



HEDDWCH

Number 74 > Spring 2020 > CND Cymru > Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament



A global ban treaty is just waiting to be signed....

Mass murder is a simple moral choice. The threat of mass murder is a form of state terrorism. Deterrence was always a flawed principle, and is even more so now that world leaders are ripping up treaties and restarting the arms race. Tell AMs, MPs, councillors, trade unions and nuclear lobbyists:

'It's time to get on the right side of history.'

WORLD DISARMAMENT UPDATE 2020

• *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*

Paraguay ratified the Treaty in January, and Belize signed the Treaty in February. Ireland is expected to ratify the Treaty very soon; the legislation has completed its progress through the government, and is now with the President to sign and deposit with the UN. After Ireland, just another 14 states are needed to ratify the Treaty before it enters into force.

• *New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty)*

This nuclear weapons treaty between the USA and Russia is due to expire in 2021. A Russian foreign ministry official has said that he doesn't believe that there

is enough time left for Moscow and Washington to draft a replacement for New START before it expires, in which case there will be no limits on either country's nuclear weapons or delivery systems.

• *NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty)*

Every 5 years, the UN hosts a conference to review the progress – or otherwise – made under the NPT. This will be held in April and May. The nuclear



weapon states will no doubt say that they're happy with progress, and that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is a distraction ... whilst everyone else will say that the nuclear weapon states have done nothing to negotiate away their nuclear weapons.

Brian Jones

OPINION

DEALS IN THE DARK

In February 2020 US Admiral Charles Richard announced that the W93 warhead, which was to be developed for submarine-launched missiles, would be part of a technical cooperation deal agreed with the UK government. Which came as something of a surprise to the Westminster parliament – it was the first time they had heard of it.

A deal had been done to which they were not party, a deal costing billions of pounds of public money. Trident never was an independent deterrent, and its replacement will tie the UK to US policy decisions for decades to come. Trident replacement is clearly in breach of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

And just remember that Trident replacement costs are estimated at a staggering £205 billion! Just £10 billion of that could house the homeless within a decade.

Evasiveness, lack of transparency, accountability or democratic process are all typical features of this Cummings-Johnson regime, and that can only end in tears. With Welsh interests being constantly overridden by Johnson's arrogance, the Senedd needs to distance itself from the arms traders and the UK's military-industrial-political lobbyists. It needs to demonstrate its opposition to nuclear colonialism and its support for a genuinely peaceful and progressive internationalism.

Philip Steele

THE DOOMSDAY CLOCK IS TICKING

JILL EVANS, *Chair of CND Cymru, sets the alarm.*

An ever present danger

On 23 January 2020, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists set the hands of the Doomsday Clock at '100 Seconds to Midnight'.

This is a measure of the level of danger to the planet due to the threat of nuclear weapons and now climate change as well. The closer the hands are to midnight, the greater the threat. The announcement that the hands on the clock were being moved was made by former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland, and Governor Jerry Brown, Chair of the Bulletin.

Unprecedented

This is the closest the world has ever come to disaster. Even in times of clear danger, such as the 1950s with the testing of the first hydrogen bombs, and during the Cold War, the hands of the clock were at three minutes to midnight. In 2018 and 2019 they were at two minutes. The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists and its advisors include some of the world's best qualified people to make such a judgement.

"The world is sleepwalking its way through a newly unstable nuclear landscape. The arms control boundaries that have helped prevent nuclear catastrophe for the last half century are being steadily dismantled."

Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists 2020

Most notably, the Bulletin recalls the Reagan-Gorbachev declaration in 1987-88 that "A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought." This must be reaffirmed urgently.

Nuclear proliferation risk

We must redouble our efforts to ensure that upcoming international conferences decide on



immediate action. In April and May, the United Nations holds its Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in New York. This conference takes place every five years. Countries which are parties to the NPT, experts in disarmament, parliamentarians and others with relevant knowledge will come together. Efforts are being made to lobby the NPT to strengthen and extend current treaties and get real movement towards disarmament. This would include more signatures and ratification of the treaty to ban nuclear weapons and the calling of a nuclear weapons convention.

COP26 Glasgow

This November, too, we have the crucial UN climate talks, COP26, in Glasgow. These will be the most important talks since the Paris agreement in 2015. We cannot miss the opportunity to get countries back on track in relation to commitments made in Paris. There is discussion about whether COP26 will go ahead due to restrictions put into place by governments around the globe in response to the threat of the COVID-19 virus.

We have not witnessed anything like the same level of government response to the Doomsday Clock, which is such a critical message to the world. Sleepwalking is not an option. We must be wide awake to the enormous danger and demand real action.



Linda Rogers and Thomas Pitt represented CND Cymru in Paris.

ICAN PARIS FORUM

On February 14-15 two delegates from CND Cymru attended the Paris forum of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

We asked them for their impressions.

See <https://paris.icanw.org/>

Thomas Pitt

It is no secret that we are living through precarious times when it comes to nuclear weapons. With treaties like the 1978-2019 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) falling by the wayside and increasing tensions between nuclear armed states (such as India and Pakistan), we do not lack for causes of global concern

In this context, it is all the more important that there is a strong international campaign movement calling for the elimination of nuclear arms. Building such a movement was the aim of February's ICAN Paris Forum, which brought together activists, young and old, from all over the world. Those attending received a stark reminder of the horrors

of nuclear war from Setsuko Thurlow, Hiroshima-bomb survivor and long-time disarmament campaigner.

Opening the forum, her powerful testimony was a moving account of her memories of that fateful day in August 1945, and demonstrated the continued importance of making sure the voices of the *hibakusha* are heard.

The rest of the forum, taking place over two days, saw a range of excellent speakers from many diverse organisations, including Extinction Rebellion, Black Lives Matter, the International Trade Union Confederation and the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy.

Many of the speakers stressed the need for intersectionality—

working together to combat the defining challenges of our age. Despite all the obstacles we face, there are reasons for some cautious optimism. With the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons gathering support, it seems only a matter of time before it enters into force. And while there is still a long way to go in the struggle for global disarmament, it was hugely encouraging to see so many young people in Paris ready to engage in political activism.

The ICAN Paris Forum was, therefore, much more than just an opportunity to network and share ideas, but a much-needed morale booster which will, I'm sure, have inspired many to go out and change the world.

Linda Rogers

To start at the end...I have a theory, that in a group of people, if one has a question, then others will also have that question. With that in mind, I stood at the last session of the conference to ask how we could best unify our voices, at a time when the clock is ticking so fast and the forces ranged against us, in the natural and political worlds, are so powerful. I was feeling the panic of needing a concrete something to grasp at the end of a massively empowering, thoughtful and inclusive experience and the prospect



was suddenly so daunting of what lay outside these comforting conference walls – the return to the looking-glass world of a country leaving Europe with a leadership in London promoting all that we had been campaigning against over the last two days in Paris. The answer lies partly, of course, in the work of the ICAN campaign itself and the promotion of the international treaty in as many forums as possible.

The answer is also in the presence and support of all the different voices, from the multitude of campaigns, come to Paris to promote ICAN and the need for us, in our turn, to support them.

We heard voices from Palestine, from survivors of the nuclear bomb, from those fighting the terrible effects of uranium mining, from activists in the forefront of direct action against climate change, from those fighting for equal rights and young people finding their way in a world where they are a minority voice – and all, oh, so brave. And this collective, quiet heroism was suddenly so overwhelming. How could it be best supported?

Thomas and I, as CND Cymru representatives, were lucky to meet many delegates who have offered to tell their stories in Wales, so watch this space. We will work towards meeting at such events as the Eisteddfod and at COP 26. We also plan to revisit Faslane with our fellow campaigners in Scotland. We also need to get political alignment with those parties at home that see the links between nuclear war and climate change and have ears to hear the stories so powerfully and simply told in Paris.

ICAN TREATY DAY AT THE SENEDD

The UK government's policy is to ignore the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and so far there has been very little media coverage of it either.

So a big thank you to **Mike Hedges AM** for hosting a successful CND Cymru–ICAN drop-in event at the Senedd on 4 March to promote the campaign. Against a background screening of the film *The Beginning of the End of Nuclear Weapons*, a group of enthusiastic members and supporters urged elected representatives to sign the Pledge to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

Some AMs had previously signed and now even more signatures have been added to the list! Has your AM or MP signed yet? An up to date list of who has signed can be found at www.cndcymru.org/ican-the-international-campaign--against-nuclear-weapons

If they are not on the list please write to them or visit their constituency surgeries to urge them to join the ever-growing campaign to eliminate nuclear weapons worldwide – **together let's make 2020 the year all our Welsh elected representatives sign the Pledge!**

Mary Jones

heddwach>action:

Can you organise a screening of the hour-long film *The Beginning of the End of Nuclear Weapons* – copies (on a memory stick) are available from CND Cymru.



Rob Anderson

Global Ban event at the Senedd

HOLD YOUR COUNCIL TO ACCOUNT!

*What does your local Council's Pension Fund invest in and how ethical are their investments, taken from your Council Tax? As a former management accountant, **David Wood** decided to look at a pension fund in detail.*

Last June, Swansea Council issued a Notice of Motion on Climate Emergency which stated they were going to divest from fossil fuel investments. They asserted that the City and County of Swansea Pension Fund is one of the first to adopt an Environment, Social & Governance policy.

Where does your money go?

Swansea Council Pension Fund (SCPF) invest in their 'Largest Direct Equity Shareholdings by Market Value' section, £52,855,000 in Royal Dutch Shell and BP, another £21,363,000 in British American Tobacco and £18,637,000 in Rio Tinto. None of which are either ethical or environmentally friendly, but it was the Rio Tinto investments that caught my eye. Rio Tinto own 68.4% of Energy Resources of Australia Ltd, who between them have mined 128,000 tonnes of uranium oxide over the past three decades.

Uranium oxide is used to make fuel rods for nuclear reactors both civil and military, and although Rio Tinto have stated no uranium oxide is sold to Iran, North Korea and Saudi Arabia, they cannot be certain that none has been bought by third parties and sold on.

Time to divest?

I contacted the Chair of the SCPF suggesting that they should divest from Rio Tinto as they are one of the most environmentally damaging companies on the planet, but the Chair refused, stating that Rio Tinto are mining lithium, used in electric vehicle batteries, making them 'ethical'. After protests by email stating Rio Tinto's lithium adventure is only a pilot project to mine 10 tonnes of lithium a year with a rather hopeful prospect of mining 5,000 tonnes a year, the Chairman stopped replying to me. At this point I decided to involve the leader of one of the opposition parties who faithfully said they would 'look into' SCPF's investment in Rio Tinto. Nothing happened.

Deaf ears

As we approach Year End for SCPF I again looked at the stock market to see how much

profit their investment in both BP, Royal Dutch Shell, British American Tobacco and Rio Tinto have made. Only British American Tobacco made a profit (of around 18%) but both fossil fuel companies lost around 25% each in the last 12 months.

Rio Tinto lost around 17%, or roughly £1,591,000, from their Pension Fund. I again contacted the leader of the opposition party informing him of their losses, hoping they would divest from Rio Tinto: after all, even stockbrokers' analyses stated 'sell, not buy'. Again, it fell on deaf ears and the email exchanges dried up. And as we go to press – the stock market has again plummeted.

heddwch>action:

It is vital to check your Council's pension fund investments. If they are unethical – hold them to account.



WHERE THE WAR NEVER ENDED....

Angharad Tomos calls on peace campaigners to mark the 80th anniversary of the Mynydd Epynt eviction.

Remember Mynydd Epynt

With the slogan 'Cofiwch Tryweryn' (Remember Tryweryn) having aroused so much curiosity in 2019, the slogan 'Cofiwch yr Epynt' has also appeared on a number of walls in Wales this year. Which is only fitting, as 80 years have passed since the 'eviction'.

The Epynt story is less familiar to people in Wales than the story of how Cwm Tryweryn was drowned, but nevertheless it is an important one. Mynydd Epynt is a part of Brecknockshire – not a single village, but a community of scattered farms, once a stronghold of Welsh language and culture. Much of its history is included in *Mae'n Ddiwedd Byd Yma* ('The World Ends Here') by Herbert Hughes (Gomer 1997).

Early in 1940 the people of Epynt received a letter from the War Office telling them they would have to leave their homes by the end of April that year. The Army was to use the area as an artillery range. It was a desperate shock to the people who lived there, many of whom had been born in the same houses as their fathers and their grandfathers before them. There was opposition, but the only concession was to postpone the leaving date until 1 June, after the lambing season had ended. As was the case at Tryweryn, the school closed for the last time and Capel y Babell too.

In no time at all the bulldozers moved in to demolish the farms. Over 200 adults and children from 54 farms and smallholdings were uprooted. The War ended – but their land was never returned to them. Today the Ministry of Defence still owns 30,000 acres of the Epynt uplands. If you look on the map, many of the farm names

have simply disappeared, and all that can be seen are the words DANGER AREA.

The Army was taking advantage of the war. They had had their eye on this location as long ago as 1912, because it was a wild spot whose peat bogs were ideal for artillery practice. The area has achieved some notoriety quite recently when young soldiers lost their lives on the mountain during training. In the Welsh psyche the area is forever associated with Cefnbrith, where John Penry was raised, and here too of course was the home of the hymn-writer William Williams Pantycelyn. The Epynt exodus will be remembered in August when the National Eisteddfod comes to Tregaron, which lies just across the mountain.

heddwch>action:

The plan is for people to gather on Mynydd Epynt on Peace Day, 19 September 2020. Because firing regularly takes place, access is only permitted on rare occasions.

As well as teaching a new generation about the Epynt eviction, it's important to recall just how much land in Wales has been taken by the Ministry of Defence, not only on Epynt but at Valley, Llanbedr, Aberporth, Trecŵn and many other places. So watch this space for further details – and paint that slogan on walls across Wales!



Angharad Tomos

Message in Llanrug

HINKLEY MUD – TAKE 2

National Resources Wales (NRW) has announced a new “pre-consultation” on EdF’s plans in 2021 to conduct further dredging of Bridgwater Bay. This is where the outflow pipes of Hinkley Point A and B have deposited radioactive particles since the 1960s. The sediment containing those radioactive particles is to be dumped off Cardiff Bay, in the Cardiff Grounds marine dispersal site. This work is all part of EdF’s construction of the Hinkley Point C nuclear power station, which – if completed – will generate the most expensive electricity in the world.

Key questions

This initial consultation concerns (a) the sampling methodology to be used to assess how much radioactivity is in the sediment, and (b) whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is necessary. The information for (a) is on the website; nothing for (b) has yet been made public. Tim Deere-Jones is writing our submission to the consultation, which closed in mid-March.

Radiation data

Radiation readings around the Hinkley site (and other nuclear sites) are measured every year by RIFE, Radiation In Food and the Environment, a UK government organisation. Following the dredging in 2018, 16 of the 18 points measured showed

increased levels of radioactivity; 6 of the readings had more than doubled. The probability of 16 out of 18 measurements randomly increasing, as EdF argues, is apparently a 1 in 1700 chance. RIFE’s measurements clearly suggest that the shoreline work at Hinkley has stirred up radioactive particles, which had been relatively stable in the sediment, and released them into the environment – exactly what we predicted.

Stirring it up

Further dredging will only increase the radioactivity in the area, and then dumping the sediment will mean that radioactive particles will be spread along the Severn Estuary. As no radiation measurements have been taken on the South Wales coastline, we will never be able to know how much radiation levels will increase as a result of the construction of Hinkley Point C.

Brian Jones

BURYING NUCLEAR WASTE

The Welsh Government has published its response to 2019’s GDF (Geological Disposal Facility) consultation.

It’s glossy and meant to be very reassuring...

The important points are:

- The Welsh Government has a “consent-based approach to work in partnership with communities and relevant local authorities for the purposes of identifying suitable locations with a willing community for a GDF”.

- All relevant local authorities must be informed before any proposal goes public.
- At least one relevant local authority must agree to participate. Where a relevant local authority decides not to be member, then the community council areas within its boundaries will not form a part of a potential host community.

The full document can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-siting-process-for-a-geological-disposal-facility>
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/communities-and-gdf.cy>



WYLFA – WHAT’S OCCURRING?

Officially the Wylfa B project hasn’t been cancelled, just ‘put on ice’. That’s why it still has the backing of Anglesey County Council and the Welsh government.

The word amongst our friends in Japan is that Wylfa is no longer up for discussion, so the conclusion has to be that Hitachi will try to sell off the site (unless the London government agrees to guarantee the whole cost of this monster).

Development Consent Order

Following the shelving of the project in October 2019, a decision by Westminster about the Development Consent Order (DCO) is expected just as we go to press at the end of March 2020. This would grant consent to build a nuclear plant on the site – and not necessarily by the same company or even using the same technology. Now, would you be able to build a house, if you had changed the plans without revising the original application?

RAB - it’s you who picks up the bill!

As Hitachi has insisted that the Westminster government hasn’t offered them sufficient financial security – and that despite the exceptionally generous offer that was made – the government is looking at ways of financing that will transfer almost all of the risks associated with Wylfa B onto the shoulders of the taxpayer and the electricity consumer. The Orwellian name for this privilege is Regulated Asset Base. (I might add that the only Rab we have any time for is Rab C Nesbitt!)

HORIZON VERSUS KATIE

Katie Hayward lives in Melin Cafnan, next door to the Wylfa site, and she is the owner of ‘Felin Honey Bees’. For years she has virtually been placed under siege by Horizon, with the aim of forcing her out of her home. A film about her story has been made and is showing at the Cannes Film Festival and other film festivals around the world. A short version (20 minutes) is available for free.

PETITION TIME

CND Cymru urges all its supporters to sign this CND-UK petition to the Westminster government – Cancel all plans for new reactors; phase out all nuclear power production; commit to renewable energy.

heddwch>action:

https://cnduk.org/actions/no-to-nuclear-power-petition/?fbclid=IwAR2Px9KL0tnQN4u-itwa5KDGbnJtIoodnRW-yNjLhSO58IRz1kUHa_B3muk

TRAWSFYNYDD

The campaign against Small Modular Nuclear Reactors is hotting up. PAWB and CADNO are now seeing the two anti-nuclear battles in North Wales as one and the same – we can’t rule out the possibility of an SMNR at Wylfa too if no big reactor is going to happen there. Anti-nuclear supporter Mabon ap Gwynfor has been selected as the Plaid Cymru candidate in the area for the next Senedd elections. Remember that Liz Saville Roberts (the local MP) and Gwynedd County Council (both Plaid Cymru too) have supported SMNRs for years. I wonder if that’s why there’s now suddenly talk about producing medical isotopes at Traws? Sugaring the pill, perhaps?

Robat Idris



Robat Idris

PAWB protesters on Menai Bridge mark the ninth anniversary of Fukushima 11 March 2020

AROUND WALES

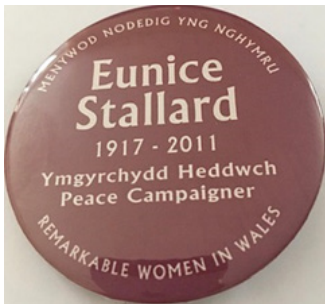


OFÔNIFYNWWY

• Ystradgynlais - honouring Eunice Stallard

'Woman for Life on Earth' and 'Greenham Woman': the late Eunice Stallard was commemorated at Ystradgynlais Miners' Welfare Hall in March. Unveiling the Purple Plaque, Eunice's great-granddaughter Megan Martin said, "It was important to Eunice to use her identity as a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother to protest against nuclear weapons, in order to safeguard children and the future". Jane Hutt, Labour AM for the Vale of Glamorgan, said: "Eunice Stallard serves as a role model to us all and I am delighted that she has been honoured

with a plaque – a fantastic and fitting way to celebrate International Women's Day'. The march from Cardiff to Greenham Common in Berkshire, England, launched the Greenham Common Peace camp in 1981.



Chwarae Teg

• Cardiff - focus on the Middle East

In January 2020, a meeting jointly sponsored by CND Cymru and United Nations Association Cardiff, heard Delyth Jewell AM and Prof Sergey Radchenko discuss "The Middle East, Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Disarmament". The meeting was such a success that we intend holding further joint meetings, the next one in Spring 2021 featuring Jill Evans speaking on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

• Aberystwyth – a meeting of minds

CND Cymru met at the Morlan

centre, Aberystwyth, on 7 March for a committee meeting followed by a public get together. Virus fears and a certain rugby game notwithstanding, it turned out to be an illuminating and inspiring afternoon. Linda Pentz Gunter of Beyond Nuclear spoke with her characteristic clarity on SMNRs and went on to discuss campaigning strategy, all very timely in view of current press speculation about Trawsfynydd. Her views chimed with those of Linda Rogers, who reported on the ICAN Paris Forum as inspirational in its international solidarity (see p.4) and ways in which we can get a hold on

shifting political and public opinion regarding deterrence and disarmament.

• Cardiff Bay - DSEI Arms Fair fallout

The Welsh government's support for the UK arms industry has come under (metaphorical) fire since it was revealed that £95,000 was spent in sending officials to the DSEI Arms Fair in London, in September 2019. The government says its presence was needed to boost firms based in Wales which produce drones, nuclear submarine parts, military IT systems or provide munitions testing.

AROUND WALES



OFÔN I FYN WY

Porthmadog – meeting of CADNO**Meilyr Tomos reports.**

According to some of our political representatives, there's not much opposition to the whole PR fanfare about Trawsfynydd, and people are enthusiastic to experiment with SMNR technology at the site. So it was great to see the Salem vestry at Porthmadog packed with a healthy cross-section of farmers, environmentalists and ordinary Meirionydd people unanimous in their opposition.

Deilwen Evans welcomed everyone: for those who don't know her, Deilwen has for decades kept an eagle eye on what goes on at the Traws site, and was one of the founders of CADNO. It was good to welcome Mabon ap Gwynfor, Plaid Cymru's prospective candidate for the Assembly elections in 2021. Mabon presented his viewpoint with insight and from the heart, and he encouraged us

to raise our voices at every level, so that those who claim support for this experiment start to realise how things really stand at grassroots level. Unfortunately, due to a family illness Linda Pentz Gunter was unable to attend, so I did my best to summarise her very effective notes on her behalf, and fill in some background on the trans-Atlantic situation regarding SMNRs. Discussion followed from the floor and as ever I was surprised by just how deep, acute and technically savvy discussions like this can be. Everyone could agree that it was time to start shouting out – people in Meirionydd really don't want to be guinea pigs yet again.

There's been a need for proper jobs here for decades. There's been a need to solve fuel poverty here for just as long. And now there's a need for us to face up to the challenges of climate change, rather than delaying for further decades because of empty promises by the nuclear industry.



Standing firm against SMNRs: CADNO plans resistance

• Menai Bridge – Fukushima anniversary

On 11 March 2020 supporters of PAWB, CND Cymru, XR and others once again occupied the Ynys Môn side of the suspension bridge in order to remember the victims of Fukushima. That accident had a major effect on world opinion, which in turn impacted the nuclear industry worldwide. A closing speech by Dylan Morgan gave an update about Fukushima, and then drew attention to the current issues with Wylfa B, Trawsfynydd and SMNRs (see p.9). The colourful banners fluttered cheerfully, the rain held off, and the rush hour traffic hooted in support. Most people were pleased to escape the morning news, with its depressing cycle regarding the virus, the budget and the bad weather. Better to be here making a point in good company!

THE POWER OF SONG

For four decades Côr Cochion have been synonymous with Welsh radicalism and international solidarity. Wendy Lewis celebrates.

In these turbulent times, we are sometimes tempted to give in to despair over the climate emergency, or the erosion of the hard-won freedoms we thought we could take for granted. But singing gives us strength. We sing to express our anger, our solidarity and most of all, our connection with each other. When we march, we don't sing primarily to those in power who won't hear us, but to give heart to those around us.

Each generation has new struggles, expressed in new songs, and rediscovers the old songs that continue to speak to us. It thrills us to give voice to the words of the Chartist Ernest Jones, or Joe Hill, and know that their struggles for peace and justice have not been forgotten, and their songs live on.

Côr Cochion Caerdydd

Côr Cochion was born in 1983 on a march for the 10th anniversary of the coup against Allende in Chile, inspired by the songs of Victor Jara and Inti Illimani. But its main focus at first was nearer to home, the Miners' Strike: when Thatcher's attack on trade unions threatened the very existence of the Welsh Valleys' strong communities. Songs were borrowed and rewritten from the Welsh choral tradition – TE Niclas had provided socialist words for many familiar hymns.

We learnt songs from the Wobblies in the US, from the Anti Apartheid movement and the campaign for civil rights in Northern Ireland; inspired by Peggy Seeger, Joan Baez, Dafydd Iwan, Maria Tolley. The choir started to collect for miners' support groups, and money poured in from passers by.

It is so special to be able to sing songs whose words mean something, that resonate with people. Many times we have met with an emotional, sometimes tearful response: "You're singing my song!" from a passing Palestinian, Irish, Chilean or South African.

In Drumcree, in Northern Ireland, the army had surrounded with tanks the estate where we were staying, to allow an Orange march to proceed. The Catholic community was unable to cross the road

to go to church. In the morning an open air mass was conducted in the square and we were asked to sing freedom songs for the service. Singing can defuse many a tense situation. When Contra supporters and Young Conservatives started shouting threateningly against a rally for Nicaragua, things looked ugly; but we sang and they melted away from confrontation.

The choir learned songs in Arabic for a solidarity tour of Palestine/Israel. During the brief window of relative peace in 1994 after the Oslo accord, it was a real eye-opener to see for ourselves the effect of the occupation. Our singing acted as a bridge across linguistic and cultural barriers. Today, new anthems like "We're Standing Here" by Dave Ramsden have come out of the environmental movement.



Côr Gobaith, Aberystwyth

Côr Gobaith (CG) was born out of 2005 Social Forum Cymru, after a chance workshop meeting between Susie Ennals and myself. Itching to start a choir in Aberystwyth and, enthusiastically nudged by me, Susie held the first rehearsal in 2006. Having vowed to sing in the street every last Saturday of the month until the war in Iraq was ended, CG is still here, singing for peace and social and environmental justice – all increasingly desperate issues.

Our first choir outing was the Time To Go (Blair) demonstration in Manchester in September 2006. Since followed numerous demos, locally and



across the UK, on dishearteningly many issues – Trident, social-services cuts, NHS, Palestine, fracking, refugees, climate change... In 2013, now with Nest Howells as choir leader, we hosted the Street Choirs Festival (UK) and instigated setting up Campaign Choirs Network of activist choirs across the UK (campaignchoirs.org.uk).

Lotte Reimer

Côr Heddwch y Pales, Llandegla - Pales Peace Choir, Llandegely

Pales Peace Choir is a small acapella choir based at the beautiful Pales Quaker Meeting House (www.thepales.org) in Llandegley, near Llandrindod Wells, Powys. Singers come from far and wide to sing in the beautiful surroundings. The choir began in 2009, following a benefit concert for peace work in Nagaland, at which Côr Gobaith performed. The peace work was being undertaken by Lynda and Martin Williams, the wardens of the Pales at that time, and they were the inspiration behind the founding of the Peace Choir.

Pales Peace choir meet monthly to sing about peace, social justice and the climate crisis. They regularly attend Street Choirs Festival and Sing For Water, as well as many local events in Powys, including the unveiling of a Peace pole in the grounds of the Pales.

As choir leader, I was also the founder of Côr Gobaith in 2006, and had also been a member of Côr Cochion in the 1990s.

Susie Ennals

Canwyr Stryd - Bangor - Street Singers

Canwyr Stryd Bangor Street Singers was founded following the December 2015 rally against the airstrikes in Syria. Candles were lit, and 2 or 3 voices joined to sing 'Assalam, Alekum Assalam'. We decided that evening that protests in Bangor needed songs. We had our first meeting in April 2016, and have since been building a repertoire of protest songs. We have taken part in rallies supporting Palestine and celebrating the 70th anniversary of the NHS. We have supported the university strikes and joined the climate strikes, and have sung at peace events in Bangor. We sing every year in the Cold Concert, a fund raiser for local homeless people.

Hilary Wilson

heddwch>action:

'A good song reminds us what we're fighting for', said Pete Seeger. Form a choir, join a choir, book a choir.

In Cardiff contact wendya.lewis@sky.com

In Aberystwyth go to <https://corgobaith.wordpress.com/join-us/>

In Bangor contact hilarycathwilson@gmail.com.

For Llandrindod area contact susie@ennals.org.uk

YOUNG PEACEMAKERS' AWARDS 2020

Welsh Centre for International Affairs

The Young Peacemakers' Awards are now open!

Organised jointly by the WCIA and the Llangollen International Eisteddfod, this is an exciting opportunity for children and young people (aged 5 to 25) in Wales to express and share their ideas for a more peaceful, fair and sustainable world!

Awards are available for individuals or groups who have:

- Expressed themselves creatively or critically about peace and/ or global issues through the medium of writing, art, digital media or performance;
- Inspired others and made a difference around peace and/ or global citizenship (e.g. been proactive as peer mediators or in implementing restorative justice; shown student leadership in organising and running a campaign on a global issue....)
- Remember that work submitted doesn't have to be new, and can be part of projects you have undertaken. Work can also be undertaken as part of the curriculum or whole-school / group activities (e.g. Eisteddfod).

The Awards are open to individual young people or groups and young people can also nominate others (with their permission!). Winners in each category will be invited to attend Llangollen International Eisteddfod on 9 July 2020, where they will receive a certificate and award from the Eisteddfod stage.

NEW this year is a **unique Peace Trophy**, sculpted by the artist David Peterson (who sculpted the Welsh Dragon at Mametz). This trophy will be presented to the individual or school who are judged to have made the greatest impact in terms of peace in their school or community or in organising a campaign on peace or global issues - to keep for a year.

Please promote this opportunity as widely as possible amongst the children/ young people in your school/ youth group and encourage them to submit an entry. **The closing date for applications is 29 May.** If you have any questions about the Awards, please don't hesitate to email me at janeharries@wcia.org.uk.

JANE HARRIES

Peace Education Coordinator,
Welsh Centre for
International Affairs



Ysgol Dyffryn Aman, 2019 award winners at the Llangollen International Eisteddfod

VIRUS UPDATE

As we go to press, public events and meetings are being cancelled because of the Coronavirus pandemic.

The NFLA's Spring Seminar in Cardiff on 3 April has been cancelled. We currently have no idea how events later this summer will be affected. Check before attending.

XR Peace calls for direct action

XR Peace will be joining the XR Rolling Rebellion in London to raise awareness of the links between UK defence policy, the arms trade, nuclear weapons and the climate and ecological crisis. Rather than

disruption in the streets, action will be focussed on government departments, institutions and corporations which are driving the climate and ecological crisis. XR Peace will organise actions at significant places like the MoD and the HQs of arms manufacturers.

heddwch>action:

We will gather in London on Sunday 31 May and be an active presence from 1-9 June. 10 June will be a day to debrief and make future plans. Please save the dates.

If you are planning to participate as an individual, contact Angie Zelter at xrpeace@gn.apc.org and we'll put you in touch with others who want to do so too, so the group can make plans together.

Looking forward to hearing from you!

website: <https://xrpeace.org>

Eisteddfod in Tregaron

Your next issue of Heddwwch will appear for the 2020 National Eisteddfod at Tregaron (1-8 August). CND Cymru will be there of course and would welcome any support (contact details for Brian Jones are overleaf). On 6 August we shall be marking the 75th anniversary of the dropping of the bomb on Hiroshima, a time for grief, reflection and renewed determination in the cause of global nuclear disarmament. We shall also be honouring Tregaron as the birthplace of Henry Richard MP (1812-88), the pioneering campaigner for peace and internationalism.

BOOK REVIEW

A Nuclear Refrain: Emotion, Empire and the Democratic Potential of Protest

Kye Askins, Phil Johnstone, Kelvin Mason

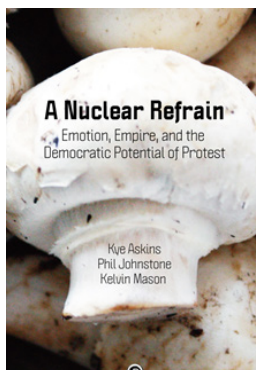
Punctum Books 2019 £15
146pp paperback or e-book
This project was born in 2016 during direct action at the nuclear bomb factory, AWE Burghfield. What, you might ask, would an 'Academic Seminar Blockade' bring about? The answer is this small-format paperback. I've always been interested in the borders between non-fiction

and narrative, a common enough meeting point in books for young people. But this fusion of academic exposition (footnotes, bibliography and all) within the narrative structure of Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* is an experiment at a different level, playful but serious, and it works well. The policies of deterrence,

'mutually assured destruction' and Trident replacement, espoused by a modern-day Scrooge, are subjected to a stern moral inquisition. Aberystwyth's Kelvin Mason,

'para-academic' and Social Forum Cymru organiser, teams up with Kye Askins from Glasgow University and Paul Johnstone of Sussex University to create an ingenious and informative synthesis.

Philip Steele



CND CYMRU

CND Cymru campaigns alongside organisations in Wales and internationally, for peace, environmental and social justice and to rid Britain and the world of all weapons of mass destruction.

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