

Presenting the Toys for Peace

26 June 2010 saw the second Armed Forces Day. In May last year, during the run-up to the first Armed Forces Day, the 'HM Armed Forces' Action Figures were launched. They follow the same format as the Action Man, dolls, the popular toy that was taken off the market over 10 years ago. All of the first 9 figures are based on Armed Forces personnel, with uniforms and accompanying equipment, weapons and vehicles. According to the publicity, "Commanders did not believe that the dolls glorify war, saying that they offer an insight into a range of military jobs, not just the frontline roles." If this is so, then why is the RAF Fast Jet pilot figure portrayed holding a gun?

These toys are aimed at children from 4 – 9 years old, and they cost up to £25. It is hoped they will not only raise some much needed revenue for the Ministry of Defence but also do their job in recruiting future soldiers, sailors and airmen.



The Movement for the Abolition of War (MAW) thinks it is wrong to be targeting children in this way. Serving in the Armed Forces is an adult occupation and the decision to join up should be an adult decision. Giving action dolls to children with the aim of instilling the belief in them that life in the Forces is 'fun' is the wrong way to go. In response to the military Action Figures they have now come up with a free, downloadable alternative – the Non-Violent Action Doll.

The first nine Action Figures generated criticism for being all male and all white. The first Non-Violent Action Doll to make her appearance is Peacenik Patty, an active young woman, found all over the country at protests, demonstrations and peace camps. What she lacks in dress sense she makes up for in commitment. She is the first in a series of dolls, based on the many characters who campaign for peace, persistently, stubbornly and always non-violently. She comes with a set of summer clothes and of course, her peace flag. Later in the year her winter wardrobe will be available, and if she proves popular she will be followed by other familiar figures from the front line of peace campaigning.

She can be found [on the MAW website – www.abolishwar.org.uk](http://www.abolishwar.org.uk) under Resources/Free Downloads.