

CO Day goes virtual

Conscientious Objectors' Day - Friday, May 15 - will be celebrated online this year. The virtual gathering will remember the stories of COs in the past, hear testimony from COs today and will also include a performance piece by the dramatist Michael Mears. For more information see www.co-day.org. The website includes many suggestions for people to mark the day at home, including making a poster, creating a video message of solidarity and the hashtag #CODay2020 .

For an electronic version of the newsletter email Gill Hurle via gill.hurle@abolishwar.org.uk *Abolish War* will next be published on August 1.

Take action for peace – as pandemic reveals futility of warfare



Tim Devereux, chair of MAW, writes: “In the security strategies of the past 15 years, UK governments identified pandemics as a Tier 1 threat, but failed to prepare adequately. Nuclear proliferation or use was deemed a Tier 2 threat - yet Trident renewal proceeds apace.

Now 2020 is proving to be a formative year for us all as the Covid-19 pandemic changes our

lives in ways we would not have imagined possible even a few short months ago.

‘The first duty of government is the protection of the nation,’ said the former Chief of the Defence Staff, Nick Houghton in June 2018.

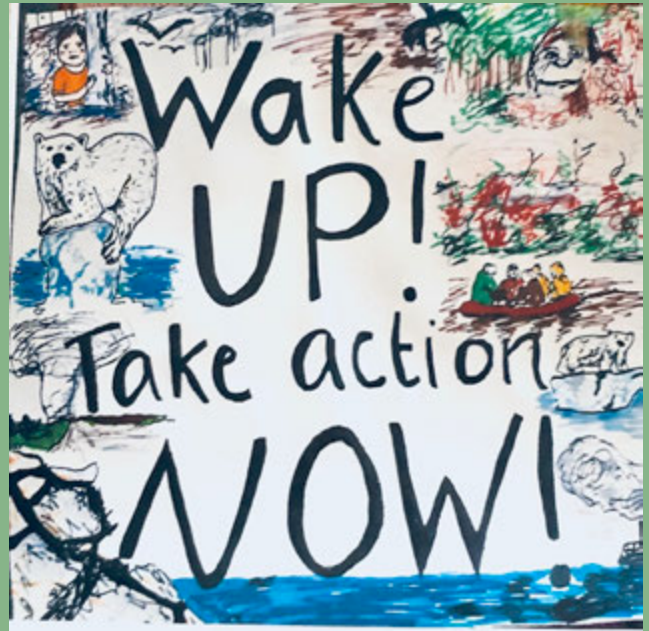
We’re finding out what that really means and seeing that the answer doesn’t lie in weapons of mass destruction.

Those of us working for peace can’t have ‘real life’ meetings - but we can come up with new ways to tell the world that real security is not found in weapons. My own garage door is now a hoarding for ‘NHS not Trident’ posters - and passers-by see it as they exercise.

This issue of *Abolish*

War has information about the Global Day of Actions against Military Spending, (See p2) and our new ‘Press Gang’ initiative - getting the anti-war message out (See p3) among other things. Radical change can spring from the chaos of crisis. Let’s do all we can to push for peace, health security and climate security - which is *real* security.”

● Many thanks to Rosie Young, 16, and a granddaughter of MAW committee member Heather Speight for this eye-catching poster.



Support GCOMS

The Global Campaign on Military Spending (GCOMS) - UK branch has an updated website, which offers a wealth of articles, reports, videos and more. It also offers campaign tools for groups and individuals to use on social media or in other ways.

Please take a look:

<https://demilitarize.org.uk/>.

As well as the Global Days of Action on Military Spending (GDAMS) which are running until May 9 this year, there is a rolling programme of events across the year.

GCOMS is keen to add to the list of Supporting Organisations, so if you have friends or colleagues in other groups please urge them to send in an endorsement.

Free resource

The Preamble to the UN Charter was agreed in June 1945. The first point in this preamble makes a major purpose of the United Nation's clear - it is to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war."

We have the printed preamble on one side of A4 card - ideal for noticeboards.

It has both the UNA and MAW address on it.

If you would like a free copy, send an A4 envelope with an 83p second class large letter stamp to Bruce Kent, c/o MAW, 11 Venetia Road, London N4 1EJ.

Making our presence felt - online for now ...

In pre-lockdown days, MAW members took our message to an Extinction Rebellion (XR) march through central London in February.

We may no longer be on the streets or meeting in person but there's still plenty of activity. MAW remains an active participant, via Zoom, in meetings of the XR Peace Council and of ICAN partners in the UK (promoting the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of

Nuclear Weapons). There is still much to do in spite of the isolation.

A recent message sent to the UN Secretary General in support of his call for a global ceasefire and written by our vice-chair, Hilary Evans, was gratefully acknowledged (although we haven't yet heard back from the Foreign Secretary on the same topic...).



A quiet night in? Still plenty to see...

As many of us will be home-based at the moment, it's a good opportunity to catch up on short films, online articles and clips. Here are our Top Five!

Covid-19 and Conflict and the Future

A five minute film from SIPRI

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7qAAGw7byI&list=PLhYE8cjKxVOMfGNpgjB0s-GKUtTWsSHTV&index=1>

Climate change and peace and security

Another five-minute film from SIPRI

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=53&v=LXCYYAxc3ws&feature=emb_logo

Reimagining Security - Ted Talk (2015 but still excellent)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTBYcSL3Mrl>

A graphic video showing military spending between 1980-2019

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muGvRYDd-lo>

Why do we need to rethink security? UK Budget Report 2020-21 with pie-chart of Public Sector Spending on page 7

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/871799/Budget_2020_Web_Accessible_Complete.pdf

Can you join the Press Gang? MAW plans to spread the peace message

A **Call to Action** is going out to MAW members to get the Abolish War message out using local networks.

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted why we should use our best scientific brains to the benefit of humanity and the wider and utterly important natural world for our survival, rather than developing weapons and new ways of destroying each other.

Do you feel inspired to spread the message and ask challenging questions about why we choose to use our resources on 'security' in terms of war and conflict, all over the world, rather than 'security' in terms of positive human living and supporting our planet?



Alison Lohead, MAW committee member, (pictured) says: "We are looking for members to join a 'Press Gang' and issue regular press releases to local media as well as writing / emailing letters to MPs, local groups and the global community. You could be part of a team that decides on topics to be addressed and composes letters or, if it suits you better, you can choose to be responsible for sending out a message supplied to you.

The more of us who are involved the more we can be listened to - together we can make a difference."

To offer your service or to find out more email
gill.hurle@abolishwar.org.uk

Military expenditure reaches \$1,917 billion

New data for 2019, published on April 27 by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, shows a rise of 3.6% in annual global military expenditure, reaching \$1,917 billion, or \$252 per head of the world's population. Britain's contribution to this total has now reached £45.2 billion, and the government still plans to spend over £205 billion on the replacement of the Trident nuclear weapons system. These figures reflect a

disturbing growth in military capacity worldwide and give rise to serious concerns for global peace and security. They also reflect a misuse of public resources that could otherwise be made available to tackle the Covid-19 crisis, climate change and other real security threats.

As part of the annual Global Days of Action on Military Spending, coordinated by the International Peace Bureau, MAW joined 19 UK charities and NGOs in signing an Open Letter, published by the Peace Pledge Union.

BOOK REVIEW

Postnational Memory, Peace and War: Making Pasts Beyond Borders

Routledge, 2019. 364 pp, 64 illus

Colin Archer

Memory is now a specialised field of its own and the author has spent much of his career deeply engaged in it, especially as it relates to modern war, genocide and mass violence - including nuclear weapons. Drawing on a huge range of examples from prose, poetry, film and theatre, painting, photography, music and the popular arts, he traces a narrative path through the tragic events of the 20th century. In this way, Young sketches out a history of modern remembering and explores the formation of a 'transnational' (or 'postnational') historical awareness, as an alternative to purely national narratives and imperial, militarist or ethnocentric histories. He takes us to 'sacred' sites (Auschwitz, Hiroshima and many more) and intersperses the more theoretical passages with telling personal 'vignettes'. This remarkable work is intense and deeply felt; not always an easy read, but one that repays the effort.

Nigel Young is Professor Emeritus of Sociology and Research Professor in Peace Studies at Colgate University, USA. He is editor in chief of the *Oxford International Encyclopedia of Peace* and author of several important works on memory and modern peace-making.

BOOK REVIEW

**The Big Book of Wisdom,
Larry Culliford**

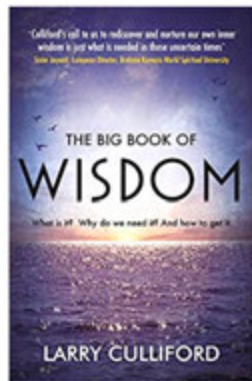
Hero, 2020, 176 pp

Heather Speight

This intriguing book is the work of a retired psychiatrist and Life member of MAW. Cultivating wisdom seems very relevant to MAW's central message.

The author suggests that we first need to "sort ourselves out", to be better equipped to contribute to the common good.

He takes us on a fascinating journey of self-discovery with a rich and comprehensive mix of ideas and experiences. We are shown how we can use these to grow and mature - a



cumulative process of discovery - embodying compassion, caring, suffering and joy, plus an emerging sense of universal connectedness, of what is best for all in any given situation – connections.

We are in an unprecedented global emergency - the combined and all too familiar existential threats to our survival - injustice, war, the threat of nuclear annihilation, catastrophic climate change, By joining with others we can hope to challenge the

status quo collectively and more effectively. We can share our wisdom to help us contribute to a more peaceful world, balancing the needs of humankind and our fragile

Shadow Minister to speak at MAW Remembrance Lecture 2020

We are delighted to announce that Fabian Hamilton, Labour Member of Parliament for Leeds North East and Shadow Minister for Peace and Disarmament, has agreed to give the MAW 2020 Annual Remembrance Lecture.



Mr Hamilton (pictured above) was recently re-appointed to the role of Shadow Minister by new Labour Leader Sir Keir Starmer. The post was created by the former Labour Leader,

Jeremy Corbyn, in 2016 and covers North Africa, the Middle East, North Korea and Party policy on nuclear weapons. The lecture will be given on Saturday, November 7, with a venue still to be confirmed and - if necessary - will switch to an online forum with an interactive Q&A session. More details will be released soon.

The Movement for the Abolition of War – join us, or renew your membership

We aim to create a world where war is no longer seen as a way to solve a problem; where it has ceased to be an option; where conflict resolution means resolution. Working through education and dialogue, nationally and locally, we have the tools, skills and laws that we need, but we also need you - ordinary people can help us realise our goal, the abolition of war.

To join MAW or renew your membership, complete this form or download the membership and standing order forms from our website at <http://www.abolishwar.org.uk/join.html>.
Send the completed form (and cheque if applicable) to: Movement for the Abolition of War, 1 Old Mill Place, Haslemere, GU27 1NE

Membership application / renewal

Name
Address
..... Postcode
Tel no.
Email

Type of membership (please tick):
Life £100 Individual £15 Unwaged £5
Household (2 or more at same address) £20 Group or organisation £25
I enclose: Membership £
Donation £
Total £
Please make cheque payable to Movement for the Abolition of War
OR Please send me a standing order form

Membership subscriptions: If you received this newsletter by post the label on the envelope shows your membership status: the date to which you are paid up, eg 2020; 'Life', if you are a life member; 'SO' if you pay by standing order or 'Comp' if you receive a complimentary copy.

To join or renew your membership complete the form in this newsletter or download the forms from our website at <http://www.abolishwar.org.uk/join.html>. If you would like to receive email notification of the newsletter availability, instead of a hard copy, please email gill.hurle@abolishwar.org.uk

Abolish War is published by the Movement for the Abolition of War, 11 Venetia Road, London N4 1EJ

● MAW President Bruce Kent has been nominated once again for the Nobel Peace Prize with the award due to be decided in October. Watch this space!