

Diary Dates

- Fri 22 Oct **Autumn Concert in aid of Amnesty International**
More details on page 15.
- Sat 23 Oct White poppies sold at Nottingham CND stall in Market Square. Proceeds to Nottingham Friends of the Iraqi People.
- Sat 6 Nov White poppies sold at Nottingham CND stall in Market Square.
- Sat 20 Nov **Nottingham CND AGM**
2.15pm at the International Community Centre, 61b Mansfield Rd
- Sat 27 Nov **One World Day Fair** at the YMCA, Shakespeare Street.

A Citizens' Inquiry into the Legality of Trident

Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th November 2004 10am-6pm
 Franklin-Wilkins Building, Waterloo Campus, King's College London

The UK Government has stated that a decision on whether or not to replace Trident will be taken in the next parliament. The UK and US administrations have just signed the renewal of the agreement by which they share nuclear weapons expertise. The UK government, as a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), is committed to an: 'unequivocal undertaking ... to accomplish the total elimination of (its) nuclear arsenal'.

PEACERIGHTS is organising a Legal Inquiry to examine the central question:
Is the UK complying with its obligations under the NPT?

An internationally renowned panel of experts will:

- Formulate legal principles applicable to the current Trident nuclear weapons system
- Examine whether they are transferable to other nuclear weapons systems
- Determine whether a decision to replace Trident would violate the Article VI of the NPT
- Determine whether renewal of the Mutual Defence Agreement violates the NPT

Experts and eye-witnesses will present evidence to the panel on each issue.

Members of the audience will have the opportunity to ask questions

The panel members are:

Louise Doswald-Beck Director of the Centre for International Humanitarian Law, Geneva. Former legal adviser and Head of the Legal Division at the International Committee of the Red Cross. Former Secretary-General of the International Commission of Jurists.

Gerry Simpson Reader in International law at the LSE. Author of 'Great Powers and Outlaw States: Unequal Sovereigns in the International Legal Order' published by CUP in the spring.

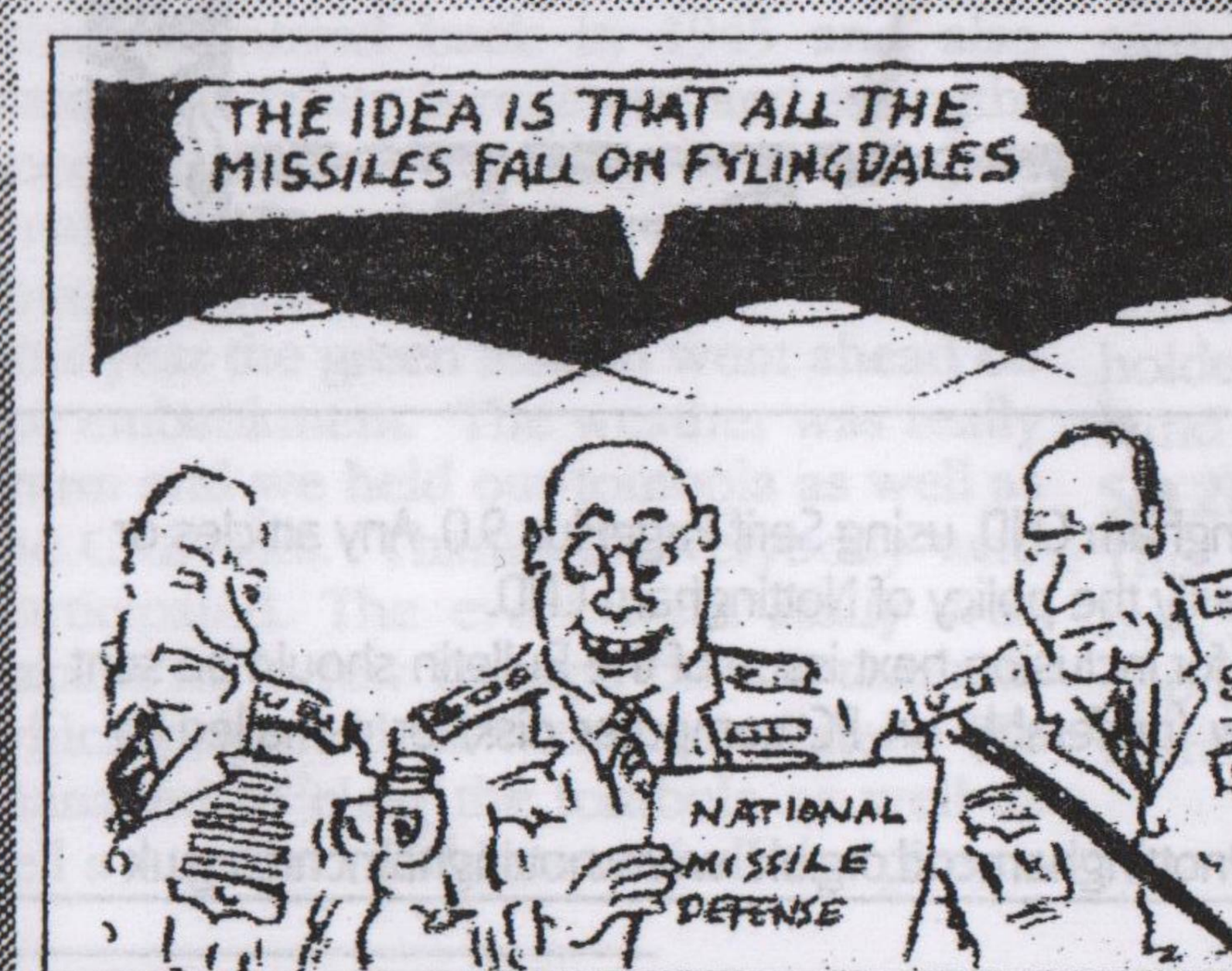
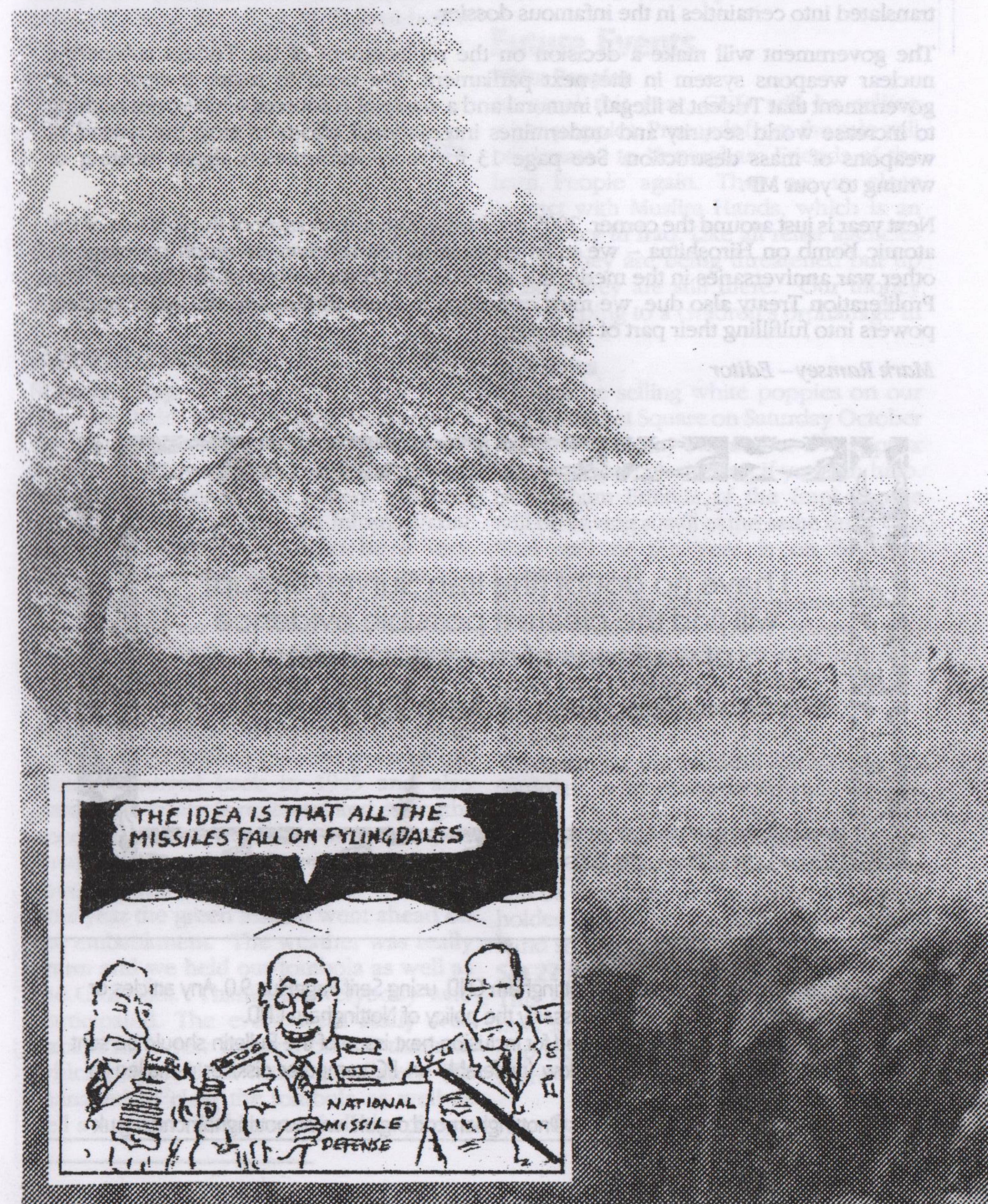
Christopher Weeramantry Former Vice President of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and former ICJ Judge. President of the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms.

Miguel Marin-Bosch Former Consul-General of Mexico Member of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (1999-2002) and its chairman in 2000.



Nottingham CND Bulletin

October 2004

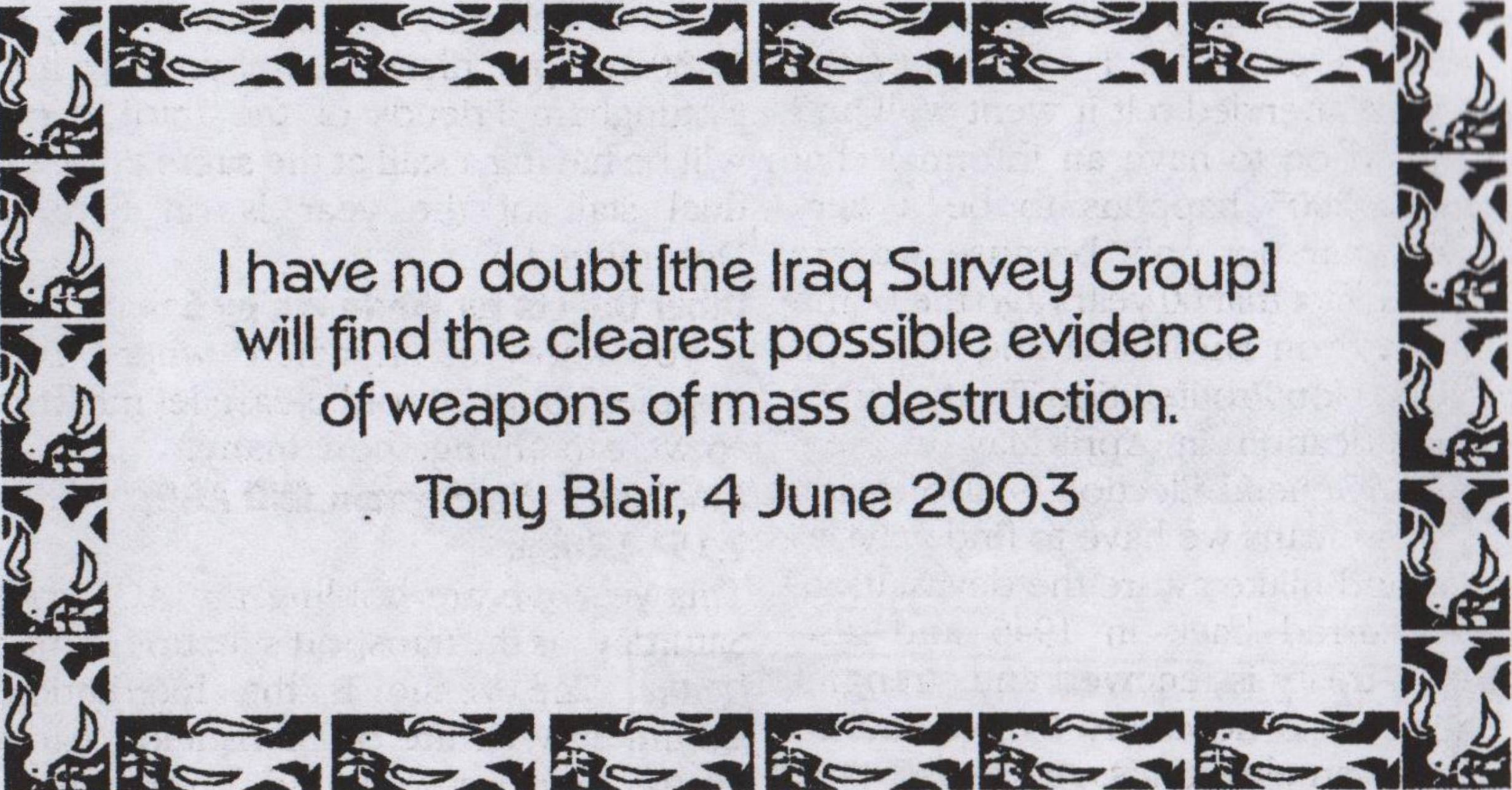


The recent Iraq Survey Group report has finally buried any claim by Bush or Blair that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. Tony Blair told us to trust him on that matter. But he was wrong and now he has lost our trust, perhaps forever. Blair still claims that although the intelligence was wrong, he did not "deceive" anyone – we're still waiting for his explanation about that claim, given what we now know about the caveats and doubts which existed about the intelligence at the time. And we're still waiting for someone to take ultimate responsibility for the way doubts and judgements were translated into certainties in the infamous dossier.

The government will make a decision on the replacement of the Trident submarine nuclear weapons system in the next parliament. We need to make it clear to the government that Trident is illegal, immoral and a waste of resources which does nothing to increase world security and undermines international efforts to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction. See page 13 for more information about meeting or writing to your MP.

Next year is just around the corner. 2005 marks the 60th anniversary of the first use of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima – we must make sure this receives as much coverage as other war anniversaries in the media this year. And with the review of the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty also due, we must campaign to push Britain and the other nuclear powers into fulfilling their part of the treaty.

Mark Ramsey – Editor



I have no doubt [the Iraq Survey Group] will find the clearest possible evidence of weapons of mass destruction.

Tony Blair, 4 June 2003

Nottingham CND Bulletin #2004/2

The Bulletin is produced quarterly by Nottingham CND, using Serif PagePlus 9.0. Any articles or opinions expressed within are not necessarily the policy of Nottingham CND.

Articles or other material to be considered for inclusion next issue of the Bulletin should be sent to Nottingham CND at the address below (preferably on PC computer disk) or e-mailed to bulletin@nottinghamcnd.org.uk.

enquiries@nottinghamcnd.org.uk www.nottinghamcnd.org.uk

Nottingham CND Update

Following the closure of our 'home' for the past few years, Nottingham Voluntary Action Centre, Nottingham CND has not found a permanent home. I am, for the moment, doing the office work from home or at [redacted]. This means any queries please [redacted] Jeremy [redacted] connect [redacted]

[redacted] ring ever rary n us then ring me. This, we are finding is the most democratic way of running CND and it is also an informal atmosphere.

Recent Events

Hiroshima Day.

This we held at the Sumac Centre and thanks to the weather we were able to hold it outside. From what I can gather the people who attended felt it went well and many stayed on to have an informal chat and drink. 2005 happens to be a very important year not only because we are marking the fact that 60 years ago the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki but also the Non Proliferation Treaty comes up for ratification in April/May in New York. The General Election is also taking place. This means we have to find ways to publicise and make aware the devastation, which occurred back in 1945 and also ensure the treaty is renewed and strengthened. It is also necessary to get nuclear weapons as an election issue.

Green Festival

This year the green festival went ahead on the embankment. The weather was really warm and we held our tombola as well as the CND stall. Thanks to everybody who participated. The event went really well except for a few hiccups on the tombola which helpers dealt with immediately. We managed to clear the tombola as well as sell a number of videos and all the plums.

Hopefully the event will go ahead next year but it looks as if we need to put pressure on the city council for funds otherwise it won't happen.

Future Events

White Poppies

As usual this year, CND will be selling white poppies. Proceeds from the sale will be donated to Nottingham Friends of the Iraqi People again. They are in close contact with Muslim Hands, which is an aid agency in Iraq. Like all relief agencies in Iraq they are being threatened but up to now they are still there. Our money will be going to a children's orphanage in Baghdad.

Stall Dates

We will be selling white poppies on our stall in Market Square on Saturday October 23rd and Saturday November 6th, approx 11.30am-2pm, please ring if you can help. Nottingham Friends of the Iraqi People will be having a stall at the same time. Our final stall of the year is on Saturday December 11th.

Other Outlets for White Poppy Sales

If you know of anywhere where white poppies could be sold please let me know so we can arrange how many.

Nov 20th – Nottingham CND AGM

2.15- 4.30pm

This year we are holding the AGM on a Saturday, as the transport situation is much better. The venue is the International Community Centre on Mansfield Road so do try your best to attend. Refreshments will be available. If you are a blue badge holder please let the ICC know beforehand so they can reserve a parking place.

Sat 27 Nov - One World Day Fair

This event, organised by WDM, will be held at the YMCA on Shakespeare Street, approx 10am-4pm. CND will have a stall there – volunteers welcome.

Diane Lunzer – Secretary

A Green festival

In my attic is a trestle made from a twenty year old wooden sign, never painted over. It reads 'This event has cost over £3000 to stage. Please give generously.' The idea that Nottingham Green Festival could cost this much surprises some people. It is, after all, a bunch of people in a field. Actually, the project's less obvious aspects make it more interesting.

The Green Festival started as the Peace Festival very early in the 1980s, as an annual Sunday outdoor gathering. Woodthorpe Park was used before Victoria Embankment was settled upon. Admission has always been free: at various times there have been programmes, but never tickets. Costs are met from stall rental fees and by grant aid from local councils. The organisers are volunteers.

Two major factors shape the whole thing. One, of course, is shortage of funds. It means the very existence of the event is uncertain until well into the year - by which time deadlines for inclusion in Council-based publications are invariably missed. This explains why you don't find any reference to the festival in local events guides. The adverts in the Evening Post for three preceding days use a big part of the total budget. Nevertheless, the Green Festival achieves a better attendance than other similar events which invariably turn out to have cost much more.

The other big determining factor is volunteering, both its potential and its limitations. If all the jobs were done by paid workers, and all the things hired and bought, we couldn't afford it. If everything was done by volunteers using borrowed equipment, it would need more people, with more free time, than are available to us. The only answer is to balance volunteering (and borrowing and 'help in kind') with actual hiring of things and people. But what do I mean by 'limitations of volunteering'? This isn't, by the way, a grumble about shortage of helpers. Often people

express surprise to me that more use isn't made of volunteers. 'You could surely get teams of students to do that...' Charities and other organisations manage it, after all. A friend staging arts events has a phrase for good volunteers in her office: 'low maintenance'! Volunteers are worthwhile provided the effort they save is not exceeded by the effort of training, supervision and intercommunication. Suitable projects need to have several fairly self-contained areas of responsibility, and they need to last long enough to include, in voluntary sector jargon, an induction period. Many charitable schemes do fit these criteria - the Green Festival not so well. Its responsibilities are short, intensive, technical and interrelated. The Peace Festival team in the eighties would undergo near-despair as one person's job was held up until they learnt the outcome of someone else's efforts (to be fair, that was before mobile phones).

But where's the money spent? Advertising has already been mentioned. Doing without at least one marquee is risky in the UK - seeing the hard work it takes professionals to put up and take down a 30 by 40 footer puts the cost into perspective. Tables and chairs - in their hundreds - also indispensable. At one time we borrowed them, but loading them on and off vans got too tiring for the few organisers (another point about volunteer recruitment - it should have educative or work-experience value, not just be cheap labour).

Live music gives the festival character. The musicians perform for modest but reasonable fees, less than they'd get elsewhere, but not for free. With the move from the Embankment field to the roadway, we use the bandstand in place of a hired tautliner lorry stage. The musical sound engineer's fee is well-earned by his expertise, equipment and speed.

The rest of the costs come under

continued on page 9

Special 'nuclear' relationship may breach NPT

In an authoritative legal opinion, Rabininder Singh QC and Professor Christine Chinkin have concluded that the renewal of the MDA is in breach of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In 1958 the US and UK signed the Mutual Defence Agreement which provides the basis for US/UK nuclear collaboration and covers all aspects of nuclear weapons design, development and maintenance, including the current Trident refit. The MDA is key to our nuclear subservi-

ence to the US, and without it, it is extremely unlikely that the UK could remain a nuclear weapons state. This year, the MDA is up for renewal, but there has been no parliamentary debate on the issue. It is essential that we raise public awareness on this issue, and campaign now for a parliamentary debate on the MDA and the special nuclear relationship. Please write to your MPs now, urging them to demand a parliamentary debate and sign Early Day Motion 1407.

Hundreds protest on moors

Protesters from all over the country went to RAF Fylingdales on Saturday 25 September to protest against the base being used as part of the US Son of Star Wars missile defence system.

Singer Thom Yorke, the frontman of rock group Radiohead, joined the protesters and helped CND organisers attract an impressive crowd of 250 demonstrators. He questioned the Government asking "How dare you Mr Blair, assume the right to sign us up to Star Wars without consulting us, just assuming that it is the right thing to do, to dominate space and go against every treaty. I don't understand what's democratic about that."

The rally marked the start of International Keep Space for Peace week and was one of 100 protests held all over the world.

Demonstrators got the closest they have ever been to the RAF base because of the discovery of a previously unused bridleway and managed to walk within about 300 yards of it.

A message from protesters in Alaska was read out as the crowd gathered at the fence surrounding the early warning base after marching one and a half miles from

Ellerbeck Bridge.

Police officers from North and West Yorkshire showed a strong presence with 120 officers escorting the marchers and Ministry of Defence officers using quad bikes to patrol the ground surrounding the base.

Talks were given from local activist Jackie Fearnley, who lives in nearby Goathland, Thom Yorke, CND national chairman Kate Hudson and Dave Knight of Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space. They are against Fylingdales being used as the official Star Wars base in the UK.

Neil Kingsnorth, of Yorkshire CND, said: "It's been a brilliant atmosphere, pleasant and peaceful yet lively at the same time. A lot of people came because of Thom Yorke and it's wonderful that someone like him will take on such a complex issue. He told everyone how it was for them to attend these protests and to keep plugging away as he cannot understand what right America has to be policeman of the world."

Source: Whitby Gazette

Poll shows public opposes space weapons

CND Press Release, 1 October 2004

Results of an official ICM opinion poll of 1008 individuals commissioned by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, unveiled today, show an overwhelming opposition to space weapons and a lack of trust in the US's pronouncements on Star Wars.

Notable results include:

- 72% of respondents believe placing offensive weapons in space would make the world a more dangerous place.
- 69% of respondents believe placing "defensive" weapons in space would still make the world a more dangerous place.
- The majority of respondents would be in favour of a Treaty banning the development or deployment of offensive space weapons (63%), weapons that are both defensive and offensive (57%) and even "defensive" space weapons (69%).
- 67% of respondents oppose UK involvement in the US Missile Defence system if it involves the deployment of weapons in space which have a capability of being both defensive and offensive. Since it is virtually impossible to make a space weapon that has only a defensive capability and is not able to attack offensively in some way if desired, that makes opposition to the US Star Wars system considerable if, as expected, it employs space-based weapons systems in the future.

Neil Kingsnorth, CND's Star Wars Campaigner, said, "The United States Administration plans to put weapons in space, dominate space and fight in and from

space - they have said it themselves time and time again. What's more they plan to use their Missile Defence system as an excuse to achieve it. These results show clearly that the British people think the idea of arming the heavens is a step too far and we expect the British government to respond by declaring its opposition to space weapons and by pushing hard to achieve a Treaty banning them for good."

Kate Hudson, CND chair, said, "These results show an overwhelming majority in favour of a complete ban on all possible types of space weapon. The threat of a battlefield in space is looming large, especially with the US's destabilising Star Wars system due online soon. It is crucial that the international community, including our government, works fast to develop a framework to ban space weapons before the world is faced with a space arms race."

The results come at a crucial time. As well as coinciding with Keep Space for Peace Week, they come just weeks ahead of the expected announcement by George Bush that his Star Wars system is up and running. They also come amid news that the US was planning to deploy a test space weapon (NFIRE) within weeks, before international outrage appears to have caused a postponement of these plans. The poll was commissioned as a new phase in CND's Star Wars campaign gathers pace and follows the release of a detailed report on space weapons over the Summer and a successful demonstration at the Fylingdales Star Wars base in Yorkshire with Thom Yorke of Radiohead on Saturday 25th September.

Source: Press Release taken from <http://www.cnduk.org/pages/press/011004.html>

3000 Iraqi civilian victims named

Names and other personal details of over 3000 Iraqi civilians killed in conflict since March 19th 2003 were unveiled today at a special ceremony in Federal Plaza, downtown Chicago. This is the largest collection of identified victims of the Iraq conflict yet to be compiled.

The names were read out in a two-hour ceremony as part of "Eyes Wide Open: The Human Cost of the Iraq War", a travelling memorial created by the American Friends Service Committee. The exhibition includes over 1000 pairs of combat boots, each pair representing one of the more than 1000 US soldiers known to be killed in action. Each pair of boots is tagged with the name, rank, age, and home state of the fallen soldier. Also, part of the exhibition is a 24-foot wall where names of Iraqi victims are inscribed. The purpose of the exhibition is to highlight in a symbolic, yet tangible, way the ongoing and increasing human costs of the Iraq conflict.

The 3029 names have been compiled by members of the Iraq Body Count project, using a wide range of sources, primarily press and media reports. Approximately 2000 of the names were supplied by Raed Jarrar, an Iraqi researcher who directed an on-the-ground, door-to-door survey undertaken by 150 Iraqi volunteers in the Summer of 2003, undertaken in collaboration with the US-based Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict (CIVIC) directed by Marla Ruzicka.

The full database of named and identified civilian victims of the war and occupation in Iraq has been published on the Iraq Body Count website. The table provides the name, age, gender, date and location of death, cause of death (if known) and source of the information. This is the most detailed record of the Iraqi death toll so far accumulated. Nonetheless it represents barely one fifth of the civilian toll so far recorded by the Iraq Body Count Project.

Speaking at the Chicago ceremony, Scott Lipscomb, a spokesperson for Iraq Body Count, said: "Every one of some 15,000 Iraqi civilians killed was a loved human being, whose loss creates heart-break and bitterness among the bereaved families and communities. Each death deserves recording, each life deserves honouring. This harrowing list, including at least 618 children (over a quarter of those whose ages are known), brings home the fact that, no matter how tragic has been the loss of American life, the loss of innocent Iraqi life has been greater still, and is a loss that is just as irreparable. It will undoubtedly also be a huge impediment to peace and reconciliation in the region."

Every week, hundreds more innocent Iraqis are dying as a result of a disastrous US-led campaign that is propelling Iraq into deeper and deeper chaos. So long as US armed forces remain in Iraq, the grim work of recording and honouring the innocent victims will, sadly, be our daily task."

Source: Iraq Body Count, 16 Sep 2004.
<http://www.iraqbodycount.net/press.htm>

Links:

American Friends Service Committee
<http://www.afsc.org/eyes/default.htm>

Iraq Civilian War Casualties
<http://civilians.info/iraq>

Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict
<http://www.civicworldwide.org>

Database of names on Iraq Body Count website
<http://www.iraqbodycount.net/names.htm>

It's the world's future at stake

"Move on," is the Blairite message. "Let's agree to disagree on the past and focus on the future." The risk for those on the liberal left who continue to bang on about the war is that soon we could be cast as obsessives, losers who just can't let go, the Labour equivalent of Tories obsessed with Europe.

That gentle form of social coercion seems to be having an effect. This week the Iraq Survey Group published its final report, coming to a conclusion that would once have been unimaginable: when it was invaded last year, Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction. Not one.

Cast your mind back to, say, January 2003 and imagine someone had told you this would be the outcome. You'd have assumed that London and Washington would now be on fire, as furious crowds filled the streets demanding the heads of leaders who had led them to war on such a manifestly false basis. Surely the garrison towns would be in revolt, as soldiers' wives and mothers, husbands and sons, bellowed their rage at the men who took their loved ones to fight a war against a danger that did not exist.

That has not been the reaction. The ISG report has been received with a weary sigh: yeah, we knew that. To express shock and anger, to demand a reckoning, is to sound like a broken record.

Of course, that's not the only reason the report has provoked yawns rather than howls. For one thing, its conclusion is hardly a surprise. We've known for 18 months that Iraq's WMD cupboard was bare. Some would say we knew on April 9 2003, when that Saddam statue was toppled: if he had had WMD, wouldn't he have used them to prevent his own fall?

Our leaders have used the intervening time to let us down gently, preparing us for the eventual news that the Baghdad tiger had no teeth. At first, George Bush and Tony Blair insisted Saddam had

WMD, ready and aimed at us. Then, when those failed to show up, they shifted ground so that, in July 2003, Blair declared: "I have absolutely no doubt at all that we will find evidence of WMD programmes." Not weapons, but programmes. When those proved elusive, it was suddenly "WMD programme-related activities".

In this way, the eventual, meagre conclusion of the Iraq Survey Group – that Saddam merely hoped to reconstitute his WMD capability – did not come as such a shock. Our expectations had been managed downward for more than a year.

To complete the process, this week's release of the report was controlled with magisterial spin. Rather than focus on the big picture – there were no WMD – much of the briefing has diverted media attention on to claims that Saddam intended to buy the favour of nations such as France, Russia and China, and individuals, including the expelled Labour MP George Galloway. That way the report can be used to discredit opponents of the war, rather than those who pushed for it.

It's hardly a surprise that the ISG document includes these crumbs of comfort for London and Washington. After all, the Iraq Survey Group is not some independent or UN-affiliated body. It was, in fact, set up by the Bush administration, in preference to having Hans Blix and his team return to Iraq to finish their inspections. It operated as an arm of the CIA; its head, Charles Duelfer, first came to prominence as an appointee of President Bush's father.

We need to strive hard to see through this cloud of smoke and remind ourselves of some basic facts about a war that has taken thousands of lives, allied and Iraqi. The warmakers always said Iraq had stockpiles of biological and chemical weapons, and was close to getting its hands on nukes – and now we know that was not true. They said Iraq had refused to comply with UN

continued on page 9

Move on? It's only the world's future at stake

continued from page 8

resolutions demanding disarmament – that, indeed, was the legal basis of the war – and now we know that Iraq had complied in the only sense that mattered, having "essentially destroyed" its illicit weapons ability by the end of 1991, according to the report.

In September 2002, Tony Blair told parliament: "I am in no doubt that the threat is serious and current" – but now we know that the "threat" was nothing of the sort, that it amounted to little more than a fond hope in the heart of Saddam Hussein.

Jack Straw says the ISG report convinces him that Saddam posed an "even greater threat" than previously understood. This is surreal logic. Would the country have been persuaded to go to war merely to stop an intention of Saddam's, one several years from even the possibility of realisation? Would parliament have voted for it? The intention of a perceived enemy does not count as grounds for war – not under international law, not under even the loosest notion of moral philosophy.

The UN charter allows for self-defence from an actual attack, not an intention. Even the advocates of pre-emptive war, a concept not permitted by the UN, agree there first has to be clear evidence of a

threat, defined as intention plus capability. Mere intention is not enough. In other words, the ISG report does not provide sufficient evidence to meet even the most hawkish neocon's definition of legitimate war. On the contrary, it proves what the sceptics said all along: that containment worked and Saddam had been tamed. War was unnecessary.

Why does any of this matter? Euro obsessives always say Britain's future is at stake. Well, in this debate, it's the world's. If this war is allowed to pass with impunity, these will be the consequences. First, "pre-emptive" wars will be deemed acceptable, even against countries that palpably pose no threat. Second, international law will become a dead letter, to be broken by powerful states at will.

And third, in Britain, a precedent will be established. From now on, a prime minister will be able to mislead parliament and public on the gravest matter – and pay no price. He will be able to say something is "beyond doubt" when underlying intelligence for his assertion is packed with doubt – and get away with it. This is where we are now and why some of us will keep banging on about it.

Source: Jonathan Freedland, The Guardian, 8 Oct 2004

A Green festival

continued from page 4

'miscellaneous'. Insurance – an outdoor public event must insure for a disaster claim of over £1 million: for this our premium is £250 (they don't offer a no-claims bonus). Ground staff deserve special mention. These Council employees staff the roadblocks, rope off and staff the car park, manhandle litter drums ... and in the event of downpour, their tractors rescue vehicles and gear from muddy fields. Their 6 am Sunday start definitely classes as 'unsocial hours'.

In giving this account I hope not

to seem obsessed with money, or, in explaining the causes behind the event's drawbacks, to sound complacent. The organisers have always kept the aims of peace and environmentalism uppermost. This year's event had slightly fewer stalls than before, probably through a stronger-than-ever rumour of closure, but noticeably more visitors, and comments have been complimentary. Another hidden aspect is the new skills organisers develop, by necessity. Or so I've found, but perhaps I was more ignorant to begin with.

Jeremy Jago

Washington's secret nuclear war

Illegal weapons of mass destruction have not only been found in Iraq but have been used against Iraqis and have even killed US troops. But Washington and its allies have tried to cover up this outrage because the chief culprit is the US itself, argue American and other experts trying to expose what they say is a war crime.

The WMD in question is depleted uranium (DU). A radioactive by-product of uranium enrichment, DU is used to coat ammunition such as tank shells and "bunker busting" missiles because its density makes it ideal for piercing armour.

Thousands of DU shells and bombs have been used in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and – both during the 1990-91 Gulf war and the ongoing conflict – in Iraq. "They're using it now, they're using it in Falluja, Baghdad is chock-a-block with DU – it's all over the place," says Major Doug Rokke, director of the US army's DU project in 1994-95.

Scientists say even a tiny particle can have disastrous results once ingested, including various cancers and degenerative diseases, paralysis, birth deformities and death. And as tiny DU particles are blown across the Middle East and beyond like a radioactive poison gas, the long-term implications for the world are deeply disturbing. DU has a "half-life" of 4.5 billion years, meaning it takes that long for just half of its atoms to decay.

Only 467 US soldiers were officially wounded during the 1990-91 Gulf war. But according to Terry Jemison at the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), of the more than 592,560 discharged personnel who served there, at least 179,310 – one third – are receiving disability compensation and over 24,760 cases were pending by September 2004. This does not include personnel still active and receiving care from the military, or those who have died. And among 168,528 veterans of the current

conflict in Iraq who have left active duty, 16% (27,571) had already sought treatment from the VA by July 2004.

"That's astronomical," says Rokke, whose team studied how to provide medical care for victims, how to clean contaminated sites, and how to train those using DU weapons. Rokke admits the exact cause for these casualties cannot be confirmed. But he insists the evidence pointing to DU is compelling. "There were no chemical or biological weapons there, no big oil well fires," he says. "So what's left?"

Dr Jenan Ali, a senior Iraqi doctor at Basra hospital's College of Medicine, says her studies show a 100% rise in child leukaemia in the region in the decade after the first Gulf war, with a 242% increase in all types of malignancies.

The director of the Afghan DU and Recovery Fund, Dr Daud Miraki, says his field researchers found evidence of DU's effect on civilians in eastern and southeastern Afghanistan in 2003 although local conditions make rigorous statistical analysis difficult.

"Many children are born with no eyes, no limbs, or tumours protruding from their mouths and eyes," Miraki told Aljazeera.net. Some newborns are barely recognisable as human, he says. Many do not survive.

Afghan and Iraqi children continue to play amid radioactive debris. But the US army will not even label contaminated equipment or sites because doing so would be an admission that DU is hazardous.

This "deceitful failure", says Rokke, contradicts the US army's own rules, such as regulation AR 700-48, which stipulates its responsibilities to isolate, label and decontaminate radioactive equipment and sites as well as to render prompt and effective medical care for all exposed individuals.

continued on page 11

Washington's secret nuclear war

continued from page 10

"This is a war crime," Rokke says. "The president is obliged to ensure the army complies with these regulations but they're deliberately violating the law. It's that simple." But these blatant violations are practically irrelevant because Rokke's Iraq mission found that DU cannot be cleaned up and there is no known medical remedy.

US President George Bush and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair used Saddam Hussein's alleged possession of illegal weapons to justify invading Iraq. But several prominent jurists hold Bush and Blair guilty of war crimes for waging DU warfare. The vice-president of the Indian Lawyers Association, Niloufer Bhagwat, sat on an international panel of judges for the unofficial International Criminal Tribunal for Afghanistan. Bhagwat and her fellow judges ruled that the US had used "weapons of extermination of present and future generations, genocidal in properties". And not just against defenceless Afghan civilians. "Bush was guilty of knowingly using DU weaponry against his own troops," Bhagwat told Aljazeera.net, "because the president knew the effects of DU could not be controlled."

A prominent US international human-rights lawyer, Karen Parker, says there are four rules derived from humanitarian laws and conventions regarding weapons:

- weapons may only be used against legal enemy military targets and must not have an adverse effect elsewhere (the territorial rule)
- weapons can only be used for the duration of an armed conflict and must not be used or continue to act afterwards (the temporal rule)
- weapons may not be unduly inhumane (the "humaneness" rule). The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 speak of "unnecessary suffering" and "superfluous injury" in this regard

• weapons may not have an unduly negative effect on the natural environment (the "environmental" rule).

"DU weaponry fails all four tests," Parker told Aljazeera.net. First, DU cannot be limited to legal military targets. Second, it cannot be "turned off" when the war is over but keeps killing. Third, DU can kill through painful conditions such as cancers and organ damage and can also cause birth defects such as facial deformities and missing limbs. Lastly, DU cannot be used without unduly damaging the natural environment.

"In my view, use of DU weaponry violates the grave breach provisions of the Geneva Conventions," says Parker. "And so its use constitutes a war crime, or crime against humanity."

Parker and others took the DU issue before the UN in 1995, and in 1996, the UN Human Rights Commission described DU munitions as weapons of mass destruction that should be banned. Despite the evidence, Rokke says Pentagon and Energy Department officials have campaigned against him and others trying to expose the horrors of DU.

That charge is echoed by Leuren Moret, a geoscientist who has worked at the Lawrence Berkeley and Lawrence Livermore nuclear weapons research laboratories in California. White House denials are part of a long-standing cover-up policy that has been exposed before, she says. "For example, the US denied using DU bombs and missiles against Yugoslavia in 1999," she told Aljazeera.net. "But scientists in Yugoslavia, Greece and Bulgaria measured elevated levels of gamma radiation in the first three days of grid and carpet bombing by the US."

Moret said: "A missile landed in Bulgaria that didn't explode and scientists identified a DU warhead. Then, Lord [George] Robertson, the head of NATO,

continued on page 12

Washington's secret nuclear war

continued from page 11

admitted in public that DU had been used." Even the US army expressed concern about the use of DU in July 1990, some six months before the outbreak of the first Gulf war. Those concerns were later echoed by Iraqi officials.

But brushing his own army's report aside – now said to be "outdated" – US President George Bush has dismissed such warnings as "propaganda". "In recent years, the Iraqi regime made false claim that the depleted uranium rounds fired by coalition forces have caused cancers and birth defects in Iraq," says Bush on his White House website. "But scientists working for the World Health Organisation, the UN Environmental Programme and the European Union could find no health effects linked to exposure to depleted uranium," he said.

Bush can point to a World Health Organisation (WHO) report in 2001 that said there was no significant risk of inhaling radioactive particles where DU weapons had been used. It said the level of radiation associated with DU debris was not particularly hazardous, but it accepted that high exposure could pose a health risk.

WHO also commissioned a scientific study shortly before the 2003 invasion of Iraq that warned of the dangers of US and British use of DU – but refused to publish its findings. The study's main author, Dr Keith Baverstock, told Aljazeera.net that "the report was deliberately suppressed" because WHO was pressed by a more powerful, pro-nuclear UN body – the International Atomic Energy Agency. WHO has rejected his claims as "totally unfounded".

The study found DU particles were likely to be blown around and inhaled by Iraqi civilians for years to come. Once inside a human body, the radioactive particles can trigger the growth of malignant tumours.

Bush's claim that the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) gives DU pollution a clean bill of health is also disingenuous. UNEP experts have yet to be allowed into Iraq, its spokesman in Geneva Michael Williams told Aljazeera.net, citing security concerns.

And a scientific body set up in 1997 by Green EU parliamentarians – the European Committee on Radiation Risk (ECRR) – found that DU posed serious health risks. An eminent Canadian scientist involved with the ECRR, Dr Rosalie Bertell, says the deadliness of DU derived not just from its radioactivity but from the durability of particles formed in the 3000-6000C heat produced when a DU weapon is fired. "The particles produced are like ceramic: not soluble in body fluid, non-biodegradable and highly toxic," she told Aljazeera.net. "They tend to concentrate in the lymph nodes, which is the source of lymphomas and leukaemia".

The US military and political establishment cannot plead ignorance. As early as October 1943, Manhattan Project scientists Arthur Compton, James Connant and Harold Urey sent a memo to their director, General Leslie Groves, saying DU could be used to create a "radioactive gas".

In 1961, two nuclear experts, Briton HE Huxley and American Geoffrey Zubay, informed the scientific community that DU targeted human DNA and "the Master Code, which controls the expression of DNA", Moret said.

In September 2000, Dr Asaf Durakovic, professor of nuclear medicine at Washington's Georgetown University, told a Paris conference of prominent scientists that "tens of thousands" of US and UK troops were dying of DU.

"There has to be a moratorium on the manufacture, sales, use and storage of DU," geoscientist Moret says, warning that this will not happen unless more American

continued on page 15

Scrap Trident – don't replace it

Trident is Britain's nuclear weapon system. It consists of four nuclear-armed submarines, one of which is on operational patrol at all times. Each submarine carries 48 nuclear warheads, each of which can be sent to a different target. Each warhead has an explosive power of up to 100 kilotons, the equivalent of 100,000 tons of conventional high explosive and 8 times the power of the atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima in 1945, killing an estimated 140,000 people. CND believes that Trident is illegal, immoral and a waste of resources. It does nothing to increase world security and undermines international efforts to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

A decision on the replacement of the Trident submarine nuclear weapons system is due in the next parliament. It is reported that the government has not yet decided what it will propose. But now is the time for us to step up our campaigning to make it clear that we don't want any kind of replacement for Trident – no strategic nukes, no tactical nukes – in fact, *no nukes at all!* Make this clear to your MP now!

The abolition of the British nuclear deterrent will only be achieved when the British Parliament finally decides to legislate British nuclear weapons out of existence. A major contribution to reaching that destination is to lobby and convince your MP not only of the dangers, but also the prohibitive costs, of researching, developing, deploying and maintaining the Trident nuclear weapons system or any new nuclear weapons. The last estimate taken in 1998 put the cost of the UK's nuclear programme at £1.5 billion a year.

Write to or make an appointment to see your local MP and ask them to:

- Ask an oral question: An "Oral Question" is asked on the Floor of the House and the responsible Secretary of State, or a Minister in their department will normally provide an answer. A typical Oral Question would be: "Will the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Policy inform the House of what his department has done to implement our agreements under the 2000 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty?"
- Table a written question: a "Written Question" is similar to an Oral Question, but is answered approximately two weeks after it is tabled;
- Table an adjournment debate: Under Parliamentary rules, an MP is entitled on application to be given a 30-minutes period during which he or she can address the House on a particular subject of their interest. Under the rule, in an Adjournment Debate a responsible Minister is obliged to give a detailed response to the points raised. This would normally provoke interventions from other MPs with interest on the subject. Like Oral Questions, Adjournment Debates are useful for stimulating debate and sometimes for eliciting information from the Government;
- Intervene and make contributions during debates on Defence and Foreign affairs;
- Table a Private Members' Bill.
- Table an Early Day Motion (EDM): An EDM is a short written statement of facts, beliefs or opinion, which is put out by an MP asking the government to take a position on a matter of policy, practice or procedure. The more MPs sign an EDM, the more effective it is in attracting press interest and stimulating public opinion and may ultimately compel the government to act.

Remember, your MP is a busy person who deals with thousands of letters. Make your letter brief (i.e. no more than one side of A4 paper), objective (indicate from the outset what it is you are asking the MP to do), relevant (stick to the subject of your letter), readable (write neatly or type your letter, if possible), and reliable (make sure your source of information is reliable).

Campaign Against Arms Trade

Braving a cold, blustery morning on 21st September, around 40 CAAT campaigners gathered outside the Bloomsbury offices of the Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO). DESO is responsible for promoting arms exports and the protest was the finale of CAAT's Fanning the Flames campaign, which calls for an end to government promotion of arms exports, particularly to countries engaged in conflict. It also marked the United Nations International Day of Peace and the opening day of Africa Aerospace & Defence 2004, the biannual arms fair held in South Africa, which DESO attends.

DESO's offices are housed in an anonymous grey building that displays nothing to suggest the weapons marketing campaigns planned within its walls. Save for a few army recruitment posters in a ground floor window, its military connections are inconspicuous to say the least and passers-by could mistake it for just another corporate office building.

CAAT campaigners gathered behind steel barriers opposite the offices carrying placards that urged the government to close DESO and to stop promoting arms exports. To the amusement of passers-by, four actors from the Theatre of War impersonated DESO civil servants, in the style of the Ministry of Silly Walks, wearing suits and bowler hats and brandishing models of rockets and missiles. They carried placards stating 'I promote arms exports in the civil service', but had thought-bubbles that stated 'I'd rather promote peace'.

The Fanning the Flames campaign is a response to New Labour continuing its supply of arms to countries engaged in armed conflicts. Despite superficial moves such as the introduction of an ethical foreign policy, and a 2002 announcement by the International Development Secretary that the arms trade "belonged in a world of the past", the government has licensed arms to twenty countries engaged

in armed conflicts including Colombia, Israel, India and Pakistan. The export of arms from the UK has only fuelled conflict in these countries, with civilians bearing the brunt of their use. The World Health Organization estimates that around 191 million people have lost their lives because of armed conflict in the twentieth century and has calculated that around 35 people are killed each hour as a direct result of armed conflict. CAAT is convinced that the closure of DESO will help reduce such suffering around the world.

Once our presence was felt and passers-by were aware of exactly why we were outside DESO's office, CAAT's Local Campaigns Co-ordinator Beccie D'Cunha gathered everyone for press photos and introduced the speakers. These included Chris Cole, former CAAT Local Campaigns Co-ordinator and now Director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and Paul Ingram, a defence economist and analyst.

Chris Cole began by criticising the government for reneging on its promises not to export arms to regions of armed conflict, and urged protesters to continue lobbying their MPs so their grievances could be channelled to the Prime Minister. He finished by reiterating how important it was to continue protesting against DESO. "One way we can begin to end the arms trade is to shut this," he said, pointing to DESO's offices.

Next up was Paul Ingram who stated that the downfall of the British arms industry was well in sight. "We could feel demoralized because today our numbers seem few, but I have news for you" he said. "The UK defence industry is in decline and we are instrumental in why it is declining - it is all down to people like you."

He explained that the Ministry of Defence's budget had declined considerably since the end of the Cold War, and that the British defence industry was losing out

continued on page 15

Washington's secret nuclear war

continued from page 12

cans realise what is happening. The Middle East has been severely contaminated, warns Moret. "That region is radioactive forever," she says, but worse is yet to come.

Moret says the air carrying DU particles takes about a year to mix with the rest of the earth's atmosphere. The radiation released by DU nuclear warfare is believed to be more than 10 times the amount dispersed by atmospheric testing. As a result, DU particles have engulfed the world in a radioactive poison gas that promises illness and death for millions.

Rokke went to Iraq a fit and healthy soldier, but the major is now beset with a

variety of illnesses and each day is a struggle. He suffers from respiratory problems and cataracts while his teeth - weakened by DU radiation - are crumbling. At least 20 of the 100 primary personnel he worked with on the US army's DU project have died. Most of the rest are ill.

Meanwhile, WHO says cancer rates worldwide are set to rise by 50% by 2020, although it does not link this publicly to DU. "They would never say that - they offered various strange explanations," said Moret. "But DU is the key factor. People will slowly die."

Source: <http://english.aljazeera.net>
Tuesday 14 September 2004

CAAT at DESO

continued from page 14

to American competition. Paul added that the government is increasingly becoming aware of public opinion - some polls put opposition to the arms trade as high as 85 percent - and as a consequence there was pressure within Whitehall to put an end to military industry subsidies. The British taxpayer currently pays between £420m-£900m in subsidies for arms exports, £16m of which pays for DESO. "When the government is aware of how strong our support actually is there will be yet another nail in the coffin of the defence industry," he promised.

After the speeches had finished, there was a minute of silence for the victims of conflict. Then it was time to head to Whitehall where a group of us would hand in a petition totalling 6167 signatures and 1015 postcards urging the Prime Minister to close DESO. The procession wound its way through central London's busy streets with campaigners handing out postcards as they walked. The civil servants from the Ministry of Silly Walks continued their street theatre en route via Covent Garden. Hundreds of postcards were handed out; the response was generally good and some

of the public showed genuine interest. Finally the petition was handed into Number 10 and the crowd dispersed, content that further pressure had been placed on the government and the closure of DESO had been brought a step closer.

Source: CAAT News, Oct/Nov 2004

Autumn Concert of classical music in aid of Amnesty International

Leela Hort
Soprano



Philip Robinson
Keyboard

Friday 22 October 2004 7.30pm

University of Nottingham
Adult Education Centre
14 Shakespeare Street
Nottingham

Tickets at the door: £5.50/£4.00