

TEACHERS FOR PEACE

BULLETIN

ISSUE NO 2 1989

APPEAL TO TEACHERS

APPEAL TO TEACHERS FOR MONEY - FOR CONTACTS AMONGST TEACHERS
FOR MATERIAL FOR THE TFP BULLETIN
& FOR HELP WITH OTHER PUBLICITY MATERIAL

Currently TFP is funded directly from TUCND's budget. We hope that the people who receive this bulletin regularly will form the basis of a network of people willing to participate both in the planning and in the implementation of a series of initiatives on peace related to the teaching professions.

The initial contacts were made through the last fringe meeting at the NUT conference and from an article that appeared in a recent issue of Sanity. It is also slowly growing from contacts with other teachers. At the moment this list of contacts is approaching the limit of the figure that TUCND can sustain.

APPEAL FOR MONEY:-

To grow, to develop in a way that can fully realise it's potential the TFP network has to have some form of income that can sustain the bulletin and some of the other activity associated with it. With the next issue of this bulletin we shall be asking for a donation to cover at least the cost of producing and mailing the bulletin. We estimate that for four issues a year it will cost us roughly £3 to produce. If the network increases in size our costs will come down and so it will be possible to mail the bulletin six times per year for the same amount.

If we were to set up a closely monitored subscription system it would add considerably to the cost of the bulletin. What we intend therefore to do is with our next issue to ask each of our readers for a £3 donation towards the running costs.

APPEAL FOR CONTACTS:-

Two things are clear. The first is that once financially stable there should be little to limit the growth of the network. The second is that in scale and effectiveness are

synonymous. We need to extend the network as far as we possibly can if we are to achieve the type of things we need to.

So if you know of anyone who would be sympathetic to the idea of developing work on peace and disarmament within the teaching professions ASK THEM IF THEY WOULD LIKE TO BE ADDED TO OUR MAILING LIST.

APPEAL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS:-

The last appeal we would like to make is for contributions to the TFP Bulletin. Because of the current format of the TFP Bulletin there is ample space for as much material as you care to submit. It is possible however that it will be edited. The criteria we will apply to that are roughly the following.

TFP is guided by the principles upon which CND is based. In other words we will not accept any material which we deem to be sexist or racist. It is also possible that articles duplicate what is being said in other pieces in the same issue. In that case we will probably try and include both - but within reason. There may also be material we feel is unsuitable. If anyone should

submit material in this category we will attempt to deal with it as sensitively as possible.

If you wish to have your material included please send it to:-
J Barnes - TUCND
22-24 Underwood St
London N1 7JG.

TFP will also have a responsibility for producing some material on behalf of CND. We would like therefore to build up a list of volunteers who could do this for us in the not too distant future.

TEACHERS FOR PEACE AGM

MANCHESTER 14th OCTOBER

This will be first AGM for Teachers For Peace following the reorganisation and the establishment of a close working relationship with Trade Union CND. The current EC of TFP look forward to a lively and interesting AGM with hopefully a number of people being nominated to take part in the incoming EC.

John Geleit as you may remember from the last issue of this newsletter took over as the interim General Secretary untill this years AGM. He is also the Chair of TUCND and a full time official with the NGA. He stood in as the general secretary as a temporary measure so at the AGM there will be an election which will put a new General Secretary into post.

This years AGM will be held in Machester Town Hall on the 14th of October. There will be a registration fee of £5 to help pay for the cost of running the conference. If you would like to register for the conference could you please fill in the form below.

(PLEASE PRINT)
UNION.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....
.....
.....
.....POSTCODE.....

EC NOMINATIONS

Nomintions will also be taken in advance of the AGM for the incoming EC.

NOMINATIONS FOR TFP EC

- Nominated By.....
- General Secretary.....
- EC 1
- 2
- 3

INTERNATIONAL PEACE BUREAU CONFERENCE

The IPB is holding its annual conference in Britain this year on the 2nd and 3rd of September. In the past a number of teachers have been involved in this organisation.

It is a global network of independent and nonaligned peace organisations, founded in 1892. In 1910 it won the Nobel Peace for its work and has played a prominent part in bringing the peace movements together from around the world ever since.

In its early years it campaigned for amongst other things the establishment of a league of Nations and for the setting up of international courts of Justice. It has also consistently organised campaigns internationally on peace and disarmament. More recently it has been involved in 'Networking' in information gathering and distribution and in Monitoring both the UN and the inter government negotiations.

In 1989 the priorities it set for campaigns were
- resistance to the International arms trade.
- resistance through the legal system to Nuclear Weapons. For instance the IPB coordinated internationally an appeal which was signed by 13,000 lawyers throughout the world against the manufacture of

Nuclear Weapons.

- against foreign military presences
- against the Arms race at sea
- against Nuclear Weapons
- in favour of the right to Conscientious objection

The current information network on Nuclear Tests carries information on these tests through an international telephone tree. In so doing it has proved the possibility of effective verification of a Nuclear test ban treaty, something the opponents of such a treaty have always held up as an obstacle.

The IPB's membership consists of the Peace movements in at least 25 countries. Its head office is in Geneva.

Speakers at this years conference will include Bishop Trevor Huddleston, Miklos Barabas (Sec of Hungarian Peace Committe) Carole Tongue (MEP for East London), Jan Martenson (Director of the UN Genva office) and Angela Sanbrano (Co-president of the US Sana/Freeze movement). The conference will also have a good range of workshops.

It will take place in Sussex University, Falmer, Sussex. To register for the conference apply to:-

Anna Rehn
30 Prince Edwards Rd
Lewes
East Sussex
0273 476 358

WHITE POPPIES IN SCHOOL

As remembrance Day approached in 1988 quite a few teachers ordered white poppies. However the small numbers asked for in orders suggested that either only a very small take up was expected or that they were only intended for fellow staff or for friends.

Given that White Poppies in schools have in the past been give the smear treatment by the gutter press, how do schools that sell white poppies handle the sale - with the maximum diplomacy? To find out I asked to visit a primary school which does

sell white poppies. This is my interpretation of what I found.

Firstly the white poppies were offered in the context of a school policy which rejected fighting as a way of solving conflict in school (but encouraged children to defend themselves out of school 'running away, shouting or trying to stick up for themselves'). The wording and the range of interpretations that phrase suggests is highly diplomatic.

Secondly, the white poppies were offered in the context of assembly where the moral stance of 'some people' that fighting 'is never right' is balanced by the view of others, not that it is right but that it is 'sometimes necessary'.

Thirdly, the white poppies were offered alongside red poppies so that the pupils could choose to buy either one or both. A range of choices, and a chance to explore the reasons for them a part of learning for living.

Fourthly, prior to the sale the matter was cleared with the school governors and the parents were informed what was going on and why by a letter from the school. Clear consultations at all levels defuses suspicion and increases trust.

Fifthly, the parents were encouraged to explain their views on the topic to the children. Inviting parent participation enables parents, who do not necessarily agree with everything that the school does, to feel that at least the school respects their right to differ. People are often at their most aggressive when they feel strongly and feel their opinions are ignored or discounted.

In the assembly, which I attended, I watched twelve children in six pairs act out a poem by Allan Ahlberg. The Bs were rehearsed to stand their ground fearlessly but non aggressively against the As. Their tone was firmly assertive, humourous and friendly.

The White Poppy:-

Symbolises remembrance of all the victims of war, past and present, on all sides. It includes the forgotten

victims of war, particularly civilians - and many of these are children. It reminds us of the suffering of the disabled, the hardship faced by refugees fleeing from war, of the millions dying from starvation and disease because resources are squandered on military expenditure.

It was adopted in the 1930's as a symbol not only of the horror of war but also as a positive symbol of the determination to prevent future wars.

It raises fundamental questions about the validity of war as a means of solving conflict.

War is a human invention which can be made obsolete.

PATHWAYS FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

PATHWAYS FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
A REPORT BY HUGH GORDON

A conference organised by 'Professions for World Disarmament and Development' (PWDD) was held at the Royal Society of Medicine on the 18th March 1989. The success of the conference, which was chaired by Lord Ennals, ensures that the PWDD continues to provide a forum for professional people to discuss key current issues.

Representatives from organisations as widely different as the Medical Campaign against nuclear weapons, Psychologists for Peace, Engineers for Nuclear Disarmament and members of the public met together to consider reports from amongst others a politician, Peter Shore MP (From the Labour Party), a Soviet diplomat, Genady Sokolov, and from Uganda an expert on the third world Dr O H Kokole who came over specially from Michigan University. Dr Kokole's central point was that the invisible slow killing through poverty and unjust distribution of resources is even more inhumane than the direct and sudden killing resulting from war.

Not surprisingly several of the speakers concentrated on the need for Nuclear Disarmament. Chief E C Anyaoka, the deputy Secretary General of the Commonwealth, quoted from the Brant Report "More arms do not make mankind safer, only poorer". Genady Sokolov went over the well known facts concerning the present vast excess of Nuclear Weapons. While he agreed with the urgent need for both sides to sharply reduce the approximate 50,000 nuclear warheads he did not himself go along with Gorbachev's proposal that the aim should be total elimination of Nuclear Weapons by the year 2,000. This he considered to be unrealistic and perhaps even dangerous because given current knowledge they could always be reconstructed. Neither did he believe in the usefulness of Unilateral Nuclear Disarmament. His hope was for progress towards a minimal nuclear force of perhaps as few as 500 warheads.

An outstanding contribution was made by Dr M Kelly from the Climatic Research Unit who spoke on Defence of the Environment. He showed convincingly that as a result of atmospheric pollution, the greenhouse effect has gone much further than is generally realised. Conditions in the Third world particularly in South America were described by Susan George, fellow of the Transnational Institute and author of "A fate worse than death". This widely read book helped to arouse opinion on the role of the Western Banks in despoiling the developing countries. Her analysis of the present debt situation in countries such as Brazil profoundly moved the audience.

A full report of the conference, to be published jointly by the PWDD and the United Nations Association will be available shortly. Advance orders should be addressed to Hugh Gordon, 1 North End, London NW3 7HH.

DISARMING ARGUMENTS

'DISARMING ARGUMENTS'

A NEW CND VIDEO FOR SCHOOLS

The Ministry of Defence some time ago produced a video advocating the current governments position on defence. A blatant piece government propaganda if ever there was.

CND in conjunction with Team Video are producing a video which we feel puts the arguments in a much more balanced way. It is included in a pack titled 'Disarming arguments' which will be available in the near future for around £28:75 from CND.

The video, based on a screenplay by Allan Platter is set in the not too distant future. A government committed to Nuclear Disarmament is in Power and have already disposed of Britains Nuclear arsenal. The plot takes the form a television interview with the government minister responsible and a shadow defence spokesperson and the discussion is centered around the proposals to remove the United States military bases from Britain. There are two pause sections in the video and it includes a section of archive material on the development of the Arms Race. Gill Gascoin plays the role of the government minister.

A comprehensive set of notes will accompany the video with a set of action sheets. The notes are in two sections one is the activity sheets and guidance notes for the video and the other is educational briefing material from CND. The educational briefing material will be available seperatly through CND on request.

The video is designed to be relevant to 'Modern Studies' and to parts of the history syllabus. In the past some teachers in English departments have found such material usefull in stimulating oral communications skills through the debates following the video.

When the video is completed Team Videos will be circulating an advert to all schools. When they carried out a similar exercise with a video produced in conjunction with the TUC

something in the region of 3,000 copies were sold.

If you wuld like any further information please contact the Information Section at CND's national office.

EL SALVADOR

UNITED STATES TRADE UNIONS AND
EL SALVADOR

In the last issue of the Bulletin we carried an article about the plight of teachers in El Salvador. Teachers in El Salvador face a double dilemma. They have to face the horrific problems of a horrendous scale of political oppression and they have to face the problems that oppression has wrought for their charges. The children of El Salvador suffer increasing poverty as a result of the political situation in their country as well as having to face the results of the political oppression leveled against the adults in their community.

The Trade Union movement in the United States has played a double role in this picture. For a number of years the Trade Union movment in the United States has supported an organisation called the American Institute for Free Labour Development (AIFLD). This body is funded partialy from trade union contributions but the lions share it's funding comes from the Unted States Government and from Industry in the United States. However The companies concerned have a long tradition of vociferous anti trade union activity. Organisations such as the Coca Cola company donate very largeamounts of money to the AIFLO. The general stated aim of this body is to promote anti-Communist trade unions in Central and Sounthern American Countries.

For instance one of the most persecuted groups in El Salvador are the telecommunications workers. The union with support from the bulk of the workers in that industry is ASTTEL. The telecommunications industry in El Salvador is run by Col Mauricio Vides Casanova. The Colonel's brother is the defence minister. In 1985 ASTTEL gained

recognition but has been unable to negotiate anything further. The agreement has been ignored since by the employers. In the year leading up to the end of 1988 six leading activists in ASTTEL were publicly murdered. A seventh has disappeared. All of the union leaders have been sacked and are barred from the companies land.

The Union funded by the AIFLD has played a passive role. It admits that has less than 200 members and yet has plush facilities. It's principle role appears to be to assert that ASTTEL is a front for the guerrilla organisations fighting the government. In the context of El Salvador this means they are a publicly targeted by the death squads. In the context of the United States it means that the US Trade Unions can claim legitimacy in supporting a government government puppet union in El Salvador and oppose the organisations which are doing the work of a proper trade union movement.

Leading figures of the CIA are on record as saying that one of the most effective ways of destabilising a government opposed to the United States is through sponsoring right wing unions in those countries. Perhaps the most gruesome example of this was the action of some AIFLD sponsored unions in Chile before the fall of the Alende governments there.

However the picture is not a totally one sided one. Recently an organisation called the National Labour Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador, which includes the teaching union the NEA, has sent a number of information gathering missions to El Salvador. The last consisted of representatives of the textile workers union, the machinists union, the autoworkers union and the public service workers union. Because of the activity of this group it is becoming increasingly difficult for the United States to continue its support of the current extremely right wing government in El Salvador.

In the nine years since the murdered Archbishop Oscar Romero urged President Carter to stop military aid to El Salvador 70,000 people have been murdered by the death squads and not one military officer has been brought to justice. After \$3.3 billion in aid over the last decade, El Savador is poorer than ever before.

Since the founding of the National Labour Committee in 1981 it has held the position that only a negotiated settlement of the conflict can solve the problems of El Salvador and serve to establish a viable democracy.

If you would like further information on the Committee write to:-

NLCSHRES
15 Union Square
New York
New York 10003