

One WORLD Column ... the first six months



**mainstreaming
Peace,
Environment,
Sustainability,
Anti-war voices**

In the Eastern Region



One WORLD

Don't worry, it may never happen

Andrew Boswell

Tara Greaves' brilliant EDP article on the day of Tony Blair's Climate Change speech called for "action to achieve a more sustainable way of life". Indeed, to encourage Green innovation, isn't it time that a Nobel Prize was created for sustainability?

Ironically, another article that day praised the business opportunities as "Demand soars for flights to Dublin" from Norwich - there should also a dummy's prize for reckless business.

These extremes reflect the predicament of our fragile world. It's seriously endangered, yet we continue to use cheap flights and buzz everywhere in cars - our mantra "Don't worry, it may never happen".

We hope a wonderful, new technology will be discovered to keep us all driving and flying for another century.

Some American corporations have grasped biofuels as an extremely lucrative market, especially in the expanding, Asian countries, where the Indians and Chinese, 2.5-billion people, are set to dwarf economic growth within the United States itself. Just last month, the Pure Energy Corporation (PEC) and American Biofuels (ABF) announced exports of biodiesel to these countries.

Given the huge energy demand of the US - a major reason for the disastrous Iraq War - wouldn't you think the Americans would want to keep their biofuels to help make their own country more sustainable?

Greenwash, now a dictionary word, describes misleading disinformation used to project an environmentally responsible corporate image. Are biofuels being spun in greenwash by interests more interested in making money than sustainable transport?

Norfolk biofuels industry lobbyists, such as Georgina Roberts in this paper recently, bandy about figures of 70%, or even greater, for carbon emission savings. However, even if correct, these large, convincing sounding, figures are based on the pure, unblended fuel before many times dilution with conventional diesel at the pump.

The actual government figures, from research, for unblended biodiesel savings are 40% - 56%. If a market were to be developed on a quick-growth, highly intensive, agribusiness model, the UK whole-market savings could be 0.8 - 3.2% by 2010. It's worth noting, that taking an average of 2.0%, then the same result would be achieved by the typical 10,000 miles a year driver reducing their driving by 200 miles a year.

True sustainability requires introducing a technology with care, so as not to introduce more environmental problems along the way. With biofuels, this means protecting local sources of food production, ensuring land use is not expanded at the expense of biodiversity, restricting practices that lead to soil depletion, eliminating chemical fertilizer regimes to prevent emissions of the dangerous greenhouse gas (GHG) nitrous oxide, and passing legislation to prevent the use of any GM technology in the biofuels cycle.

The Large Scale Biofuels Concern Group is advocating that the public are presented with the real facts - ungreenwashed, and that the socially and environmentally sound applications of this technology are then promoted and funded. Sustainable development requires an accreditation system to ensure all suppliers meet high carbon saving targets, and producers can demonstrate sustainability of their supply-chains. It also means much greater emphasis on small-scale production units, eg on farm, which minimize GHGs from transport costs, and really benefit the local communities. EEDA should be funding more research into such smaller projects.

Localised, small scale, biofuels, are being developed elsewhere in the UK. For example, Pembrokeshire Bio Energy, a farmers' co-operative which supplies biomass for automated heating of buildings such as hotels, swimming pools and homes. Let's see similar, exemplar, small scale schemes in Norfolk, instead of the exploitation of our heritage by big business.

The "Green Fuels" greenwash is distracting motorists from addressing the real issue that we need to be cutting world wide emissions by tens rather than units of percentages. We should demand that the Government urgently introduce a radical sustainability policy, including truly sustainable biofuels. A slower and more sustainable introduction of biofuels would inevitably yield less, short-term - perhaps less than 1% UK GHG savings by 2010.

But a wider sustainability policy would also reduce use of private cars, short haul air flights, make huge investments in public transport, develop electric and hydrogen transport, and introduce incentives for energy efficiency including domestic solar panels and small-scale wind systems.

Alas, no politician is yet prepared to say it - we need to cut private car mileage not by hundreds of miles, but by thousands of mile each year. One of those Sustainability Nobel prizes should go to the Transport ministers in the country, which first implements an integrated sustainability policy; otherwise, it may take an environmental "September 11th" to compel Governments to take real action.

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One WORLD

Who Dares Wins

Marguerite Finn

Recently I wrote about five young men whose **courage to refuse** to serve with the Israeli Defence Forces earned them two years in jail.

Today I am delighted to report that the five – Haggai Matar, Matan Kaminer, Noam Bahat, Shimri Tzameret and Adam Maor – were released from jail on 15 September.

They had to endure several more days of nerve-racking uncertainty as to their future before learning that they had been permanently dismissed from army service. Had they not received this dismissal, they would have been required to re-enlist or face further imprisonment if they refused. The military committee, in deciding to exempt them, particularly noted their contribution to society before they were taken into custody and also during their incarceration where they served as tutors and helped other prisoners in various ways.

Adam Maor said: “In spite of the heavy punishment we received, we feel victorious. We will continue working to end the occupation and to contribute to society.” The loyalty and devotion to Israel of the refuseniks is unquestionable, “We refused out of love for this place and for the people who live here. All along the way, we asked to do alternative service to contribute in our own way to the community. With our release, we will work according to these principles”, affirmed Matan Kaminer.

While still at school, Haggai Matar took part in a joint summer school for Israelis and Palestinians, and subsequently he became active in various anti-occupation groups. He visited Salfit in the Occupied West Bank and what he saw there convinced him that he had no option but “to refuse to be part of an army occupying another people and destroying Israeli society”. What he would say to anyone else considering military refusal? “I would say ‘Hey, you are already doing the most important thing –

and that is *considering* itself’. The problem with Israeli politics these days is that the majority just doesn’t stop to think, to ask the question: ‘What is the *moral* thing to do?’”

I asked him what people outside of Israel could do to help. He replied, “It is very important for us, and for future refuseniks, to get support from people all over the world. It makes you feel better in your hardest times in prison, that you are a part of something greater, international.”

Haggai told me that there is a growing movement for change in Israeli society. Israel is one of the most militarised societies on earth, yet Haggai says, “Now, there are about 40-60 percent who either don’t enlist or don’t finish their first year in the army. This is an amazing figure, not talked about too often in Israel.” Is this, perhaps, the outward manifestation of the internal struggle engaging the minds of many soldiers serving in the occupied territories: Can they treat the thousands of Palestinians passing through the road blocks like equal human beings? Dr. Ian Gibson M.P. may have been asking the same question when the Palestinian ambulance taking him to hospital for urgent medical treatment for a stroke, was held up for 1½ hours at an Israeli checkpoint on Saturday.

Israeli culture and media portray a world in which the use of force is the normal means of solving political problems. Ilan Pappé, lecturer in Political Science at Haifa University, says, “Israel in 2004 is a paranoid society led by a fanatical political elite, determined to bring the conflict to an end by force and destruction, whatever the price to its society or its potential victims -- while the rest of the world watches helpless and bewildered.” He fears that “the critical instincts of both intellectuals and journalists have petered out in the last four years. There is an ethical void which allows the government to go on killing unarmed Palestinians and, thanks to curfews and long periods of closure, starving the society under occupation.” A recent report by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) states that the Palestinian economy ‘will sink to mere subsistence’ without aid and urges immediate action to shore up small and medium-sized business in the occupied territories.

This is Haggai’s world – but it is ours too. Like Haggai, we must ask questions, like why the UN resolution 242 of 1967 calling for the withdrawal from the occupied territories has been ignored by Israel for over 35 years – with no action from the West?

We owe it to Haggai and all young Israelis fighting for justice, to demand answers. I am grateful to Haggai Matar in Israel for his input and inspiration

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One WORLD

Remembering Falluja

Ian Sinclair

The experienced Middle East journalist Robert Fisk argues the Americans have faced the same problem in Iraq from the start: "explaining how Iraqis who they allegedly came to 'liberate' should want to kill them." The questions raised about US tactics in Iraq by Steve Snelling in last Saturday's EDP are thus very pertinent. The recent uprising in Najaf confirms Fisk's thesis, however nowhere is this paradox more apparent than in Falluja, where, during a week in early April, US forces killed over 600 Iraqis and wounded over 1,000.

For the Western media, events in Falluja began with the murder and mutilation of four US private security guards on March 31. However, the Iraqis know different. In April 2003 US soldiers killed 18 protestors during a demonstration. After six months of occupation, US forces had killed at least 40 people in the city. In response to the killing of an American soldier, on March 27 US Marines undertook a "sweep" through the city, killing at least six Iraqi civilians, including an 11 year-old boy. It was in this heightened atmosphere that the private security guards were murdered.

On April 5 the US military sealed off the city, cut the power and launched military operations, using heavy artillery, cluster bombs, 70-ton main battle tanks, F-16 fighter-bombers and Apache helicopters. The US commander explained that US marines are "trained to be precise in their firepower", and that "95% of those killed were military age males."

However, eyewitness accounts from those who managed to flee the city, international observers and journalists contradict the official US story. During the incursion, US soldiers occupied the city's main hospital, a violation of the Geneva Convention. Ibrahim Younis, the Iraqi emergency coordinator for Medecins Sans Frontieres, said "the Americans put a sniper position on top of the hospital's water tower and had troops in the single-story building." Mr. Younis noted this meant many wounded died because of inadequate healthcare.

The heavy use of snipers by US forces is confirmed by testimony from both sides. A 21-year old Marine Corporal told the Los Angeles Times that Falluja was "a sniper's dream." He continued: "Sometimes a guy will go down, and I'll let him scream a bit to destroy the morale of his buddies, then I'll use a second shot." However, it is clear US snipers killed many Iraqi civilians. Journalist Dahr Jamail saw "an endless stream of women and children who have been sniped by the Americans." Jo Wilding, a human rights campaigner from Bristol said, "the times I have been shot at - once in an ambulance and once on foot trying to deliver medical supplies - it was US snipers in both cases."

Contrary to US military claims of precision firepower, the director of the town's general hospital, Rafie al-Issawi, estimated that the vast majority of the dead were women, children and the elderly.

With a few exceptions, the facts presented above have been largely ignored by the mainstream media in the UK. The chief of the Falluja delegation for the ongoing negotiations with the US said, "we are facing what can be called... war crimes." Amnesty International said they were "deeply concerned at the ever mounting civilian death toll" and that "the parties to the conflict have disregarded international humanitarian law." Even Adnan Pachachi, widely seen as the most pro-American member of the (then operating) Iraqi Governing Council said "we consider the action carried out by US forces as illegal and totally unacceptable."

In Najaf, the US forces implemented similar tactics to Falluja - sniping civilians, cutting the power and limiting access to hospitals. According to American commanders as many as 1,000 Iraqi fighters may have been killed in Najaf, compared to just 11 American deaths.

Last Friday, the vision of an independent Iraq, free of US/UK troops, gained an unlikely supporter. In its editorial the Financial Times argued "the time has come to consider whether a structural withdrawal... can chart a path out of the current chaos." And it is chaos. On Sunday 13 Iraqis were killed in Baghdad when US helicopters fired on a crowd of unarmed civilians. On Monday a US air strike on Falluja killed over 15 people, including an ambulance driver and two nurses when an ambulance was hit. On Tuesday 47 people were killed and over 100 injured in a bomb blast in Baghdad, and 12 policemen were killed in Baquba.

Only a complete Coalition withdrawal will bring this bloodshed to an end, because, as Kofi Annan said last October, "as long as there's an occupation, the resistance will grow."

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One WORLD

Patriots and scoundrels

Rupert Read

When I was at University, I took part in a debate. I spoke in favour of the motion, 'Patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel.'

Twenty years on, little has changed. For instance, I took no pleasure in this summer's Olympics: the naked jingoism of the media coverage, even that of the (supposedly 'objective') BBC, made the whole thing too painful to bear. I didn't necessarily want some British bloke I had never heard of to beat a skilful sporting opponent from another nation. Why should I 'support' someone, just because they are British? Isn't it a bit *sad* to feel happy if someone who you have never met beats someone else you have never met (but who has a foreign accent) at Synchronized Underwater Weightlifting?!

You could call me an *internationalist*. And an internationalist surely cannot be a *nationalist*. And yet...Some of my cultural heroes call themselves 'patriots': Billy Bragg, in Britain; Michael Moore, in America.

And when I was campaigning in the Council elections, this June, I noticed something that surprised me: Many of the houses which were flying St. George's England flags (the elections took place about the same time as the 'Euro 2004' Soccer competition) were also sporting posters for one political party or another, including (indeed, *especially*) my own Party, the Greens.

That made me stop and think: Perhaps those people who identify with their country are not narrowly nationalistic? Perhaps many patriots are people who really care about their locality, and about their whole world, too.

Why else would it be that people supporting their national soccer team were also supporting political parties, parties trying to change things in a positive way? Maybe the reason why there were England flags and party-political-posters hanging from the same windows was that the same people who cared enough to shout for their country also cared enough to shout for the Party that they believed would

make that country better. But then the following worry came to me: is Britain really a force for good in the world?

Next week, Norwich will be joining in the celebrations of 'Battle of Britain Week'. What is this event really for? Is it for the remembrance of past heroism? Or is the reason that our rulers fund events such as this that it helps them to justify present-day atrocities and illegalities? In the run-up to the attack on Iraq, in 2002-3 just as in 1990-1, we were often told that Saddam was 'a new Hitler'. This was silly propaganda: Hitler led the most powerful armed forces in the world, whereas Saddam's army was a pitiful remnant only. But invoking the ghost of the Second World War seemed to help Blair and Bush 'justify' their illegal war of aggression.

When the British Army is illegally occupying and subjugating another people, having first blasted many tens of thousands of those people to their deaths, some of us may find it hard not to feel ashamed of our country. It is hard to have any enthusiasm for the flag, when that flag has far too often thoughtlessly been waved -- in our name -- over the bodies of dead foreigners.

We humans need community. But too often, patriotism doesn't give us any real community. Instead, it gives us only a mythical sense of belonging, a sense that can then be exploited by unscrupulous leaders.

So I am still unsure. Does patriotism always lead to perdition? Or is it only that the worst scoundrels -- such as the 'leaders of the free world' -- use and *abuse* patriotism, to try to get away with murder? Is the problem really with the way that politicians and Generals *twist* love of country so that it turns into hate for certain foreigners?

It cannot be right to say, "We should not speak against war, when our troops are fighting", if what they are fighting in is an immoral war. It cannot be right to say, "My country right or wrong". That kind of disgraceful attitude is exactly what led to Hitlerism -- and more recently, in the U.S., to the appallingly authoritarian 'Patriot Act' (introduced as a response to the events of September 11th 2001) which virtually abolishes free speech and 'habeas corpus'. Would a true patriot support the destruction of the very liberties for which the people have fought so hard, the very liberties that make one's country truly *worth* defending?

So: is being a patriot nevertheless quite compatible with being someone who cares about their neighbourhood, and about the planet as a whole?

Given the number of people who are keen to call themselves 'patriotic', we should hope that the answer is 'Yes'. Who knows; maybe one day, when patriotism is identified not with being a 'Little Englander' but with one's country doing the right thing the world over, then it will be *easy* for everyone to be proud of being British.

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One WORLD

Rethinking Crime and Punishment

Ian Sinclair

Currently, the two main political parties in this country are going head-to-head over who has the toughest policies on crime. In July, Tony Blair heralded “the end of the liberal, social consensus on law and order.” Not to be outdone, Michael Howard responded by arguing rising crime “is the reality of Britain today”. If elected, Howard promises to send “an unequivocal message to offenders – if you break the law you will be punished.”

However, these tough policies are not based on any objective reality, but rather implemented in response to the general public’s often irrational fear of crime – a fear which our political masters, along with a pliant mass media (more about this below), have created in the first place.

The authoritative British Crime Survey (BCS) consistently concludes, “people generally have a poor knowledge of crime levels and trends” and of the criminal justice system. This misperception is based upon two commonly held beliefs. Firstly, most of the public believe recorded crime is rising. However, crime has been falling across the western world, with the BCS showing the number of crimes has fallen by 17% since 1999. Secondly, the popular perception is that we are soft on crime, with the system weighted too far in favour of the criminal. The 2000 BCS found over 75% of respondents believed the courts treated young offenders too leniently.

However, the fact is this country is currently experiencing the most punitive period of criminal justice for decades. The latest official figures show that 111,600 people were sentenced to immediate custody last year – the highest figure for at least 75 years! The courts are finding roughly the same number of serious offenders guilty as they were ten years ago, but are dealing with them much more harshly. A 2003 report by the Prison Reform Trust, noted that between 1991 and 2001, magistrates tripled the

proportion they sent to prison (from 5% to 16%) while in crown courts it rose from 46% to 64%. Currently, England and Wales has more prisoners serving life sentences than the rest of the European Union put together.

Society’s love affair with imprisonment continues, even though it is clear locking up people, especially children, does not work. The reoffending rates for Young Offender Institutions are as high as 84%, with a six-month custodial sentence costing the taxpayer an average of £21,000. By comparison, alternative non-custodial options for a similar six month period cost as little as £6,000 and have markedly lower rates of reoffending. The journalist Johann Hari summarises: “The choice is not between ‘tough’ and ‘soft’ it is between effective and useless. ‘Tough’ policies... just don’t work. It is not those of us who want rehabilitation who are betraying the mugged grannies and the burgled primary schools – it is the Howards and the Blunketts, who choose facile posturing over policies that actually work.”

So why is there a gigantic chasm between the public perception of crime and punishment and the reality? Most commentators agree that the media play a significant role in the public’s misperception of crime. Commissioning a review of the literature on public attitudes to crime in the UK, the organisation Rethinking Crime and Punishment concluded “the media misrepresents the levels of occurrence and the nature of criminal acts.” Interestingly, the BCS found those who read tabloid newspapers tended to have a poorer knowledge of crime and criminal justice than others, with 43% of tabloid readers thinking the crime rate had increased a lot compared to 26% of broadsheet readers.

We need to revolutionise the way we think about crime and punishment. We need fresh policies – that actually work. Building more prisons is not the answer, because, to paraphrase Michael Howard, prison does not work. The Government needs to be pressured into introducing policies that tackle the root causes of crime – poverty, unemployment and social exclusion. During the 80s and 90s, while Britain experienced a dramatic rise in poverty and unemployment, countries like Germany and France pursued policies designed to redistribute wealth and protect vulnerable members of society. At the start of the 80s recorded crime was roughly the same in Britain and France (3.5 million), but by the end of the decade it had fallen to 3 million in France, but increased to 5.5 million in Britain.

As the public’s primary source of information, the media must also change, improving the way it reports crime issues. Rather than simply focusing on sensational, violent crime, the media need to explore the wider, societal problems that lead people to commit crime in the first place.



One WORLD

Courage to Refuse

Marguerite Finn

Not a lot of people know that, Michael Caine might have said about the 'refusenik' situation in Israel. Little information about their plight appears in our newspapers in the UK. However, in Norfolk we "do different" and should acquaint ourselves with the principled refusal of a growing number of Israelis to serve in the occupied territories of Palestine and the effect that this is having on the Jewish community in Israel and abroad.

A solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict seems further away than ever when set against the worsening cycle of violence, death and destruction in Gaza, where Palestinian homes are reduced to rubble, families made homeless and innocent civilians and Israeli soldiers killed.

Ariel Sharon's plan for unilateral disengagement from Gaza has failed to gain majority support within his own Likud party and over the past year Israel has embarked on a large building programme in the West Bank where a minimum of 3,700 homes are being built with tacit US approval. This development has reinforced the fears of all those who want peace, that the intention to "retain in perpetuity" major Jewish settlements on the West Bank (illegal in International Law) will make *any* solution virtually impossible. Under the terms of the 'Road Map' endorsed by the Israeli Cabinet, Israel was asked to freeze all settlement activity and to dismantle 51 out-posts. The exact opposite appears to be happening.

It is against this background that the 'refusenik' movement is gathering momentum.

Currently at the forefront of the movement are five young men who chose to go to prison rather than serve with the Israeli Defence Forces in the Occupied Territories. Noam, Haggi, Matan, Shimri and Adam are ordinary young people, typical of their generation. Their protest began while they were at High School. They were amongst 300 signatories of the "High School Seniors Letter" in which teenagers shortly to be conscripted wrote to Prime Minister Sharon stating that they would not take part in the

oppression of the Palestinian people by serving in the Israeli army. They are to be released from jail on 15 September – but they may be re-arrested if the army demands they serve or face further imprisonment. This movement of youthful refuseniks is called *Shministim* and, when combined with other groups like *Yesh Gvul* ('there is a limit'), *Seruv*, and *Courage to Refuse*, whose reserve officers published the "Combatants Letter" which now has over 500 signatures, brings the total number of refuseniks to around 1000.

Powerful and moving statements have been made by refuseniks of all ages and reflect a common realisation that – as 19 year old Daniel Tsal put it – "in the 37 years of occupation we have become gradually more violent, disdainful and racist towards Arab culture – I did not understand that the majority of the Palestinian people know only a life full of check-points, bulldozers, the uprooting of trees, humiliation and killings." The harsh sentences meted out to the young refuseniks and the refusal to grant them Conscientious Objector status, reflect the Government's anxiety that their refusal will encourage others. They have good reason to be worried. The Israeli public generally are not yet sympathetic to refuseniks, but the fact that 344 faculty members from a number of Israeli universities have signed a declaration of support for their students and lecturers who refuse to serve as soldiers in the occupied territories, indicates a move away from the militarised culture. Bereaved Israeli parents have recently formed a group to campaign against conscription. Things are slowly changing in Israel thanks to the courage of the refuseniks.

Outside of Israel there is support too: Last October, 60 members of the European Parliament expressed "solidarity with the group of Israeli Air Force pilots who declared they would refuse to fly missions that could endanger civilians in the West Bank and Gaza".

Michael Ben Yair, a former Israeli Attorney General says of the situation: "Israel's security can not be based only on the sword; it must rather be based on our principles of moral justice and on peace with our neighbours – an occupation regime undermines those principles of moral justice and prevents the attainment of peace. Thus, that regime endangers Israel's existence. It is against this background that one must view the refusal of IDF reservist officers and soldiers to serve in the territories – their refusal to serve is an act of conscience that is justified and recognised in every democratic regime. History's verdict will be: *their refusal was the act that restored our moral backbone.*"

I am grateful to Mrs Jean Davis & Norfolk Jewish Peace Group for their input and encouragement.



One WORLD

Ethics must be part of Science Training

Jacqui McCarney

From throwing a cup of Ribena from the high chair, to finding how tall a lego tower can grow before it collapses, to marvelling at a jam jar of minnows, young children display all the attributes of a natural scientist. It is no surprise that primary school science is often the most popular subject on the curriculum. The awe and wonder of discovering eyes on the end of antennae on the garden snail and the hush surrounding the incubator as a class of six and seven year olds watch a tiny beak emerge from an egg means that this subject also becomes closely associated with a sense of reverence.

Reverence and intimacy with the natural world go hand in hand. Many scientists describe having deeply profound spiritual experience through their work. Einstein wrote, "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed"

We could happily place our trust and the care of our ecosystem in the safe hands of such respectful souls. However, nearly 200 years ago Mary Shelley warned against the dangers of complacency - "Frankenstein" dramatically spelt out the horrors resulting from the clever scientist whose sole pursuit is a blinkered obsession with knowledge. Today, public trust in science is at an all time low. From nanotechnology, animal experimentation to GM's, the public has grown suspicious and cynical. When scientists seem divorced from the effects of what they do it is not surprising that the public become distrustful.

Today, scientists may invent or discover thing that are capable of wiping out the human race and it is only after the work is completed that we attempt to put restrictions on their use. By this time it is often too late, the "Pandora's Box" of nuclear and biological weapons, human cloning, GM's and climate change are a constant threat.

It is essential that we sacrifice some areas of knowledge as too abhorrent to research - science does not need to always be expanding. As Einstein again said "Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius – and a lot of courage to move in the opposite direction". If the rule of science is that knowledge is all, without ethical or environmental considerations, then it is time we changed the rule.

Science for Global Responsibility (SGR) has done just that. It is an organization of about 600 UK scientists supported by many eminent names, most famously, Prof Stephen Hawking, whose aim is to promote "principles of openness, accountability, peace, social justice and environmental sustainability". They publish advice on ethical careers in science and offer support for those scientists who wish to retain their integrity and independence. Their work involves research, education and lobbying.

It is a depressing reflection on our education system that somewhere between the ages of 6 and 26 a student of science acquires a huge number of facts but loses a sense of reverence. An absence of a mature morality may go unnoticed by an examining board but may be very costly to humanity. It is incumbent on us to provide a richer more holistic education for our young scientists and to ensure that the integrity of both life and the scientific process is protected.

Political and commercial interests are a great threat to this integrity and are in danger of plucking the soul out of science. The level (estimated at 80%) at which scientific research is funded by big corporations, driven by the desire for profits and out of control economic growth, is becoming quite frightening. Dr David Kelly's tragic death illustrates the problems faced by scientists involved in work with high political and commercial stakes.

We need scientists who can see the moral and ethical issues, and are not prepared to accept funding from industries which are trying to grow to quickly at the expense of ethics.

There is no shortage of challenging and essential work from the global to the local.

As the government's Chief Scientist has said several times climate change needs to be urgently tackled. But don't forget, we need sustainable and wholesome ways of ending world hunger - and not by GMs produced by greedy companies - we need new clean energy technologies, and we need to decommission our nuclear weapons and nuclear power stations.



One WORLD

How torture can be eliminated

Ian Sinclair

The profoundly horrifying images of torture in Abu Ghraib shocked many in the UK – could people from our own nation be involved in similar brutalities?

History actually shows that torture often goes hand in hand with warfare, as does rape and other horrors. These awful acts manifest themselves in most military forces. We know that American forces are culpable in Iraq.

But let's look honestly at our own part of this legacy. The 100 men holding out against 3,000 Zulus at Rorke's Drift in 1879 is portrayed as a glorious military victory, in films such 'Zulu'. However 'Zulu Victory', published last year, written by two retired British officers, shows that after the battle, senior British officers and enlisted men of a force sent to relieve the garrison killed hundreds of wounded Zulu prisoners in revenge. Some were bayoneted, some hanged and others buried alive in mass graves.

Our national conscience has many similar "scars" – in the 1950s Malaya independence struggle, there was vicious conduct by the British forces, who routinely beat up Chinese squatters. There were cases of bodies of dead guerrillas being exhibited in public, and in 1952 a photograph of a Marine Commando holding two guerrillas' heads caused a public outcry.

In Kenya, British forces inflicted brutalities including slicing off ears, boring holes in eardrums, flogging until death, pouring paraffin over suspects who were then set alight and burning eardrums with lit cigarettes. Former members of the Mau Mau independence movement are currently trying to sue the British government for these human rights abuses from the 1950s.

Last year, the journalist Natasha Walter, citing medical and police records, reported that 650 Kenyan women say they have been raped by British soldiers on exercise in the region over the past thirty years. Their nature and number suggest these rapes were not simply committed by a few soldiers –

one woman said that she was caught up in an attack in which at least twelve soldiers raped six women.

Then Iraq - torture by British soldiers has been extensively documented by the International Committee of the Red Cross and Amnesty International.

A notorious case occurred in September 2003, when British soldiers arrested seven hotel employees in Basra. Driven to a military base, Kifah Taha said "they started beating us as soon as we arrived." The British soldiers gave the prisoners footballers' names and made them dance. Taha explained, "They said if we didn't remember our names they would increase the beating." One of the prisoners, Baha Mousa, died in British custody, as a result of being "kickboxed". Taha himself was so badly beaten that the British military medical report noted, "it appears he was assaulted... and sustained severe bruising to his upper abdomen, right side of chest, left forearm and left upper inner thigh."

Baha Mousa's family was recently in London, presenting their case to the High Court. His family's lawyer, Phil Shiner, is also helping Iraqis pursue 26 other reports of unlawful killings, eight of torture and two of serious injury. The Ministry of Defence has investigated 93 allegations of abuse by British soldiers in Iraq. Further, the allegations made last week by three Britons held at Guantanamo Bay, suggest that British officials were complicit in human rights abuses including beatings, sexual humiliation and holding a gun to a detainee's head during interrogation.

As lawyer, Mr Shiner says "This case involves issues which are not only important to the victims and their families and their right to redress ... but significant in ... ensuring that future conflicts, occupation and peacekeeping operations are subject to human rights law."

Given this serious evidence, we must demand that our armed forces put in place a culture which totally and finally eliminates these breaches in international law.

Internal military inquiries will solve little: Amnesty International notes Royal Military Police investigations are "shrouded in secrecy and lack the level of public scrutiny required by international standards."

A systematic ("top-down") review of the military should be undertaken with the objective of developing totally new approaches to their training, command structures and operational procedures so that torture ever being used by British forces again is precluded. Further the armed forces should be under continual external scrutiny, under British law, by external agencies, including human rights and legal experts.

Concerning the events at Rorke's Drift in 1879, the authors of 'Zulu Victory' note "the British government and public thought it was better to sweep it under the carpet." We must not "sweep under the carpet" recent events of brutality by the British soldiers in Iraq.



One WORLD

From Hiroshima to World Peace

Jacqui McCarney

6th August 1945 :the innocuous sounding “Little Boy” drops on Hiroshima - a huge flash like the sun falling to earth, a mushroom cloud, vaporized bodies, a flattened city - 66,000 people die instantly. 9th August 1945 : “Fat Man” drops on Nagasaki. A fireball kills 39,000 people instantly. Clouds of radioactive filth engulf both cities - radioactive diseases, leukemia and cancers linger for years - combined death toll by 1950 is 350,000. People still die from it.

Not military targets, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were cities filled with men and women and children and animals who had no idea they were about to die. Gandhi said “The soul of Japan may recover”, and asked “*what will happen to the soul of America?*”. From Hiroshima, Vietnam, numerous proxy wars to Iraq, we see that war breeds war - the unequivocal lesson of America history. Nearly 60 years later, America is still dropping bombs on civilian populations, increasing the likelihood of terrorist attack, and increasing the feeling of fear and isolation among its citizens.

It is impossible to justify modern warfare when the target is largely innocent men, woman and children. At the beginning of the last century 90% of war casualties were military. By its end, 95% of war casualties were civilian. Eleven thousand is a conservative estimate of those Iraqis killed since the beginning of hostilities but who will count the numbers who continue to die from the increased childhood and adult cancers as a result of the use of depleted uranium.

The great achievements of many international treaties, painstakingly negotiated, show what can and MUST be accomplished - 1907: Hague Conventions; 1945: the UN Charter; 1948: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; 1949 & 1977: Geneva Conventions; and 1946: Nuremberg Principles. These make it illegal to cause unnecessary suffering, exercise a disproportionate use of military force, use weapons that do not distinguish between military and civilian targets, and create long-term damage to the environment.

Britain has signed up to all of them, but as our government ignores them, they are the basis for challenging it to cease its hypocrisy, and begin to fulfill its pledges and commitments towards a war-free and nuclear-free world. But Geoff Hoon recently announced plans to make “defence” even more hi-tech - so the dominant can inflict great damage from a distance. Modern warfare has become a cowardly unequal battle increasingly favouring the richer nations.

On nuclear weapons specifically: the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) commits its signatories to work “in good faith” for the abolition of nuclear weapons; and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) bans all nuclear test explosions. Britain has ratified both of these treaties, but has done nothing to comply with the NPT pledge to work for nuclear disarmament - we have in fact joined in with U.S. in efforts to undermine it while loudly claiming to be in support. And along with the U.S. we are planning to circumvent the CTBT by building testing facilities at Aldermaston which will give the necessary information without actual explosions.

The 60th anniversary of the bombings on Japan is an important year. Nearly 190 States will meet at UN Headquarters to consider developments affecting the NPT Treaty at its 2005 Review Conference. Issues affecting the purpose, operation and implementation of the Treaty and strengthening measures must be approved and agreed.

If the US carries on with its strategy of world dominance, terrorism will continue to escalate and we the people of the world can look forward to a 21st century in which our TV screens will continue to satellite images of endless - brutality, bloodshed, violence and human suffering.

Where lies the hope? The 75 million who signed Manifesto 2000 for a peaceful 21st century, and the millions of voices raised on February 15th 2003 from London to Sydney calling for another way. Behind these millions are 500 organizations in the UK alone working for peace. The internet has energized these groups and allowed communication links across the world. This is the “other Superpower” - people who can threaten to topple any government that takes its people into unnecessary war, as the people of Spain did in a magnificent show of true democracy in action.

People everywhere must work to stop their governments developing further nuclear weapons, and to really meet the NPT treaties objectives. These themes are currently explored further in the Norwich Cathedral “Hiroshima to World Peace” exhibition, remembering Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

I am grateful to Davida Higgin and Jean Davis for inspiration and research materials.

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One WORLD

WMDs, right here, in East Anglia

Rupert Read

The "planning, preparation, initiation or waging of...a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances", is a crime against peace (Nuremberg Principle VI.a).

Sixty five years ago, Nazi Germany initiated a war of aggression. Two years later, Japan did the same. Their rulers were rightly found guilty of crimes against peace at Nuremberg and elsewhere.

Fifty nine years ago, next week, the first true weapons of mass destruction dropped on the unsuspecting civilian population of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with the most appalling results. Opinions differ about whether this was a war crime, for which the American President and military should have been held criminally responsible, under the Nuremberg principles. I believe it was, but I can see the counter-arguments.

Two years ago, the British people were told that Iraq had WMDs, and that therefore we should support the Americans in their pre-emptive war against Iraq.

Given that we now know that there was no reliable intelligence that Iraq had any WMDs, what is the difference between a war of aggression and a 'pre-emptive' war?

We were seriously misled over Iraq's alleged WMDs. With 40 MPs writing to Kofi Annan, this week, calling for the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to rule on the UK involvement in Iraq, this unprovoked attack on Iraq may yet be judged internationally for what it was – a war crime.

But it gets worse. Iraq *had* no WMDs, only lots of oil. But America and Britain *DO* have WMDs. Hundreds – thousands – of them. Where? All over Britain, in nuclear bases. Like the pretty village of Lakenheath, where the EDP is sold next door to an ugly American military base.

Last month, some brave friends of mine, most of them former UEA students, decided to inspect Britain's WMDs.

They cut their way into Burghfield, near Aldermaston, distributing leaflets informing the base personnel of the criminality of the Trident nuclear weapons at Burghfield.

Why is Trident illegal?

The laws of war require military force to be proportionate to the objective. The use of nuclear weapons can never be justified. They cannot distinguish between civilians and military targets. The horrific effects of nuclear weapons cross borders. In 1996, the ICJ ruled that even the 'mere' threat of use of nuclear weapons would be unlawful except possibly if the very survival of the State was at stake.

The Trident weapons system threatens the rest of the world. It says, even to countries which, like Iraq, pose no threat to the survival of Britain, "You!: Damn well do as we, and our American allies, say; otherwise, *you're dead.*" In March 2002, our Defence Secretary, Geoff Hoon, threatened explicitly to use nuclear weapons against Iraq.

Trident is a *war crime* waiting to happen - its possession without any serious attempt to negotiate it away, is illegal, for exactly the same reason that it was illegal for Hitler to plan to attack Poland, for Japan to plan to attack Pearl Harbour, and for America and Britain to plan to attack Iraq.

The UK signed the (nuclear) Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1968, agreeing "in good faith" to work to cease the nuclear arms race leading to complete disarmament. That's probably the same "good faith" that Tony Blair has shown, over Iraq's supposed WMDs! But, I hear you ask, if we do not keep our "deterrent", how will we stop the threats of 'terrorism' and of 'rogue states'?

The first step would be to stop terrorizing the world, ourselves. To stop being the poodle – or rather, rottweiler – of the world's leading rogue state, a state that shows no interest whatsoever in abiding by any international agreements, be they on climate change, WMDs, or Iraq. I am referring, of course, to the U.S.A.

It is time for, we, the citizens of Britain to say "We will not be hypocrites any longer". If we are to deny Iraq the right to hold onto its (non-existent!) WMDs, we must give up our own.

The 'Burghfield six' go on trial in September. You can go to court, listen to their powerful arguments for why they should be found 'Not Guilty'. Or: you can do as they did. If our government will not let go of its WMDs, oughtn't we to take matters into our own hands? Isn't that what our shared humanity calls us to do? If we believe in the rule of international law, mustn't we take all necessary measures to rid the world of WMDs that might one day be used – *in our name*?

[Thanks to Maggie Charnley, Zina Zelter and Kathryn Amos for research - and inspiration - for this column.]

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One WORLD

'Celebrate Humanity' – the Sporting Way

Marguerite Finn

Readers of a certain age may remember the hit song of the Kinks, "Dedicated Follower of Fashion":

'They seek him here, they seek him there,
His clothes are loud, but never square,
It will make or break him so he's got to buy the best,
'Cause he's a dedicated follower of fashion.'

With the 2004 Olympic Games only a few days away, these words are a poignant reminder of the enormous power of peer pressure and targeted marketing.

Garments bearing leading brand names and the Olympic logo will be sought after fashion items. Perhaps this is the time to think about what happens to the people who make these clothes.

The promotional caption for the 2004 Olympics is "Celebrate Humanity". It is a noble motto and it reflects the aim of the Olympic Charter: "everywhere to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of man, with a view to encouraging the establishment of a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity". The International Olympic Committee (IOC) exists to see that all connected with the Olympics abide by the principles of the Charter.

Sportswear is big business. In 2002 it was worth more than US\$58 billion worldwide. Not surprising that all the top brands are vying for a slice of that market – and its profits! Customers constantly demand goods at ever lower prices, forcing companies to choose suppliers who can manufacture at low cost - whatever the 'knock-on' effects on the workers. The majority of workers in the sportswear industry are women whose health, children and family life are suffering from long hours, poor working conditions and low pay. In peak seasons, 7-day working is the norm and in some factories it is common to find workers doing 16-18 hour shifts without proper breaks. One factory in Thailand resorted to distributing amphetamine tablets to workers so

that they could work on through the night after their day shift! Human dignity ?

Many factories employ workers on short-term contracts or without contracts at all, thus denying them the legal minimum wage, statutory overtime payments or sickness allowances and banning trade unions. This story is repeated in almost all of the traditional garment-producing countries. Further along the supply-chain, the situation is as bad. The textile bleaching and dyeing processes carried out in the Tirupur area of Southern India create serious threats to human health and the environment. The people of Tirupur depend on water, which, according to World Health Organisation standards, is not fit for consumption or for irrigation purposes. The treatment of waste water is wholly inadequate. There are 800 bleaching and dyeing units in Tirupur, using 60,000 kilos of chemicals and over 115 million litres of fresh water per day.

What can be done about this appalling situation ? There are two sets of people who can change the way things are done: the buyers for the major sports brands and the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The intense competition between companies to deliver constantly changing fashion at ever lower prices has put pressure on suppliers who, in turn, have responded by pushing their workers to work faster and longer. Factory managers claim that buyers use the threat of 're-location' to keep prices down, consequently workers are hired and fired at will and factories have no spare money to invest in health, education or safe working conditions.

In March 2004, Norwich-based Labour Behind the Label, together with Oxfam and TUC, launched the Play Fair at the Olympics Campaign calling on global sportswear retailers and Olympic institutions to respect workers' rights. Labour Behind the Label acknowledges that certain big brands have made progress but others have done too little to meet their responsibilities. Fair Play at the Olympics calls on the British Olympic Association (BOA) to use its voice as the UK representative on the IOC to ensure respect for workers' rights in Olympic-related contracts.

The most influential set of people who can improve the lives of the sportswear workers are ourselves - the customers. Big Brands, unwilling to lose market share, will listen to what their customers want. So, be a 'dedicated follower of fashion' but also be a dedicated questioner about the labour behind the fashionable label.

Contact Labour Behind the Label at 38, Exchange Street, Norwich NR2 1AX. Tel: 01603-610993; e-mail lbl@gn.apc.org; website: www.fairolympics.org

I would like to thank Chantal Finney (LBL) and Pamela Lowe (UNA) for the inspiration for this article.

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One WORLD

How 'Active Peace' can abolish war

Andrew Boswell

It seems violence is everywhere. Never ending. Countless wars in the last 50 years. Women and children often suffering the most. Human created disasters are an icon of our time. Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, and the Sudan just the latest.

Yet the Seville Statement on Violence, published in 1986, by 20 leading scientists and states no gene, brain mechanism or pre-determined behaviour pattern has been found to suggest an innate violence in humanity.

So why doesn't peace break out? For the last 8000 years, a dominance culture has prevailed that values the 'masculine' over the 'feminine'. Our culture accepts waging war, perceiving it as dynamic, active and masculine - "doing something". Violent activity has prospered and become institutionalized. Just look around - excessively militarised societies, economies bankrolled by the huge global arms trade, and media obsessed with sensationalizing conflict.

As long as we accept this silently, we are passively colluding with this violence. Great practitioners of non-violent resistance to dominance, like Gandhi, have taught that peace is an active process. Now, the proliferation of atomic weapons demands that we all become practitioners of "Active Peace".

This means, first, waking up and weaning ourselves as individuals from the cultural grip of violence. Pervasive violence must then be transformed to dynamic peace from the local to the global, the individual to the species. As the Movement for the Abolition War (MAW) chair, Bruce Kent, says "I live in a fairly multiracial, turbulent area ... but we manage to live together ... and I believe that that image - of the small London street living together harmoniously - is the one we should try to transpose to the world community."

Around the world, this is what people want - a Culture of Peace. More than 1% of humanity, 75 million people, signed Manifesto 2000 and made the commitment to cultivate peace in their daily lives.

The 1999 UN Declaration on a Culture of Peace emphasised starting with children and peace education to address the cultural causes of violence. Children suffer an ever increasing pressure to be consumers and to become the cogs of future economic expansion. The essential space and time of childhood to touch and grow peace within must be cultivated rather than being eroded further. Urgently needed peace education can be simply learning to share, to listen and to understand others, helping to make conflict resolution a way of life from an early age.

The UK citizenship curriculum is a good step, but, Charles Clarke please note, it needs to be self development and exploration, rather than more study. The practical "peace keys" in Manifesto 2000 (see: www3.unesco.org/manifesto2000/uk/uk_manifeste.htm) provide a brilliant backbone for exploring citizenship - this needs to be given a much greater priority by our educators.

However, the primary cultural priority of endless economic growth leads to exploitation of people and nature alike. A future global society of real freedom, social justice, sustainable development, and human rights - the One World - can not be built for our children without an urgent change in mainstream values and corporate behaviour.

"Active Peace" requires that governments initiate high priority and challenging programmes in disarmament, environmental protection, poverty elimination, conflict resolution, peace building. Ministries for Peace" in Government, and independent Commissions for Peace, could oversee the necessary social and political transformations. We do not lack the skills - there are plenty experts to start this and train others. However, we urgently need a new political will, and much greater resources, to develop this to a working reality. The well established campaign in the UK (see: www.ministryforpeace.org.uk) has already included discussions in Parliament.

The aim is the abolition of War before it is too late. MAW has recently created an inspiring short video called "War, No More", including our local Martin Bell, the broadcaster Jon Snow, and the Green MEP Caroline Lucas on this topic. This film may be seen via the internet at www.eapeace.org.uk/war_no_more.

We are on the edge of the abyss, yet, the potential for "Active Peace" has never been greater. As the Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh said "The 21st century is a green, beautiful hill with ... all the wonders of life. Let us climb [this hill] ... not as separate individuals ... humans can live together in true harmony with each other and with nature, ... as cells live together in the same body, all in a real spirit of democracy and equality."

Active Peace is thriving in Norfolk with an exhibition hosted by Norwich Cathedral, "From Hiroshima to World Peace - exploring many paths to peace", from August 4th to 17th.

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One WORLD

“Iraqi Sovereignty” or “Arab Façade”?

Ian Sinclair

The recent handover of ‘full sovereignty’ to the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) begs too many questions.

Why would the west be pumping billions of dollars into the country and risking the lives of their armed forces for project Iraqi Freedom? Are we really that altruistic or is there an ulterior motive? The west imports most of its oil and Iraq just happens to have the world's second largest oil reserves. Saudi Arabia, our constant and ruthless ally in the oil business, is now threatened by instability. As former US Assistant Secretary of Defence Lawrence Korb said regarding the area in 1991 "If [it] grew carrots we wouldn't give a damn."

If we are helping to create a democratic and free Iraq why is the ‘coalition’ sending thousands more troops? South Korea, the UK and the US have pledged up to 10,000 this summer, bringing the total in Iraq to around 160,000 – there at the “request” of the IIG, apparently. Do they really need that many troops in a country which has been “liberated from tyranny”? Surely they should have been welcomed with “open arms” as the Bush Administration predicted. And why that many troops if, as pro-occupation politicians insist, the “terrorists” are a small minority comprised of former “Ba'ath party remnants” and “foreigner fighters”? In an agreement already made, the Coalition forces are exempt from prosecution in Iraq. Operating above the law of the land they will be free to commit any crime, torture or rape without fear of prosecution; only by their own governments.

Why, in a country liberated from tyranny is there now at least 4,000 to 5,000 Iraqis held in detention camps across the country without charge or legal representation? The dark shadow of Abu Ghraib and Saddam Hussein's feared secret police, originally recruited by the ‘coalition’, will continue to operate under the IIG. To further darken the picture the IIG, with the agreement of the US, is proposing the imposition of martial law – the calling card of every

respectable Arab dictatorship. No prizes for guessing who the last person was to impose martial law on Iraq.

The oil revenues placed in trust for the Iraqi people are being spent on reconstruction contracts handed to mainly US firms. These contracts for reconstruction – running the oil industries, and privatizing water and electricity – were already signed off before the “handover of power”.

Why, when the Iraqi people were polled and the majority chose Ayatollah Ali Sistani as their most popular leader has he been sidelined and Prime Minister Allawi been placed in power? Is it because the popular Sistani represents the Shia majority in Iraq and might create a powerful alliance with the Shia population in Iran – part of Bush's so called “axis of evil”?

Who is Allawi and how was he selected? Once a Ba'ath Party member, Allawi was exiled from Iraq in the 1970s and has been on the payroll of the CIA and MI6. He headed the CIA-funded Iraqi National Accord, which, we should not forget, was the source for the discredited claim that Iraq could deploy weapons of mass destruction within 45 minutes. Originally the members of the IIG were to be chosen by UN envoy Lakhdar Brahimi in consultation with the US and the US-appointed Iraqi Governing Council. However, Brahimi publicly noted his ability to choose the IIG had been “sharply limited” by American officials. Brahimi also called Paul Bremner, the US occupation administrator, “the dictator” of Iraq, arguing “nothing happens without his agreement in this country.”

In all meaningful senses then, the occupation will continue under what Lord Curzon, the British Foreign Secretary from 1919-22, called an “Arab façade ruled and administered under British guidance and controlled by a native Mohammedan and, as far as possible, by an Arab staff.” The new ruler of Iraq in the real world is John Negroponte, the new US ambassador, who will head the largest US embassy in the world, fittingly situated in one of Saddam Hussein's former palaces.

If we really want a democratic Iraq, the mantra that Tony Blair is fond of repeating, then we should gradually withdraw troops, not escalate their numbers, offer the mechanism of a democratic election process via advice through the UN or NGOs (should the majority wish that) and allow the Iraqi people to choose for themselves. However, this does not suit the aims of the Bush Administration or its appointed IIG because the majority, as the polls show, would choose Sistani above Allawi, and favour restoring Iraq's resources under its own true sovereignty.

I would like to thank Peter Offord for the inspiration and much of the content of this column.



One WORLD

Why does this New Apartheid thrive?

Rupert Read

There is a new obscenity in the Middle East, spreading like a disease across the landscape of Palestine, systematically cutting Palestinians off from each other, blasting houses and olive groves out of its way.

It is the 'apartheid wall', FOUR TIMES as high as the Berlin wall, designed to keep Israelis from ever meeting a real live Palestinian person, designed to make ordinary life impossible for Palestinians in the West Bank, and designed to smash the chances of there ever being a meaningful Palestinian state.

Remember the 'bantustans' in South Africa? Pathetic microscopic enclaves, surrounded by South African border guards? There you see the future of Palestine, if Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and his armed forces get their way. Palestine's best land and its water resources will continue be stolen by the Israeli 'settlers'; the rest of the country will be divided into Bantustan-like-areas.

What a tragedy that Israel, founded as a result of the most disgusting and ruthless racism in history, is now itself a practitioner of a new apartheid. What a tragedy that the Jewish state of Israel -- some of whose citizens, as Holocaust survivors, were so utterly oppressed -- has now become the oppressor. What a tragedy that, under the terms of this new apartheid, there are spanking-new roads, all over Palestine, that are for 'Israelis only'. It is no coincidence that Nelson Mandela is one of the foremost international spokespeople for the Palestinian people, and against their oppression at the hands of the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) and its U.S. backers.

Many people in Israel do not support the policies of Sharon's Likud party, yet the systematic destruction of the Palestinian people continues because the people consent by silence to these atrocities.

Our silence, too, is not just consent, but allows the Israeli apartheid state to thrive.

But there is hope in a sizeable and growing campaign of non-violent resistance to this obscenity. Large numbers of Palestinians are engaged in a struggle against the building of this wall. They are supported by a number of brave and determined Jewish-Israeli people, and by a growing 'International Solidarity Movement' (ISM), a kind of non-violent version of the international brigade that went to Spain in the late 1930s. This work is not for the faint hearted - a young American, Rachel Corrie, stood in front of bulldozer which was destroying Palestinian homes - she was literally, intentionally bulldozed to death. Earlier this year, a young British photographer, Tom Hurdall died after many months in coma - he was shot in the head by a soldier whilst with a peace group in Gaza. Just last month, 3 British parliamentarians on a UN sponsored visit and came under Israeli army fire themselves. They later said "If the IDF treat the UN in this fashion it is scarcely surprising that over 100 Palestinians died and over 400 were wounded in Gaza in the month of May alone."

There's a direct Norfolk link - Angie Zelter from north Norfolk co-leads the 'International Women's Peace Service', which plays a leading role in the ISM. They help the local people to continue living in this hell, in Salfit, an area of Palestine's occupied West Bank. For example, olives and olive oil are by far the largest agricultural products in the Palestinian economy, but due to violence and intimidation from Israeli settlers and army, it has been impossible for farmers to complete their harvest. The presence of the IWPS women observers helps reduce tension and intimidation so the villagers can make their harvest. (Such Palestinian Olive Oil may be bought locally - call 01603-722898.)

Non-violence works - take Gandhi's peaceful resistance in India; Martin Luther's King's defeat of racism in the American South; the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. These peaceful campaigns worked because they had wide popular support. This campaign too needs your support.

Don't just take my word for it; check out the graphic pictures of the apartheid wall, and bear witness to the video clip showing the gassing of elderly Palestinians who lay down in front of a bulldozer just two weeks ago, at www.iwps.info.

Unfortunately, sometimes it seems as though the mainstream media are only interested in violent resistance to Israeli violence. The occasional suicide bombing gets huge coverage; the brave and difficult day-to-day campaign of non-violent resistance to the Israeli bulldozers gets very little. What's worse, the Israeli army seems to speak no language other than violence. So there's one more thing you can do, to support the oppressed people of Palestine. Write in to the media, why not start locally with this newspaper - and tell them that you want to hear more about the ISM and about the Palestinians' struggle against the apartheid wall.

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One WORLD

Childhood hijacked by Pester Power plc

Jacqui McCarney

Norfolk County Council's "Every Norfolk Child Matters" scheme is very heartening - a positive 10 year strategy to stamp out abuse and boost achievement for our county's 180,000 children. Council leader Alison King is right, our children are "the future", and an EDP leader called for each child to "be nurtured, loved, treated with respect and given every chance to fulfil their potential". Much focus in Norfolk's scheme will be to help our dedicated and committed child agencies deal better with the worst problems children face.

However, we are all stakeholders in our children and their future. The wider aim of satisfying their real needs requires a sea change in our cultural and economic attitudes.

In previous generations, children's need for playing and sharing with others and nature, was met in the freedom of "play streets" and fields. This gave children a private world in which they could explore spiritual, psychological, social and physical dimensions.

Now, many are kept indoors through fears of increased traffic and other dangers. Real life is replaced by the voyeuristic and artificial worldview of television. This hijacks the private world of childhood, as increasingly commercial interests supported by advertising and the media are moulding our children's experience.

"Pester Power" is recognised by advertising companies as a powerful tool in selling to children. From fizzy drinks to extortionately priced trainers, advertisers know that whining children are their best allies. This exploitation of the relationship between parent and child leads to stress and guilt for poor parents, and sheer weariness for all when such purchases go against their better instincts. Satisfaction is short lived and children caught up in the pestering habit are often restless, discontented and unhappy.

Restricted outdoor exercise encourages childhood obesity, but parents are offered little support from advertisers or governments in tackling this problem. Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell rejected the opportunity to ban junk food

advertising during children's television, although it was recommended by The Commons Health Committee. Was this in the interests of children, or was Ms Jowell bowing to pressure from advertising companies? Local parents had no difficulty in seeing the contradictory messages given to children when they complained about McDonald's handing out meal vouchers on regular visits to the children's ward of The Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital.

As well as commercial exploitation, children are faced with an onslaught of inappropriate role models in the media. I find particularly offensive the sugary pinkness of girly magazines aimed at a pre-teen market. These talk a great deal about "girl power", but only if you are wearing the right gear, know how to do "makeovers" and look sexy, and how to please the boy in your life. Of course, the advertising promotes all the products you need to achieve this image.

This exploits the fear and insecurity of pre-teens growing up in a competitive and scary world, and offers glamour and the possibility of celebrity as ways of feeling good about yourself. It encourages an obsessive ness with appearance and sexuality among readers who may be as young as 8 years of age.

Then, there is the tobacco industry, brazenly flying in the face of parental concerns by targeting children. As Frank Dobson, a former health secretary said, "We all know that hardly anyone takes up smoking when they are grown up. That is why the tobacco industry wants to target children." British American Tobacco stooped to a all time low when it was announced they had been testing chocolate and alcohol flavoured cigarettes, which campaigners say are aimed at enticing children to smoke.

Until we cease using children as agents in the war to sell endless products, and grooming them as avid consumers in the race for continual economic growth, schemes like "Every Norfolk Child Matters" will only go so far. Despite the plethora of material possessions from TV in bedrooms to computers and video games, children in the 21st century are poorer in a real sense than their parents and certainly their grandparents were.

I look forward to the fruits of Mrs King's Vision Statement particularly in developing children's sense of belonging, responsibility for their environment, and pursuit of creative, spiritual and leisure activities. However, we are collectively responsible for nurturing children in all their humanity, and this means protecting them from the excesses of commercial exploitation and returning key influence to responsible parents and guardians. Our culture can support this richer set of values and experiences to help our children grow into rounder and more whole adults. They are the foundations of a stable 21st century One World, and we must provide for their physical, emotional and spiritual needs now.

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One WORLD

Time to move on to world peace

Marguerite Finn

As we approach the hand-over of 'sovereignty' to the Iraqi people on 30th June, there are predictable calls from the US and UK governments for the public to "move on" from their preoccupation with the war. This is flawed, wishful thinking on their part.

The public are trapped in a limbo of mistrust and anxiety over the whole issue of the invasion and destruction of an ancient civilisation and its peoples in the name of freedom and democracy. The biggest obstacle to 'moving-on' is the fear that no lessons have been learnt from the US/UK's disastrous intervention in the region.

Is the world a safer place since March 2003 ? No.
Is the Middle East region more stable ? No.
Is the War on Terror any closer to being won? No.

What we *have* gained is the opprobrium of the international community and the national shame of our involvement in an illegal war, occupation and abuse of human rights. For any real 'moving on' to occur, there first has to be an adequate national contrition led by the government, followed by a radical re-orientation towards a non-nuclear, non-aligned foreign and defence policy and a build-up of a special relationship with the United Nations.

Meanwhile, here in East Anglia, we have a relevant concern with the prospects for international security, because we "host" the biggest concentration of American military bases in the country: Lakenheath and Mildenhall in Suffolk; Feltwell in Norfolk and Molesworth in Cambridgeshire. Personnel from the bases were directly involved in the war: re-fuelling bombers, rescuing missions and intelligence-gathering.

Longer-term concerns go well beyond this. There is no doubt that the US has nuclear weapons at Lakenheath.

Having a nuclear base on the Norfolk / Suffolk border puts us in the front line of danger from terrorist attacks, not to speak of potentially horrifying accidents. The danger of radiation from a simulated crash in Thetford Forest of a US aircraft carrying unarmed nuclear weapons (the 2003 exercise ominously code named 'dimming sun') has never been made public. At a recent meeting in Dunwich, the consultant nuclear engineer John Large described in chilling terms the dangers facing the residents of East Anglia from a terrorist attack on the Sizewell nuclear complex. Current emergency procedures drawn up to deal with a small to medium range accident at Sizewell A or B power station, are totally inadequate to deal with a major radioactive emission following a well planned terrorist attack.

So, we are hostages to the proponents of nuclear power and nuclear weapons. Moreover, preparations are being made for the manufacture of a new generation of "usable" mini-nukes here in the UK at AWE Aldermaston.

This calls into question the commitment of both the UK and the US to Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (signed and ratified by this country nearly 40 years ago) to achieve prompt, total and unequivocal elimination of nuclear weapons.

Even if, as is rumoured, the US intends to reduce some of its nuclear weapons in Europe - it will simply be a shift away from the big bases here in "old Europe" towards more flexible "lilly-pad" bases elsewhere.

So how *do* we, as a nation, regain our self-respect and 'move-on' from the horrors of this war? Two unlikely allies have recently shown one way: Madeleine Albright and Robin Cook, writing jointly in The Guardian on 9 June, called on the United States "to stop developing new nuclear weapons, to sign the comprehensive test ban treaty and, together with Britain, to support a fissile materials cut-off treaty that would end the production of fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons". They went on to say that "given their nuclear weapons capacities, the US and European countries have a special responsibility to ensure that these terrible weapons do not spread further - but before they can fulfil this responsibility, they must be seen as credible proponents of nuclear non-proliferation." We must campaign for a bigger role for the UN in combating poverty by allowing the General Assembly, in which there is no veto, to control the IMF, the WTO and the arms trade. We must also control the multi-nationals and confine our military role to support for UN action authorised by the Security Council.

Current US/UK policies lead to perpetual war; these alternatives would open the way for world peace.

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One WORLD

Let's nurture our kids, not bash them

Ian Sinclair

Often we hear or read that "kids today are getting away with murder", are "out of control", "know all their rights" and are therefore immune to discipline.

But this is a refrain throughout history. In 500 BC, Socrates felt the "youth today" have "bad manners, contempt for authority" and "disregard for older people." In 1843, Lord Ashley told the House of Commons "the morals of the children are tenfold worse than formerly." A Chief Constable in 1904 complained, "our young people have no idea of discipline or subordination."

Children probably change little, then, but the real issue is how we nurture them and protect their rights. In 1991, the UK ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a comprehensive international treaty that took ten years to develop, which grants children in all parts of the world a comprehensive set of social, political and civil rights. It binds the UK under international law and we are obliged to comply with its principles and provisions. But does the UK really meet the spirit of the convention?

In its 2002 report the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child concluded the UK's record on children's human rights in the youth justice system is worsening. England and Wales sentenced 7,600 under-18s to custody in 2001 up from 4,000 in 1992 - a 90% increase. During the same period the number of under-15s incarcerated rose by an amazing 800%. It is no surprise then the rate of custodial sentencing for under-18s in the UK is more than ten times that in Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Spain.

The Committee was also "extremely concerned" at the conditions children experience in detention noting the "very poor staff-child ratio, high levels of violence, bullying, self harm and suicide, the inadequate rehabilitative opportunities" and "the solitary

confinement in inappropriate conditions for a long time as a disciplinary measure."

This unwholesome culture pervades our homes too - the NSPCC recently found approximately one in six British parents reported hitting children with implements such as belts, slippers or wooden spoons. The current legislation on this issue dates back to 1860, with the judge who set the legal precedent deeming physical punishment acceptable "to correct the evil of the child." Twice the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has recommended the UK ban all physical punishment, and in 1998 the European Court of Human Rights ruled that British law does not provide adequate protection for children from assault by parents.

Rather than encouraging the best in children in trouble, it seems our culture re-inforces the worst violence and aggression. This is compounded by child poverty rates which have risen dramatically over the past 30 years, despite a fall in both average family size and the numbers of families with children.

3.6 million UK children are currently living in poverty. This is one of the highest child poverty rates in Europe, which has grown from 1 in 10 in 1979 to just under 1 in 3 today. In contrast, Finland, Denmark and Sweden have a child poverty rate of below 1 in 10. Poverty greatly affects a child's human rights and life chances. In 2001, the Treasury released a report that noted children growing up in low-income households are "more likely than others to have poor health, to do badly at school, become teenage mothers or come into early contact with the police, to be unemployed as adults or to earn lower wages."

It can be seen then, that contrary to popular opinion, the future for UK children, and their rights, is in a sorry state, lagging far behind our European neighbours. Growing up in Britain in 2004 is tough. The Children's Rights Alliance for England agrees, noting that progress on children's rights "is painfully slow".

From now on the refrain "kids today!" should be met with the fact that complaints about children have been a constant throughout recorded history; the assertion that we need to be tougher on crime needs to be countered with the fact that the British criminal justice system is already the most punitive in Europe; and the person who believes "things have gone too far" in favour of the child should be reminded that in many areas the UK's record on children's rights is actually getting worse.

Rather than pursuing policies that exclude children from the community, we should be working towards their inclusion and rehabilitation. In short, it is time to change the way we respond to children in trouble.

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One WORLD

The East Anglian biofuels bubble

Andrew Boswell

Slowing climate change is everyone's responsibility now, and much excitement has been generated by the plans for East Anglian farmers to grow oil seed rape for a local biodiesel fuel industry. It is suggested that biofuels can replace dwindling, price spiralling and polluting fossil fuel oil. Already the "Oil Fields of East Anglia" are being promoted as a green way to diminish the harmful global warming caused by road transport.

It is said these new crops will boost the fortunes of struggling small farmers all over East Anglia, and MPs like Gillian Shepherd and Keith Simpson are throwing their weight behind the biofuels movement.

Small scale biofuel production is a good idea, but can it scale up to have the desired good result for the climate? Well, we haven't enough land to replace Oil based diesel altogether with biodiesel, and, even highly intensive agriculture will produce at best enough biofuel to make a 5-10% diesel (ie 90-95% still Oil based). This reduces the amount of CO₂ emitted from a diesel-burning engines, so is it enough to do the trick?

Well, the EU target is to create 5.75% biofuels by 2010, but EU road traffic is growing at around 2% per year, and the emissions from just 4 years' traffic growth at 2% per year would put us back to where we started again. The cost to get us back to square one would requires all "set-aside" land across Europe, and some food land to be used for biofuels.

That might give us a breathing space to come up with something else, but, in other countries, vehicle numbers aren't increasing by only 2%; in China, they doubled over the last three years alone, so there's their CO₂ to consider as well as ours.

That's the bad news. We hear the good news is that unlike pumping Oil from underground, growing next year's crop of oil seed rape absorbs the CO₂ produced by vehicles this

year, thanks to the wonders of photosynthesis. So that's all right then.

Except, that to grow this year's crop, farmers will have to cultivate the fields with tractors and drive the product to the factory, 3-8 million transport miles per year depending on production capacity, all of which will have consumed large amounts of diesel, only 10% of which is likely to be biodiesel. And except that growing the rape, as intensively as modern agriculture insists, means applying plenty of nitrogenous fertiliser. Unfortunately, it needs huge amounts of energy and greenhouse gas emissions to produce it, as well as causing the soil to release nitrous oxide (N₂O), a gas which is 310 times more potent than CO₂ in causing global warming.

So, we are still looking for some good news to entitle us to feel that biodiesel is going to change the climate in the right direction. Unfortunately, there is one more distinctly biodiesel-unfriendly point. The government's chief scientist recently warned again that severe weather conditions across the world can be expected more often. Insurance claims for drought and heat-related animal and crop losses came to over £7 billion in the EU alone. Biofuels cannot, therefore, be regarded as a 'reliable' fuel source.

And, every field that grows biodiesel means one less field growing food - one less field's worth of supermarket shelves for us to choose from. No one would put up with that, least of all the supermarket owners. So they will try to fill those shelves by importing the food from abroad with further more transportation emissions.

What about the small farmers? To operate industrial scale biofuel plants, long-term contract prices will have to be kept low, for production to be "viable". Low long-term contract prices favour only large landowners and agri-businesses amongst who will demand GM crops to meet their commercial drive for high yields. And small farms will be unable to act on this scale and will continue to be bought out by large ones.

I support any measure which provides verified long-term and sustainable benefits to our environment, but suggest more research and consultation is required on the real "climate change" costs of biofuels. Let's support small scale production exemplars, but we must be cautious in growing a large agri-business industry that may only be a diversion from developing longer-term greener renewable energy sources (eg wave and tidal power).

What we really need is the political will to demand the Government to develop transport policies which reduce dependence on private motor cars. The review of the 10-year transport plan, due in July, provides an ideal opportunity.

I am indebted to Peter Lanyon for the inspiration and much research for this article.

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One WORLD

Yet more carnage

Rupert Read

This must never, ever be allowed to happen again."
[Newspaper editorial, 100 years ago, commenting on the first ever car accident fatality]

Yet the very day after my first 'One World' column ("Why we must stop this carnage", May 15), the headline on p.4 of the EDP was "Six killed in road accident 'carnage'". There have also been a lot of deaths in Iraq, and in Israel and Palestine, recently, too. Photos of the dead and the grieving from there, too, have been all over the press.

Lots of deaths on British roads; lots of deaths in the Middle East. Coincidence? Not entirely; the two tragedies are *closely* connected. Every time you fill up with petrol, you are touching the tragedy of the Middle East. For the Western economy has a kind of terrible drug-habit. Every time you or I fill our cars with petrol, we are part of the West's habit. We are dependent on cheap oil, which makes the wheels of our economy, literally, run smoothly.

Virtually no-one now believes the lies of our spin-saturated 'New Labour' government: the biggest lie of all is that the war on Iraq had nothing to do with oil. The truth is that, worried about the stability of the Saudi regime and worried about the independence of the Islamist Iranian government, Bush-Blair wanted to get their dirty, and now bloody, hands on the vast oil reserves of Iraq, which were of course in the grip of the bloody, and, far more importantly from Washington's point of view, worryingly independent Saddam regime.

The Iraqi oil fields have now been 'secured', *and are being sold off to huge (mostly American) oil companies*. The forced privatisation of Iraq's greatest national asset is the underhand way in which the 'coalition' is seeking to ensure that it never loses access to Iraq's oil again.

The fire that Bush and Blair have ignited in the Middle East – especially in Falluja and Najaf and all over Iraq -- has however got out of control. The anger of the Iraqi people against their occupiers has in fact destabilised the country very badly. The ironic result is that oil prices are shooting up. The nightmare scenario now looming for Bush-Blair is this: their attempt to secure Iraq's oil fields for the West *will lead to an economic downturn*, as a result of rocketing oil prices!

The West invaded Iraq so that Western businesses might control the oil fields there. The West props up Israel so that it has a reliable strong-man in the MidEast. Every time an Israeli military assassin or a suicide-bomber strikes, the British and American governments bear a responsibility for it.

Every time there is carnage on the streets of Iraq, you and I bear a little responsibility for it. Every time we fill up with petrol, and choose to risk car-nage on the roads of Britain, we also choose to fuel longer-term carnage on the streets of Gaza and Baghdad and Jerusalem.

Only by ending our love-affair with the car, and looking for ways of weaning ourselves off the drug of oil, do we have a hope of putting an end to the terrible scenes that occur on our roads *every day*. The kind of scenes (dead and dismembered bodies, screaming relatives) that shock us, when we hear of an atrocity in the Middle East -- yet which fail to shock us, when they happen right on our doorstep. Horribly, we have learnt to accept carnage.

Until we start to break our oil-petrol-drug-habit, *each and every one of us is playing a part in the tragedy of the Middle East, as well as in the growing death toll on Britain's roads*.

What can be done? The first thing is always to drive within the speed limit. If you just do that, you cut massively the chance that you will turn your own car into a bomb. The second thing is wherever possible to car-share, to use other means of transport - summer is a great time to get on yer bike, for example! - or even to ask yourself, in the old war-time spirit, "Is my journey really necessary?" The third thing is to campaign and vote for politicians who are serious about changing our economy and our transport system so that we are no longer addicted to the car. Cars are wonderful things, but, like antibiotics, they are being dangerously over-used...

Cars are killers. There will be war in the Middle East as long as there are casualties on our roads. And so, truly: Norwich is Gaza is London is Jerusalem is Washington is Baghdad is Norwich.



One WORLD

Dig for victory, dig for choice

Jacqui McCarney

My family have joined a growing trend as we dug up our lawn to cultivate a kitchen garden. The self sufficiency of the 2nd World War has been reawakened as seed manufacturers report bumper sales this spring. This time it's not about "Victory" but about choice. We want good, wholesome food: vegetables which are fresh, locally grown, and not contaminated by GM products or pesticides. Soon growing your own may be the only way to ensure this.

In holding the "GM Nation" debate last year, the government intended to paint public concern as "anti-science", and "educate" the public about the benefits of GM technology. However, a sceptical public was not won over - 4 out of 5 people oppose the growing of GMs and only 2% are prepared to eat them.

The companies promoting GM, such as Monsanto have a poor past record: remember PCBs, Agent Orange, and Bovine Growth Hormone. They don't inspire confidence when they push for unlabelled GM in our food. Now the US government is demanding that the EU abandons its ban on growing genetically modified crops or pay \$1.8bn in compensation for "loss" of exports over the last six years. The US bases its case on the "breaking of Free Trade rules" - "Free" Trade, but no Free Choice here!

Good news: Mendocino County in California banned growing GM crops earlier this year, followed soon by four Australian states imposing moratoriums and bans. Here on May 11th Hertfordshire County Council voted to go GM-free at their Cabinet meeting, and proposed that the East of England Regional Assembly adopts a policy preventing the growth of GM crops in our region. As the GM-free movement mainstreams, the US will have its work cut out.

Whilst the US claims that such bans are made without scientific evidence, there are mounting claims that, in fact, the scientific evidence of the risks of GM is suppressed. This is comprehensively documented by Jeffrey M. Smith in his damning expose of the GM industry, "Seeds of Deception". For example, Dr Arpad Puztai, found in 1998 that rats fed on GMs suffered damage to the immune system, the thymus and spleen, and indicators of increased cancer risk. Their brains were smaller and less developed than rats on non GM diets, as were their livers and testicles. Puztai was sacked and banned from speaking to the media.

We are sensible to cultivate our own veg when allergic reactions have doubled in the US since the introduction of GMs, and the Royal Society has said that genetic modification could lead to unpredictable and harmful changes in the nutritional state of foods.

Farmers are also threatened by huge difficulties in containment. Seeds are carried by birds, winds, floods and cross pollination by bees. For example, organic farmers in Canada can no longer grow GM-free Soya beans or canola because all their seeds are contaminated. Former environment minister Michael Meacher says "the Canadian experience shows clearly that GM will wipe out the organic sector".

To protect the livelihoods of our farmers, Gregory Barker conservative MP for Bexhill and Battle, with the support of Friends of the Earth, is trying to ensure their legal protection with the "The GM Containment and Liability Bill". This would enable farmers to seek compensation from the bio-tech industry for loss of earnings due to contamination. This is only a sticking plaster solution : an outright ban is the only real protection.

If GM crops are introduced on this small Island, we will find it increasingly difficult to buy non-GM contaminated foods. They are sneaking in anyway as new laws allow the food on our supermarket shelves to contain 0.9% GMs without the need for labelling.

Growing our own will buy us a little time but we also need a guarantee from supermarkets that the food we buy will be 100% GM free. Even without the environmental and health risks of GMs, surely it is the right of all citizens to decide what they and dependent children will or will not consume, and not what US corporations dictate. With aching backs and dirty fingernails, many are making that choice. But real choice is being freely able to decide if we as a country want GM or not.



One WORLD

Why we have to stop the carnage

Rupert Read

The scene is all-too-familiar. An ambulance streaks towards the place in the middle of the road where people lie wounded and bleeding. Children are screaming. A dismembered leg is visible on the tarmac.

Hours later, we see a bus smashed half to pieces, and the remnants of a car are close beside it. Once again, sirens wail, and the bereaved wail just as loud.

Terror. Terror and horror. How can anyone tolerate the despicable people who made these scenes possible?

Let's look a little closer, if we dare. Near the dismembered leg, there are heavy skid marks. It looks like a car shot down the road at much too high a speed and did not succeed in avoiding these pedestrians.

And passers-by tell how the bus was smashed in a near-head-on collision with a car which jumped the lights.

When we look closely, then, we see that these are not necessarily scenes from Iraq or Palestine. These could be scenes from the roads of Britain, every day. The main subject of this column is road-crashes. In this country, 70 people die on our roads, and 750 are injured, *every single week*. Cars *themselves* are deadly weapons.

Is it outrageous to compare the deaths caused by road-crashes with the deaths caused by Palestinian or Iraqi suicide-bombers and by Israeli and 'coalition' assassination-squads? People don't *choose* to kill with their cars, whereas the Israeli and 'coalition' occupation forces and those who fight against them *DO choose* to kill. True. There is an important difference. And yet... people *DO choose* to use their cars in ways that they *know* can kill. At times, virtually all of us who drive knowingly drive dangerously, because we are three minutes late, or because we are angry, or ... we knowingly use our deadly weapons with the safety-catch

off. We kill. Some of us go to prison for it. Perhaps more of us should.

The real outrage, perhaps, is that we aren't more outraged by the car-nage on our roads.

And what of the assassins and the bombers? They *choose* to kill, for sure ... and yet ... they don't. It is virtually chosen for them, by their lives. As Jenny Tonge M.P. recently said: if you or I had been born into a refugee camp, if we had seen our parents humiliated daily by occupying troops, if we had seen our land systematically taken away, if we had seen the governments of the U.S. and Britain giving the occupiers vast military aid, if we had been offered neither democracy in our own land nor the chance to learn effective techniques of non-violent resistance, if we had become utterly desperate ... then we too would quite probably have become suicide bombers. Bombers and assassins are made, not born. The life-choices that are available to them make their terrible vocation seem natural. Just as it seems natural to many of us to break the speed limit routinely. We do it, because our consumerist culture 'forces' the pace of our lives. We do it, even though we know that speeding drastically increases the dangers posed to others by the metal lethal weapons that we move around in.

Needless to say, I am not arguing in *favour* of the desperate, horrific and self-defeating actions of Palestinian or Iraqi suicide-bombers, nor of the oppressive, brutal and self-defeating actions of their Israeli or American counter-killers. I believe passionately in a non-violent solution to the problems of humankind, including even the tragically difficult problems of the Middle East. But such a solution will probably take a long time coming. At least as long as it will take for us to get violence off the roads, and end the daily car-nage of our own streets.

Sooner or later, we will have to start changing our economy and our transport system drastically. If we do it sooner, we can perhaps reduce carbon emissions enough to stave off the looming catastrophe of global warming.

Whereas, if we leave it until later, the car-nage on our streets will not stop. And nor will the carnage in Iraq. For let's not forget: we went into Iraq (and not into Zimbabwe or North Korea) because of *oil*.

Oil and petrol; cars and killers. It's time to start thinking seriously about the connections here. Before it's too late for all the families - in Fallujah *and* in Norwich and everywhere -- who haven't had to grieve ... yet...

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One WORLD

A tale of two cities ... divided by a veil

Marguerite Finn

I wonder what Charles Dickens would have made of the great debate currently raging in Paris and London, on the ban the wearing of religious symbols in French public (state) schools.

I have no doubt he would have produced a masterpiece exposing both sides of the issue – possibly entitled *Too Great Expectations?*

Christians, Muslims and Francophiles in Norfolk are all disturbed at the decision of the French Government to legislate against Muslim girls wearing headscarves at school. France is a secular state, but nevertheless, a secular state should respect human rights, including the free expression of one's faith, as required under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - Article 18 of which affirms that "everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion" and this includes "freedom, either alone or in community with others, in public or in private, to manifest his religion or belief, in teaching, practice, worship and observance".

The French proposal also bans the wearing of turbans by boys at school, crosses on necklaces or bracelets, the Star of David, or anything which denotes adherence to religion of any kind. Pursued further, it could even preclude the display of such symbols on notice boards outside any place of worship. This is a dangerous road to have set out on. So *why* are they doing it - and does the issue of the headscarf not veil a much deeper conflict at the heart of the State ?

The French Revolution in 1789 ushered in the immortal values of *Liberté, Egalité* and *Fraternité*, together with a tendency to recognise individuals rather than groups: a French citizen owes allegiance to France first and foremost and has no officially sanctioned ethnic or religious identity. In 1905 France passed a law separating Church and State, and from as far back as 1937, French schools have been periodically exhorted to keep religious symbols out.

In attempting to "sell" the forthcoming legislation to a divided population, French Government spinners argued that the conflicts of the world should not be brought into the class room. They said they were not seeking to take away individual freedoms – they wanted individuals to be integrated and Muslim women to be viewed and treated as equals. Head scarves, they argued, could not be tolerated in schools because they were instruments of propaganda for an intolerant version of Islam and are symbols of the oppression of women. If a Muslim woman wishes to wear the *Hijab* in order to identify herself with a particular set of values and a way of life which rejects some of the wilder material excesses of today's world, is that such a bad thing?

But should Muslim women not *always* be 'viewed and treated as equals' according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and irrespective of whether they wear the hijab? Is there really a threat to France's traditional secularity now, from its 6 million muslims ?

And what about the United Kingdom? Is the multiculturalism of the UK a better model? Well, there are 1.8 million Muslims in Britain and Islam is one of the fastest growing religions. London has become one of the world's principal centres of Islamic publishing, as well as a major Muslim cultural and intellectual centre. There is greater political representation in the UK with at least 12 ethnic-minority members of Parliament and a reasonable presence in the world of radio and television. This compares favourably to France where there are no Muslims in the French National Assembly. Britain's more 'relaxed' attitude to ethnic minorities may have produced more social mobility but perhaps at the price of complacency about our entrenched *ghettos*, from whence there may be a drift towards greater extremist activity.

So, where is the evidence that either the French or British model works, when in both countries, Islamophobia is on the increase? Secularism/integration and *laissez-faire* multiculturalism both appear to be failing. Is it not far, far better to celebrate the diversity of life rather than to produce a seemingly homogenous population that is seething with resentment underneath the surface.

We can ensure respect for diversity by better employment and wage prospects for all. If ethnic minorities are encouraged to attend classes in Citizenship, English and History – all of which could be taken wearing veils, turbans, crosses in mosques, temples and churches and school halls throughout the land – then surely all of us should attend classes in the dangers of violence and of unremitting competition and alienation – for **citizenship depends upon inclusion and not exclusion**. In a pluralistic society such as ours, we ban the wearing of veils, crosses and turbans to our cost.



One WORLD

Here's a birthday present for Live Aid

Andrew Boswell

One World, a new regular column, raises issues such as international development, poverty, globalisation, peacemaking, human rights, international relations, and the environment. Our columnists intend to provide a positive voice for the future. We represent a wide group of concerned Norfolk people, and we welcome feedback and healthy debate. This first column discusses the Prime Minister's Commission for Africa.

Next year marks the 20th anniversary of Live Aid. But where is Africa now? That continent is in a more horrendous a plight than it was back in 1985. Unpayable debts and unfair trade rules keep Africans poor, whilst Aids ravages the continent largely uncontrolled.

Sir Bob Geldof, sanctified by some as Saint Bob, has asked global leaders for a 20th anniversary birthday present to the Live Aid generation. Well done, Sir Bob. Let's be in no doubt, Africa needs several leaps beyond the gesture politics seen at Johannesburg and past summits. Referring to one of the UN Development Goals for 2015, Gordon Brown recently said "on current forecasts, sub-Saharan Africa will achieve our target for reducing child mortality not by 2015, but 2165. This is not good enough."

The UN estimates that it needs an extra \$50 billion annually to meet the UN Millenium Development Goals and the challenge to us rich nations is to deliver money and actions, not words. Aid on this scale and without strings might just permanently reverse the endemic poverty and suffering.

Who pays, you ask? Well, Gordon Brown has a crafty financing scheme where rich, donor countries borrow from the international capital markets to underwrite large increases in aid between now and 2015. The French are on board: they hosted a meeting just before Easter to promote the scheme. The US and Germany are

less keen, but Britain, as twin president of the European Union and the G8 industrialised nations, next year, has the ideal opportunity to promote this doubling of global aid to \$100 billion.

Sounds good, but the scheme has downsides. The donor countries will be expected pay the money back, up to around 2032, out of aid budgets. This undermines stable and predictable aid-flows Africa needs long into this century. Worse, Gordon Brown's scheme ties countries to unhelpful IMF rules, and borrowing countries will also have to agree to trade liberalization, more likely to increase poverty and limit growth.

It is essential that world leaders stop burdening poor countries with these with unfair conditions, and instead underwrite further Aid generating schemes to enhance Gordon Brown's scheme and sustain its benefits beyond 2015. Otherwise, we'll find ourselves wondering in 2025 why the lot of Africa hasn't improved since 2005 and 1985.

Here are two ideas for Messrs Brown and Blair, and the G8. *First*, impose a minute tax, a fraction of 1%, on the billions traded every day in currency transactions. Better known as Tobin Tax, after Nobel prize winning economist James Tobin, I love this idea – it's a wonderful triple whammy. It will raise vast international revenues to eradicate global poverty, calm financial markets and protect developing countries from the currency fluctuations that can currently reap enormous damage on their economies. I urge readers to support War on Want's campaign for the tax at www.waronwant.org/tobintax.

Second, Messrs Blair and Brown should encourage leaders to part-fund development from a peace dividend from reducing global spending on warfare, now around \$1trillion annually. In the light of the horror of Africa, we rich nations must ask honestly if we need hugely, expensive defence systems: "Star Wars", flotillas of large war-ships, or new nuclear weapons.

A Peace dividend is not a new idea: Isaiah referred to turning swords into ploughshares millennia ago. If all nations progressively decreased defence spending by 1% annually into a "ploughshares" Aid fund, approximately an accumulative extra \$10 billion would be generated each year. By 2015, this annual Peace dividend would amount to \$100 billion – a further doubling of the Aid budget, at the time that the IFF is due to time out.

This triple headed financial plan comprising Mr Brown's scheme, Tobin Tax and a Peace dividend, creates real, sustainable action – it would be a true 20th anniversary birthday present to the Live Aid generation.

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Eastern Daily Press

**One
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The articles here are from the regular Saturday column "One World" in the Eastern Daily Press (EDP). They raise issues such as third world development, poverty, globalisation, peacemaking, human rights, international relations, and the environment.

Our columnists provide a positive voice for the future, representing a wide group of concerned Norfolk people.

We welcome feedback and healthy debate – please read our columns, constructively criticise them and add to the debate on the EDP letters page (email : EDPletters@archant.co.uk).

All proceeds from the column will be donated to charities which work in the areas highlighted.

We are always looking for material to cover in this wide area. If you would like to participate by providing research or material for columns, then please contact Andrew Boswell (email: info@oneworldcolumn.org, 01603 613798).