

# Update - October 2020



## Northern Friends Peace Board

NFPB, Victoria Hall, Knowsley Street, Bolton BL1 2AS  
[nfpb@gn.apc.org](mailto:nfpb@gn.apc.org) 01204 382330 <http://nfpb.org.uk>  
Charity SC 024632

## NFPB meetings online

In June, we were due to meet in Glasgow for the second of our members' meetings of 2020. An online meeting using Zoom was arranged in its place, with 26 Friends participating. We spent time in worship and shared reflections on how the pandemic had affected our lives and witness. Trustees had done further work on their vision and



strategy paper and shared this thinking with members. Trustees had also finalised and approved the accounts for 2019 and these were presented to the Board. As with our usual meetings, we gave time for Friends' sharing of information and news on those peace activities and events that had been taking place and were coming up. The Coordinator reported on the collaborative work, communication and networking that had continued since March.

Following a suggestion at our June meeting, smaller and shorter online meetings are now taking place for NFPB members and other interested Friends. We have been pleased to meet and welcome a wider network of Friends from across the north at these meetings, which have been times for reflection, discussion and worship together.

We plan to have informal NFPB meetings for our members and any other interested Friends on the morning of 17<sup>th</sup> October and early evening of 17<sup>th</sup> December.

NFPB's business meeting will take place on 7<sup>th</sup> November.

All these will be online using Zoom and we would be very pleased to welcome interested Friends: **please get in touch if you would like to participate. (see contact details above)**

If you are not a Zoom user and have information, questions or reflections to share, please do get in touch by email.

## Beyond military spending - alternative approaches to peace and security

The pandemic and the consequences for choices around governments' spending priorities around the world has highlighted the level of funding for the military which, in the current context, does not provide security when.

A number of UK peace groups, including NFPB and QPSW, have continued to meet online before and after the focus



GLOBAL CAMPAIGN ON  
MILITARY SPENDING

period in April for the Global Campaign on Military Spending. This coalition has identified work that could usefully be done to develop and strengthen the previous rather low-key resources and profile of this work in the UK, and has obtained funding to pay for a consultant to do some work to take this on. They hope that this will move ahead during October.

Friends in Hebden Bridge, meanwhile, have formed a group to take forward a Swords into Ploughshares concern; they want to put forward the proposal that governments across the world reduce their military budget by 10% and that the funds be re-directed to health, social welfare and combating climate change. They are keen to hear from and work with others in relation to this.

We also support another network, which includes disarmament campaigners, political figures and trades union members. This has been meeting online to develop further ways of promoting the ideas of arms conversion and defence diversification, particularly amongst political parties.

### Government security review

There was a short period during August and early September when it was possible for non-governmental organisations to make submissions to the UK Government's integrated security review. Rethinking Security, with which NFPB is now affiliated, submitted its evidence\*, which includes the following:

- *the UK should set out its vision of 'global' security, and its strategy for building a more peaceful, just and sustainable world. It should be transformative in its aspirations to 'build back better' an international system that upholds human rights, justice and democracy and prioritises, supports and sustains peace. Promoting disarmament and demilitarisation, championing peacebuilding, and committing to abide by international law and UN institutions are fundamental to such an approach.*
- *In a context of climate and ecological emergency, rebuilding Planetary Security must be an integral part of any country's vision and strategy for security. Strategies that promote a consumption-based idea of prosperity will be counter-productive.*

- *A security review should not be considered a one-off activity but part of an ongoing conversation between people and government on what can maximise their own security, resilience and happiness, as well as that of the wider world. Mechanisms for ongoing societal consultation should be included as a key output of the Review.*

Rethinking Security is hoping to set up a process for engaging people in developing ideas for an Alternative Security Review in the coming months.

\* <https://rethinkingsecurityorguk.files.wordpress.com/2020/09/rs-submission-to-the-integrated-review-03-sep-2020.pdf>

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## **Nuclear weapons on the road and the road to abolition**

In mid-September, a convoy carrying nuclear weapons warheads was seen travelling through populated areas of central Scotland, en route between Aldermaston and Coulport (see news report here: <https://bit.ly/3cOwJmM>).

You can download an information leaflet about weapons convoys at: <https://nfpb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NucConvoys1.pdf>

Meanwhile, at the time of writing there are just four more ratifications needed for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to enter into force. See information about the treaty here: [https://www.icanw.org/the\\_treaty](https://www.icanw.org/the_treaty)

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## **NFPB Trustees**

The Committee met online in September for an additional meeting. They put to one side finance, employment and other considerations that make up their agenda for most of the year, to reflect in a more relaxed way on the possibilities of our work in the future. They acknowledged the power of performance and the arts as a way of communicating and engaging. There are myths that reflect the conventional establishment approach to making the world secure; what other stories or narratives can be told and created that reflect a different approach? We need to listen, to celebrate and promote acts of hope and be as ready as we can to embrace – or at least respond to – changes in the wider society and amongst Quakers. How can we make our activities more inclusive and open to new light? Trustee will keep before them these questions and the possibilities they point to.

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## **Wider Quaker networking**

As well as the networking with peace organisations outlined above, NFPB members and staff have participated in a number of national and international Quaker events online in recent months. These included a meeting for worship marking the centenary of the first world Friends' conference, which had peace as its particular focus.

We were pleased to contribute to the QPSW 'summer series' of webinars and are currently supporting the Woodbrooke online course on Living the Peace Testimony.

The annual Peace and Service Consultation for Friends from Quaker groups in Europe and the Middle East will now be taking place online rather than in person, and its members are also meeting online for shorter times for reflection and discussion.

We hosted an online Meeting for Worship to mark Hiroshima day on 6<sup>th</sup> August.

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## Finance

Thank you Friends for your continuing support during this challenging year, particularly those contributions from local Meetings.

We are able to receive online payments via <https://nfpb.org.uk/donate/>

To view our accounts, these can be found online at:

<https://nfpb.org.uk/resources/updates-and-reports/#financial>

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## Office and staffing issues

With growing Covid-19 infection rates, particularly in the North West of England, the planned gradual return of staff to work in the Bolton office is on hold. Our Coordinator, Philip Austin, continues to work from home for the time being. Transition from furlough arrangements for our Administrative Assistant, Steven Waling are being discussed.



### Mailing list

If you are not already on our mailing list to receive these updates directly, please contact [nfpb@gn.apc.org](mailto:nfpb@gn.apc.org) to be added to our mailing list.

## Peace Round-up

*On the following pages is the most recent of our monthly 'Peace Round-up' newsletter. To be added to the mailing list for this please get in touch.*

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## Peace Round-up – 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

A selection of items from a range of sources. Inclusion here does not imply full endorsement, but is based on current concerns of NFPB and its members.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list for these mailings, please contact [nfpb@gn.apc.org](mailto:nfpb@gn.apc.org)

### Liverpool Greens urge warfare show ban over 'merchants of death' claim

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-53805587>

### AOC Electronic Warfare Europe will not take place in 2020

<https://www.eweurope.com/event-update/>

### Military police probe British soldier over Yemen war protest

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-08-25-military-police-probe-british-soldier-over-yemen-war-protest/>

### STATEMENT BY VETERANS FOR PEACE UK IN SUPPORT OF LANCE CORPORAL AHMED AL-BABATI

<https://vfpuk.org/articles/statement-by-veterans-for-peace-uk-in-support-of-lance-corporal-ahmed-al-babati/>

### Why compassion needs to be at the heart of our response to Channel crossings

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/blog/why-compassion-needs-to-be-at-the-heart-of-our-response-to-channel-crossings>

### Racial justice learning for Quakers: a reflection

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/blog/racial-justice-learning-for-quakers-a-reflection>

### Why I'm friends with the man who shot me

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/ideas/videos/why-im-friends-with-the-man-who-shot-me/p08rh75r>

### Racism – An Urgent Concern for Peace Churches

The Britain and Ireland region of Church and Peace recently hosted an online event to discuss the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, and why racism must become a priority for peace churches and peace groups. <https://www.church-and-peace.org/en/2020/09/racism-concern-for-peace-churches/>

### Written Submission to the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development & Foreign Policy, submitted by Rethinking Security

<https://rethinkingsecurityorguk.files.wordpress.com/2020/09/rs-submission-to-the-integrated-review-03-sep-2020.pdf>

### Culture wars and the work of citizenship

By Jill Segger

<http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/29937>

### Online gathering sees enthusiasm for resisting everyday militarism

<https://www.ppu.org.uk/news/online-gathering-sees-enthusiasm-resisting-everyday-militarism>

### Friends support new children's rights bill

Bill aims to incorporate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into Scottish law

<https://thefriend.org/article/friends-support-new-childrens-rights-bill>

### **Paul Parker: How the Quakers embraced stillness in virtual meetings**

<https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/voices/when-two-or-three-are-gathered-online-i-am-there-among-them.html>

### **UK could be 'aiding and assisting' Saudi Arabia war crimes by selling arms, UN report warns**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/uk-saudi-arabia-war-crimes-yemen-arms-exports-ban-un-b453921.html>

### **Iran and the nuclear deal: latest news**

<https://cnduk.org/iran-and-the-nuclear-deal-latest-news/>

### **COVID-19 and the Lessons from History**

analyses the current state of the outbreak, puts it in the context of the past century's worst pandemics

<https://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/covid-19-and-the-lessons-from-history>

### **Five years on from UK's first drone targeted killing, increasing secrecy needs serious challenge**

<https://dronewars.net/2020/08/21/five-years-on-from-uks-first-drone-targeted-killing-increasing-secrecy-needs-serious-challenge/>

### **#PeaceMoments**

Peacebuilding can look like any one of hundreds of different actions, and mean different things to different people.... . So, to mark the International Day of Peace, we've asked our peacebuilding colleagues, partners and friends from around the world to share their most memorable peacebuilding moments.

<https://www.c-r.org/news-and-insight/peacemoments>

### **Systems, Relationships, and History: Advocating for Peace Today**

Adapted from remarks delivered at the New Association of Friends Fall Gathering, September 2020.

<https://www.fcni.org/updates/systems-relationships-and-history-advocating-for-peace-today-2989>

### **Civil society tells Canada: Stop arming Saudi Arabia**

<https://quakerservice.ca/news/stop-arming-saudi-arabia/>

### **Filming Police in Europe – new briefing from QCEA**

Briefing looks at the law and practice of video recording police operations across Europe, its relationship with public service accountability, prevention of human rights abuses and violence

<http://www.qcea.org/2020/09/filming-police-in-europe-new-briefing-from-qcea/>

### **Annexation Statement, September 2020**

Charities, trade unions, religious groups, and civil society organisations speak out against Israel's plans to annex Palestinian land.

<https://www.palestinecampaign.org/annexation-statement-september-2020/>

### **Plunged into despair: How Israel's policy affects Gazan families that depend on fishing for a living**

[https://www.btselem.org/gaza\\_strip/20200909\\_fishermen\\_families\\_gaza\\_strip](https://www.btselem.org/gaza_strip/20200909_fishermen_families_gaza_strip)

### **Climate Justice Now – End Militarism!**

<https://xrpeace.org/2020/09/01/climate-justice-now-end-militarism/>

**UK armed forces providing training for majority of countries on government's own human rights watch-list**

<https://www.caat.org.uk/media/press-releases/2020-09-09>

**Trading in Misery: The arms trade, empire and international law**

<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/2020/09/17/trading-in-misery/>

**Facing the Truth: Engaging with the Climate and Ecological Emergency**

<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/2020/09/14/climate-anxiety/>

**China and the US: the arms race in space**

<https://www.ft.com/video/80b1eb31-6cbc-422d-865b-29686dc9b235>

**Weekly lessons from Razor Wire & Olive Branches available via @TesResources**

Created with the eyewitness help of Eappi's human rights monitors, we look at questions of peace and justice for Palestinians & Israelis.

<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/where-are-palestine-and-israel-and-who-are-their-people-12398310>

**We invited you to imagine the world to come...now let's work together to make it happen**

<https://reset-uk.org/>

**The Rainbow: Peace, Equality and the NHS**

<https://thepeacemuseum.eu.rit.org.uk/the-use-of-the-rainbow>

**Why Eurosatory should be closed for good – and for the good of the world (Part 1 & Part 2)**

<https://qceablog.wordpress.com/2020/09/18/why-eurosatory-should-be-closed-for-good-and-for-the-good-of-the-world-part-1/>

<https://qceablog.wordpress.com/2020/09/20/why-eurosatory-should-be-closed-for-good-and-for-the-good-of-the-world-part-2/>

**People Not War**

Download and share this zine from CAAT

<https://www.caat.org.uk/resources/caat-news/pdf/caatnews258-people-not-war-zine.pdf>

**Global peacebuilders urge governments to recommit to peace**

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/global-peacebuilders-urge-governments-to-recommit-to-peace>

**Unethical and amoral. How the EU weapons programme neglects human rights**

<https://qceablog.wordpress.com/2020/09/21/unethical-and-amoral-how-the-eu-weapons-programme-neglects-human-rights/>

**Former World Leaders Urge Ratification of Nuclear Arms Ban Treaty**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/20/world/treaty-nuclear-arms-united-nations.html>

**Is your pension fund wrecking the planet?**

<https://sgr.org.uk/resources/your-pension-fund-wrecking-planet>

**British training of Saudi pilots continues amid bombing of Yemen**

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-09-23-british-training-of-saudi-pilots-continues-amid-bombing-of-yemen/>