of service' in the next generation.

The National Memorial Arboretum

part of The Royal British Legion family



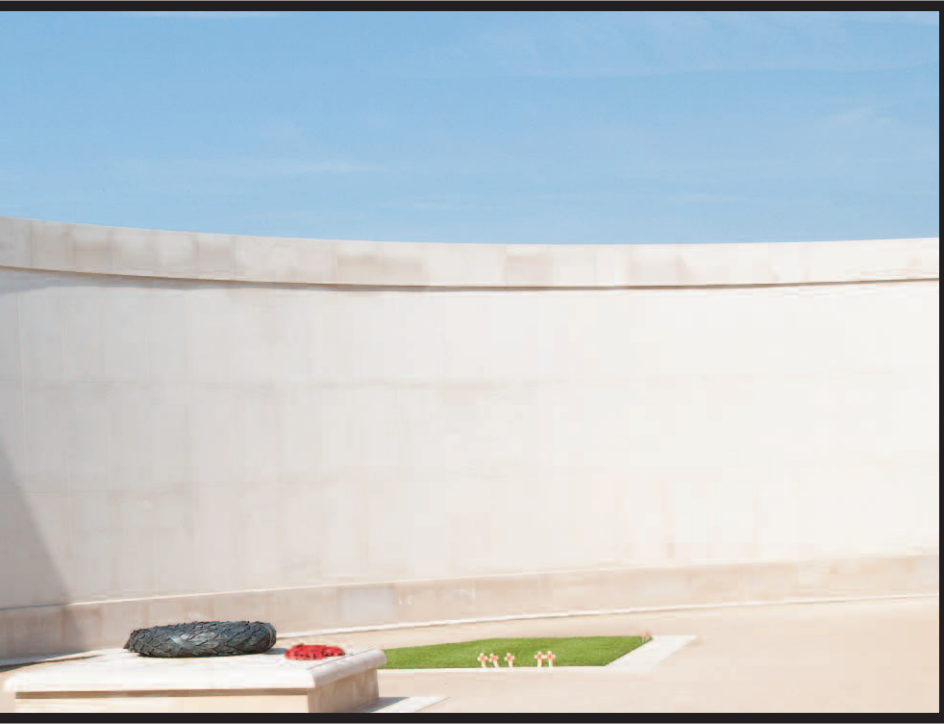
W A R W I T

At the heart of England not far from a German military cemetery the British Legion is, in its own words, 'growing remembrance'. What those words mean is not wholly clear but what is clear is that this newish outpost of the British Legion's expanding empire is a project in forgetfulness.

Here students (The National Memorial Arboretum is big on education) are given the opportunity for 'intergenerational learning, active citizenship and literacy' as well as workshops on making poppy wreaths. And yes students will also hear some 'forgotten stories'. All this may be fun or boring, useful or useless but that is not our concern. What is of concern is 'the focus on looking at how conflicts are remembered' which you might think is a fairly esoteric subject and of no great value in today's job market. It is gratifying that Cambridgeshire, Staffordshire and Suffolk local authorities are supporting 'liberal'



The bare wall of the Armed Forces Memorial await the names of future British military dead. Not much hope for a more peaceful future here.



H O U T E N D

education but disturbing that they support what is largely a myth making project that weaves a web of wars inevitability around the cosy vision of brave men and women willing to sacrifice 'their all' in the service of their country. Michael Gove would be pleased. The causes of war and how wars might be prevented find no place here but worse is the saccharine view of war through 'remembrance' that the British Legion dispensed which makes engaging with difficult issues even more difficult.

This is a fine place for old folk to re-live their memories, as many do, but anyone below the 50 should be kept out.



A new website from the PPU will go live on 1 November.
remembranceday.org.uk

America's wars the logic of escalation

The United States's political-military strategy for drawdown in Afghanistan is in trouble, even as Washington is tempted by increased high-tech military engagement in other theatres of war.

The killing of Afghanistan's former president Burhanuddin Rabbani in a suicide bomb-attack at his home in Kabul on 20 September 2011 removes a senior player who for decades was at the centre of the country's political scene. A major incident in itself, which led the current Afghan president

Hamid Karzai to return home from New York to attend the funeral, Rabbani's death follows the concerted assault on key targets in central Kabul on 13-14 September that lasted twenty hours.

The exact responsibility for Rabbani's death is still to be established. But this and similar operations - such as attacks on Kabul hotels, and on the offices of the British Council in the city on 19 August - reflect the ability of the Taliban to hone tactics in recent months in response to the "surge" in United States troops into Afghanistan.

There is a specific and two-sided context here. First, the Taliban and other armed opposition groups have been seeking to maintain control of rural districts in parts of southern and eastern Afghanistan, using both subtle and violent means. The endemic government corruption and maladministration creates a base of support for these groups, many of whom can build on their pre-existing links with the same communities; such support can be supplemented by often ruthless intimidation.

Second, the paramilitaries face substantial dangers in engaging openly with the increasing numbers of US troops that can be deployed to suppress any large-scale insurgent activity. Such more open confrontation has worked in the past (especially

Paul Rogers

against some of the more remote US outposts), but the Americans' huge manpower and firepower superiority underpins a shift to assassinations and suicide-martyr missions.

The impact of the Taliban's refocus may be less important militarily than in psychological and political terms. The death of Rabbani, who was involved in negotiations with the Taliban, makes any talks process less likely to produce results. The broader Kabul attacks, embarrassing as they are, don't of themselves constrain greatly US and other Nato troops; but they confirm that these forces do not control the country, and make it harder for them to contemplate an early withdrawal.

This is a real problem for the Barack Obama administration, which wants to accelerate the drawdown of forces as the US presidential-election campaign of 2012 begins to dominate calculations.

It is not clear how this strategic conundrum will be resolved. To clarify what is at stake, it makes sense to look at current Pentagon options from a wider perspective - one that stretches well beyond Afghanistan-Pakistan, and even Iraq.

The reason is that the war itself is no longer confined to these regions. The bombing of the United Nations offices in Abuja, Nigeria's capital, in August 2011 symbolises its expansion. There is now a growing conviction among US security analysts that three groups across northern Africa - Somalia's al-Shabaab, al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb in the north (possibly including Libya), and Boko Haram in Nigeria - are beginning to coordinate their actions and knowledge.

The interconnections between these groups are believed to be hardening; and Pentagon sources highlight the proliferation of paramilitary technologies (such as improvised explosive devices [IEDs]) across south Asia, the middle east and north Africa - often via the transfer of technical experience gained in one conflict to another .

There has been much talk of al-Qaida being reduced to little more than a rump. The reality is that this applies only to the original entity, already quite limited in reach. What has evolved is a very much more diffuse network, one that the Pentagon seeks to defeat without wanting to commit ground-troops in any significant numbers.

There is an exception here: the use of special forces to carry out night-raids in Afghanistan and Pakistan. These continue, even though there is

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ample evidence that they lead to more opposition to US forces.

More significant, however, is the notable increase in the reliance on armed-drones, especially in Yemen and Somalia. Drones now fly from a facility in the Seychelles (following a series of trials there), while a new CIA airstrip in Saudi Arabia supplements existing drone-operations based in Djibouti and directed mainly at Yemen. A further base is being established in Ethiopia, intended mainly for operations in Somalia.

The possession of bases in four countries has two advantages. The first is the degree of geographical overlap; this allows more detailed and extensive surveillance and attack operations. The second is the availability of back-up; if one of the countries involved undergoes a political change of heart, then others are available to take up the strain.

Beyond the legacy

This rapid expansion of drone capabilities is provoking a debate within the White House over how extensively the drones can be used. The core question is: should the targeting be restricted to more senior paramilitary leaders, or should it seek out many more - hundreds, or even thousands - of low-level militants?

For the moment, the practice leans towards the former option; but this already raises a host of legal issues around what is essentially targeted assassination with not even the pretense of an attempt at capture and legal process.

The context of the debate is that the Barack Obama administration is facing sustained problems in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq, and a growing threat in Yemen and northern Africa. The availability of armed-drones presents a tempting military

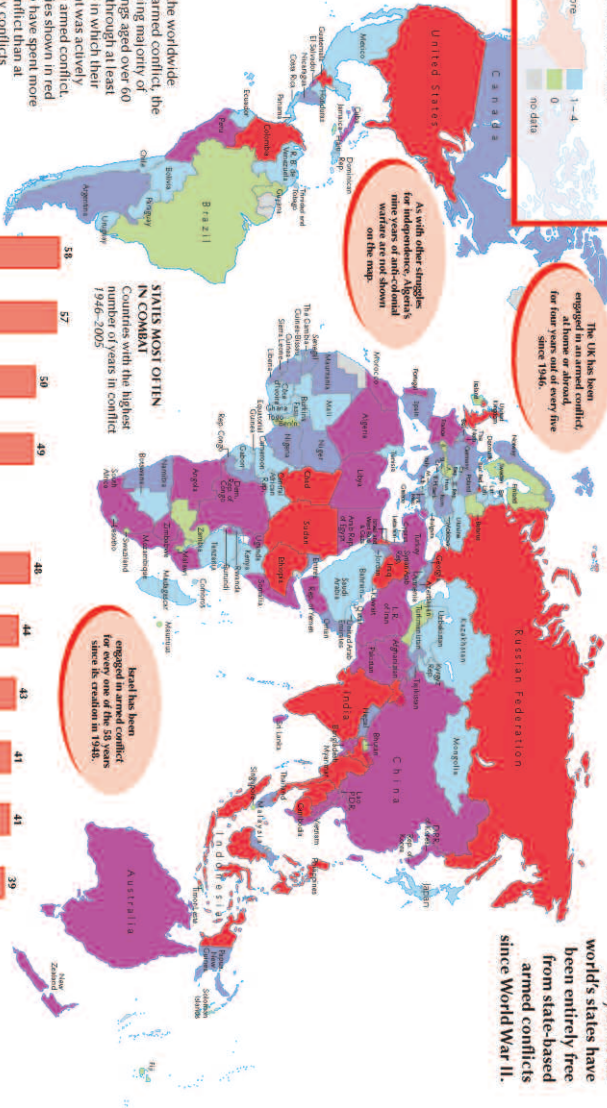
option that combines apparent effectiveness with (in terms of American casualties) zero cost.

Yet even leaving aside the considerable legal and moral questions, there are strategic perils. For if radical Islamist groups continue to spread their influence (as seems likely) this will invite the routine application of armed-drones in what amounts to generalised warfare, quite possibly far beyond Yemen and Somalia. Drones have already been used in Libya against Gaddafi's forces, and - now that Nato has extended its air operations by three months - could be again (either if the former leader's supporters remain active, or if jihadists form a new challenge). Even Nigeria might offer convenient targets.

The prospect of such escalation is very far from the original hope of many of Obama's advisers that the "war on terror" could be greatly reduced in scope (if not ended altogether) before 2012 and the end of his first term. That increasingly looks vain - and even worse, there is a real chance that this administration's last year will see a steady expansion of the war. Such an outcome would be the direct opposite of the promise of 2008, and yet more evidence of the toxic legacy that George W Bush bequeathed to his successor.

YEARS IN CONFLICT

Total number of years in which a country has been involved in at least one conflict 1946–2005



Time Spent in Conflict

Only 21 of the world's states have been entirely free from state-based armed conflicts since World War II.

In spite of the worldwide decline in armed conflict, the overwhelming majority of human beings aged over 60 have lived through at least one period in which their government was actively engaged in armed conflict. The countries shown in red on the map have spent more years in conflict than at peace. Only conflicts involving government forces have been counted, and counts started only when a state became independent, so the period of independence of fighting for independence from colonial rule are not included.

STATES MOST OFTEN IN COMBAT

Countries with the highest number of years in conflict 1946–2005



These 11 give the experience of a state armed conflict to every one of its people. In many countries in conflict, most citizens live a long way from the fighting.

Source: Human Security Report 2009/2010

Gorbachev's advancement of democracy and peaceful foreign relations was fostered by private conversations with members of international civil society

Citizen Diplomacy : Russia and the Gorbachev Years (1985-1991)

Rene Wadlow

There is in the Agni Yoga teachings of Helena Roerich to which Raisa Gorbachev was particularly devoted a line which says 'Not the new is proclaimed but what is needed for the hour.' This idea became a guideline for Mikhail Gorbachev whose 'new thinking' was not really new. Many of us had been saying the same thing for years before, but none of us was head of state. His September 1987 address to the UN General Assembly was a clear call for the rule of law both domestically and internationally. He recommended greater use of the International Court of Justice and that all states accept its compulsory jurisdiction. He called upon the permanent members of the Security Council to join in formulating guidelines to help lead the way. This was a renunciation of a sixty-year resistance to the World Court that Maxim Litvinov — though an internationalist — had initiated in 1922 claiming that there could be no impartial arbitrator between the Soviet and the non-Soviet world saying 'Only an angel could be impartial in judging Russian affairs.'

I had published Gorbachev's statement in the N°3, 1987 issue of *Transnational Perspectives* convinced that the changes in the Soviet Union were profound and real. Unfortunately, the US State Department took the speech as a propaganda ploy to further embarrass the US over the World Court's Nicaragua litigation. Therefore the US delega-

tion to the UN did everything it could to hinder discussion of giving the World Court a larger role and was successful in stopping any effort to expand compulsory jurisdiction.

Gorbachev did all he could to strengthen the peace-making role of the UN, leading to the successful completion of what had been seemingly endless negotiations at the Palais des Nations in Geneva concerning the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the very difficult negotiations, also in Geneva, between Iraq and Iran to end their war. Progress was also made on the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea (Cambodia) which led to the 1992 Paris Accord.

This combination of de-escalation in tensions and violence in the international area, significant steps in arms control and the democratization of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact states are largely due to the leadership of Gorbachev. His seven years in power has left the world a safer place and Russia a more openly pluralistic society. However, the common ground on which he tried to stand was constantly eroded by forces he could not control, leaving him at the end with no place to stand.

Metta Spencer, Editor of *Peace Magazine* and professor emerita of sociology at the University of Toronto tells some of this story, especially through interviews with persons in Gorbachev's inner circle as well as other participants of the fast-changing scene. She has contin-

ued her interviewing so that persons also reflect on events and trends in post-Gorbachev Russia — the Yeltsin and Putin years. (1)

However, what is most helpful to those of us interested in citizen diplomacy and talks with Soviets on arms control is her account on how discussions with members of the Soviet Academy of Sciences' institutes, especially the USA/Canada Institute of Georgi Arbatov and the Institute for World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) had an impact on Soviet decision-making. As Spencer notes, Gorbachev's advancement of democracy and peaceful foreign relations was fostered by private conversations with members of international civil society, especially with those who became his chief advisors.

The ground for these discussions had started relatively early at the time of N. Khrushchev. The Pugwash meetings in which Joseph Rotblat played an important role started in 1957 and the Dartmouth Conferences led by Norman Cousins and Georgi Arbatov began in 1960. Norman Cousins was a friend from the mid-1950s when we were both in the world federalist movement and protesting against atomic bomb tests in the open atmosphere. I had been for a month with Joseph Rotblat in 1977 in Hiroshima working on the life histories of the people who had survived the A-bomb. Thus with both Cousins and Rotblat, I discussed how such discussions

REVIEW

were carried out. I went to Moscow for the first time in 1975 after having chaired the NGOs present at the first NPT Review Conference held a month before. I continued in arms control discussions until the 1987 UN speech of Gorbachev when I became convinced that arms control was no longer “the name of the game” and moved over to dealing with the negotiations of ethnic conflicts just in time to get active on the eve of the Yugoslav conflicts. Thus, I knew some of the people that Metta Spencer interviewed as well as others who came to Geneva at different times, especially for meetings

1. As I look back on the years of citizen diplomacy through Metta Spencer’s fine book, two things stand out for me: In many ways we had more exchanges at a deeper and higher level with the Soviet decision-makers and advisors than with the Americans. It is true that the US diplomats could easily read our articles as they were in English and readily available while in the Soviet Union foreign publications were available on a “need to know” basis, and many people did not know that they existed at all. Spencer underlines the lack of trust in Soviet society and how this lack of trust prevented a free flow of information. I was in Moscow in 1991 for the OSCE conference on human rights (Human Dimension in OSCE vocabulary). This was very shortly after the coup against Gorbachev. There were still broken blocks on the side of the streets that had been set up to prevent tanks from coming into the city from their bases outside of Moscow. I went to talk to a leading scholar in one of the Academy of Sciences institute who had been a key advisor on the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. (He thought it was an error). He suggested that we talk in a park as he knew his office was bugged. As I was living in Geneva and

of the disarmament study group — the Palme Commission. Pugwash also had an office in Geneva.

Metta Spencer sets out clearly the core of her book. Democracy, human rights, and non-violence are rarely re-invented independently by local citizens. Usually they are imported from abroad and spread by personal contacts in international civil society, not by diplomats or rulers. That was the way it happened in the Soviet Union. This book will describe how certain back-channel relationships with foreign peace researchers and activists influenced that country’s brief democratization, its foreign

policy and its military doctrine. It takes time and help from someone in the country that you trust to tell you “who is who” with whom to speak and what is going on. I hope that there are civilian diplomats for Syria, but once violence breaks out, it may be too late in the day to be able to do much. For those of us working for non-violence and creative conflict resolution, we need to do more contacting and planning in advance.

not Washington, I did not try to develop avenues of communication to the US policy makers. In retrospect, it would have been useful to stress with Americans how positive Gorbachev’s efforts were and how fragile ethnic/nationalist tensions were making the Soviet Union as I was already working on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. The second aspect which stands out for me is what the Soviet citizen diplomacy experiences can tell us about such efforts in other parts of the world. I am currently particularly concerned with the conflicts in Syria where things could get even worse. I was asked by a group of Tunisian lawyers with whom I had been in contact over the changes in Tunisia if I wanted to come to Tunisia to try to do something on the Syrian situation from there. I had to reply that I did not know what to do or from where. The Soviet Union was structured the way they said it was. The key researchers/advisors were in the institutes of the Academy of Sciences — and the School to form Communist Party workers — all in Moscow. There were no doubt Russians in other parts of the country who had ideas and that it would have been nice to meet, but the Soviet government was a Moscow-based structure as far as

policy and its military doctrine. She adds that transnational civil society organizations are most helpful for they create heterogeneous relationships — those that tend to bridge the society’s disparate elements. Such relationships inform and strengthen individuals who, in an authoritarian setting face heavy pressures to conform.

Metta Spencer’s interviews with people well after the events give a sense of necessary distance, of the strengths and weaknesses of movements and individuals.

foreign policy-making was concerned. It takes time and help from someone in the country that you trust to tell you “who is who” with whom to speak and what is going on. I hope that there are civilian diplomats for Syria, but once violence breaks out, it may be too late in the day to be able to do much. For those of us working for non-violence and creative conflict resolution, we need to do more contacting and planning in advance.

Metta Spencer. *The Russian Quest for Peace and Democracy* Lexington Books, 2010

See, listed by date of publication:

Gale Warner and Michael Shuman. *Citizen Diplomats: Pathfinders in Soviet-American Relations – And How You Can Join Them* (New York: Continuum, 1987)

David D. Newsom (Ed.). *Private Diplomacy with the Soviet Union* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987)

Gale Warner *Invisible Threads: Independent Soviets Working for Global Awareness and Social Transformation* (Washington, DC: Seven Locks Press, 1991)

Matthew Evangelista *Unarmed Forces: The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University press, 1999)

Of the 72 million primary school-age children not currently attending school worldwide, more than half - 39 million

revenge on villages believed to be aiding LRA defectors by, among other things, looting and burning schools.

done to document, publicize, and take steps to end them. Nor is the negative impact of long-term occupation of schools by military forces fully appreciated. Access to education is increasingly recognized as an important part of emergency humanitarian response, particularly during mass displacement and natural disasters. But protecting schools, teachers, and students from deliberate attack in areas of conflict is only now receiving greater attention.

schools as battlegrounds

- live in countries afflicted by armed conflict. In many of these countries, armed groups threaten and kill students and teachers and bomb and burn schools as tactics of the conflict. Government security forces use

"We warn you to leave your job as a teacher as soon as possible otherwise we will cut the heads off your children and shall set fire to your daughter," read a threatening letter from Taliban insurgents in Afghanistan, where

"We warn you to leave your job as a teacher as soon as possible otherwise we will cut the heads off your children"

schools as bases for military operations, putting students at risk and further undermining education.

In southern Thailand, separatist insurgents have set fire to schools at least 327 times since 2004, and government security forces occupied at least 79 schools in 2010. In Colombia, hundreds of teachers active in trade unions have been killed in the last decade, the perpetrators often pro-government paramilitaries and other parties to the ongoing conflict between the government and rebel forces. In northern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has abducted large numbers of children from schools and taken

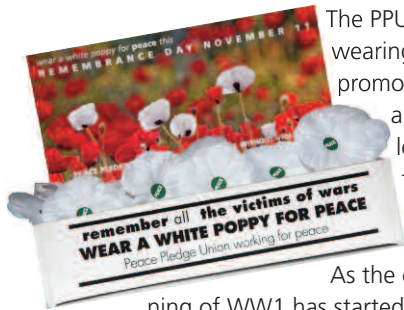
between March and October 2010 20 schools were attacked using explosives or arson, and insurgents killed 126 students.

While attacks on schools, teachers, and students in Afghanistan have perhaps been most vivid in the public eye intentional targeting of education is an underreported phenomenon. Researchers have documented attacks on students, teachers, and schools in Afghanistan, Colombia, the DRC, India, Nepal, Burma, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand. UNESCO reports that attacks occurred in at least 31 countries from 2007 to 2009.

While only a few non-state armed groups openly endorse such attacks, too little is being

An effective response to attacks on education will require more focused policies and action by concerned governments and a much stronger international effort. Making students, teachers, and schools genuinely off limits to non-state armed groups and regular armies will require governments, opposition groups, and other organizations to implement strong measures that are enforced by rigorous monitoring, preventive interventions, rapid response to violations, and accountability for violators of domestic and international law.

more | ppu.org.uk/peacematters



The PPU has written to the BBC asking about its policy on the wearing of white poppies by presenters and suggesting it promotes a more 'liberal' atmosphere in which people may also feel 'free' not to wear any poppies. A copy of the letter is available on our website and you might wish to write to the BBC yourself. Let us know what reply you get.

As the countdown to the centenary anniversary of the beginning of WW1 has started might this not be a good time to start planning for the winding down of the national Remembrance Day? Let us know.

John Hyatt, who has died aged 62, was a life-long radical pacifist activist. Leaving Cheshire in his teens to come to London, he soon became involved in the Youth Association of the PPU,

John Hyatt 1949 - 2011

and it was not long before he was appointed the PPU's Youth Organiser. He began a series of duplicated extracts from pacifist classics, Studies in Nonviolence, and arranged a road tour of YAPPU members around the country to encourage the 1960s youth counter-culture in a nonviolent direction.

Attending a WRI Council meeting in Vienna in 1968 he and others became aware of the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia, and travelled to Bratislava for a meeting with the dissident peace committee. Later John returned alone and woke in his hotel to witness the Soviet tanks rolling in to crush the Spring; John

joined briefly in the nonviolent protests, and wrote up the story for the PPU's magazine, The Pacifist.

John left the PPU staff for a brief sojourn with Movement for

New Society in the USA, then joined the staff of Peace News. When the offices of the paper were raided by Special Branch in 1974, as a preliminary to the prosecution of 14 supporters of the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign (with which PN was seen as heavily implicated), John was arrested in the office and became one of the BWNIC 14, facing a 3 month trial for conspiracy to incite disaffection among troops destined for Northern Ireland. All 14 were acquitted, but John pleaded guilty and was fined for assisting one soldier who went AWOL.

John moved on from PN to work for its sister company, Housmans

Bookshop, which included editing a notable bibliography on pacifism and nonviolence.

In 1980 John took over the secretaryship of the War Resisters International, overseeing the re-settling of its office in London after a sojourn in Brussels. After leaving that post in 1984 he served for some years as part-time secretary of the Lansbury House Trust Fund, a charity associated with the WRI's work. Some two years ago John and his long-time partner Liz Chapple (also a former PPU staff member) settled in Turkey, which necessitated disposal of a large collection of books on pacifism, anti-militarism and the like. This was generously donated to the PPU, a number surplus to its requirements being passed on to Housmans.

Bill Hetherington