



FARINGDON PEACE GROUP

NOVEMBER 2021

Newsletter 18

THE HUMAN COSTS OF WAR – 9/11 AND AFGHANISTAN

Almost **3,000** people were killed in the original 4 aircraft attacks on the US.

Almost **4,000** US and NATO troops have been killed in Afghanistan and almost 500 humanitarian workers.

Approximately **66,000** Afghan military and national police have been killed and an estimated **50,000** anti-government opposition fighters.

Approximately **47,000** Afghan civilians have been killed.

Over **20,000** US military have been injured and over **2,000** UK troops were “wounded in action”. Twice that number of UK troops were admitted to hospital for disease and non-battle injuries.

Over **2 million** Afghan refugees were already in neighbouring countries at the outset, most in Pakistan and Iran, and there are now **3.5 million** internal refugees who have had to leave their homes inside Afghanistan.

Sources: Watson Institute, Brown University, Providence R.I. and US and UK government sources.

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Commander Robert Forsyth RN (Ret'd) recent speaker at Peace Group) writes

You might be interested in this short piece for your next one that I adapted from a post on my Facebook. I sent it to John Healey Shadow Defence in the hope it might encourage him to at least lead the Labour Party towards No First Use. Sadly no reply or acknowledgement.

The failure of US/UK intelligence to anticipate the Taliban's rapid take-over of Afghanistan is a humanitarian disaster. Following similar failures of intelligence in Iraq (2003) and again in Libya post the 2011 uprising, it is a cause for considerably more concern than meets the eye. The UK policy of 'deliberate ambiguity' for the use of Trident nuclear weapons announced in the recent Integrated Defence Review (*Global Britain in a Competitive Age*) espouses the first use of nuclear weapons to pre-empt any perceived - i.e. intelligence based - existential threat to UK interests at home or overseas.

While UK/US clearly needs to up their intelligence games, they also need to recognise the underlying fallibility of intelligence and abandon any suggestion of First Use (ideally any use) of nuclear weapons.

The consequences of nuclear weapons fired in error would be unimaginable.

www.whytrident.uk

MONTHLY MEETING

WEDNESDAY 3rd NOVEMBER

COP 26 with Pete Dilly local XR campaigner.
at 7.30pm on Zoom

Contacts Jennie (01367 710308) or Karen (01367 241707) or Dave (01367 240808).

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - NOV 2021

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Events organised by Faringdon Peace Group as well as other groups. For further information please contact Jennie 01367 710308 or Karen 01367 241707 or Dave 01367 240808

- **TUES 2nd NOV**

Proposed vigil to draw attention to **COP 26 - 'WAR CAUSES CLIMATE CHANGE CLIMATE CHANGE CAUSES WAR'**

Probably 10-11am, Faringdon Market Place. With placards & leaflets. Details tbc

- **WED 3rd NOV: MONTHLY MEETING**

(see separate notice p.1)

- **SUN 14th NOV**

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY We usually lay a wreath of white and red poppies on the War Memorial, in memory of all victims of war.

- **MON 22nd NOV**

FARINGDON TOWN MEETING

Faringdon Town Council meeting at 7.15pm Jubilee Room at the Pump House.

Representatives from FPG will seek to persuade the Council to write to the Prime Minister asking the government to ratify the Treaty on the Prevention of Nuclear Weapons, now signed by more than 50 countries, thus joining the global majority.

Please contact Rosalind if you would like to attend the meeting and for more info rosalind.ann.burns@gmail.com

- **WED 1st DEC MONTHLY MEETING**

Our MP David Johnston has agreed to speak on COP 26 WHAT NEXT?
7.30pm on Zoom

- **?TUES 7 DEC OR TUES 14 DEC?**

Shall we hold our usual Women in Black Silent Vigil for Peace in Bethlehem?
Faringdon Market Place
10-11am Details tbc.

FARINGDON BRANCHES OUT

NOVEMBER

is the time for planting Trees.

Take part in the tree planting at the beginning of November. Have a look at faringdon.org.uk to find out more.

Earth & Faith

AN OPPORTUNITY TO TACKLE THE CLIMATE CRISIS

The UK hosts COP26 – the UN's climate talks – in November. Sign our petition to call for decisive action to be taken. We are at a crucial moment in the fight against climate change, which is pushing people back into poverty.



Join us in signing *The Climate Coalition's* declaration calling on the UK government to lead the world in delivering a greener, fairer recovery, which limits warming to 1.5°C. Go to Tear Fund website, and sign the petition

QUIZ

In which countries are the following 10 places?

1. Bikini Atoll (site of 23 nuclear tests)
2. Batman
3. Bigfoot
4. Gogogogo
5. Humpty Doo
6. Pripyat
7. Lost
8. Waikikamukau (Why kick a moo cow?)
9. Timbuktu
10. Pugwash (home to the first conference on nuclear disarmament)

answers

1. Marshall Islands
2. Turkey
3. Texas, USA
4. Madagascar
5. Northern Territory, Australia
6. Ukraine, town next to Chernobyl
7. Scotland
8. New Zealand
9. Mali
10. Nova Scotia, Canada

ZAMBIA WILL SPEND 75x SCOTTISH AID FINANCING ON DEBT REPAYMENTS

Global Justice Now and Jubilee Scotland protest outside Edinburgh banks.

Zambia's debt payments to private banks will render Scotland's aid funding to the country "virtually insignificant", campaigners warn, as they prepare to protest outside debt-holding banks in Edinburgh.

As one of the Scottish government's four international development partner countries, Zambia has received £10 million from Scotland between 2017 and 2021 for projects helping healthcare, education and small-scale farming.

But Zambia's annual debt repayments will total £1.34 billion this year, with £756 million going to private creditors, including banks in Scotland. The repayments to private banks alone amounts to more than 75 times the total aid funding Zambia receives from the Scottish government.

Zambia's next interest instalment, totalling \$20 million [£14.6million], is due on Monday. The sum could pay to vaccinate all of Zambia's adult population. Currently, less than 2% of the country's population is vaccinated.

The "eye-watering" sums illustrate the urgency of addressing global south debt and why campaigners want the Scottish government to pressure banks in Scotland to cancel Zambia's crippling debt.

Global Justice Now last night projected "Cancel the Debt" onto BlackRock's Edinburgh office, ahead of protests outside UBS, Aberdeen Standard Investments, and HSBC on Friday (17 September).

Protestors from Global Justice Now and Jubilee Scotland will bring a giant debt repayment cheque to the creditors' offices, as well as a syringe comparing the proportion of Zambia's funds being used to service debts to the cost of Covid-19 vaccinations in the country. Protestors will also hand in letters to the banks with their demands.

Banks often pile "crippling interest" on low-income countries' debts, Global Justice Now says, "locking them in a never-ending cycle of payments", which is harming Zambia's ability to battle Covid-19 and respond to the climate crisis.

In March, David Malpass, President of the World Bank, called for G20 countries to do "much more" to force banks under their jurisdiction to participate in debt relief.

Liz Murray, head of Scottish campaigns at Global Justice Now, said:

"Scotland should be proud of its partnership with Zambia. £10 million should make a significant contribution to building the country's economy. But the sum is dwarfed by Zambia's huge payments to private creditors – including banks based here in Scotland – servicing a grossly inflated national debt.

"Big banks often pile crippling interest on low-income countries' debts, locking them in a never-ending cycle of payments that prevent investment in crucial infrastructure, education, and health services – and they haven't let up during the pandemic.

"The Scottish public rightly want to stand with Zambia. But our aid funding is virtually insignificant compared to the eye-watering sums demanded by banks right here in Scotland."

Line Kikkenborg Christensen, campaign director of Jubilee Scotland, said:

"The World Bank has been clear that the G20 countries must do much more to force the banks under their jurisdiction to participate in debt relief. The Scottish government may not have the legislative power to force debt relief, but they can send banks a clear message."

"We cannot let banks in Scotland profit from Zambia's debt crisis. Scotland must demand debt justice."

'The UK is both the second most generous donor to Yemen and the second largest seller of arms. We are giving with one hand and enabling deaths with the other.'

Bill Nighy Red Box, (Times & Sunday Times)

You can't fault the timing of two news stories regarding France's approach to nuclear power.

12th October - protest against the dumping of French nuclear waste at an unsafe site in Seversk, Siberia.

13th October - Macron announces further support for the nuclear sector! C'est la vie.

AUKUS - Planned new nuclear submarines for Australia

Dr Sue Wareham OAM, President, Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia): [The] “concern from health professional colleagues in Australia, the US and the UK indicates the far-reaching implications of the deal that has been struck. Although the Australian government claims that there is no nuclear weapons agenda, the use of weapons grade uranium in the submarines will lead to questions being asked about our motives, just as questions are asked of Iran’s uranium enrichment program. The nuclear weapons proliferation potential will be significant. If our government wants to provide real assurance of Australian intentions, then signing and ratifying the nuclear weapons ban treaty would be by far the best way to do this. Equally, there are huge questions and problems with this ramping up of preparations for war with China. We should be doing absolutely everything possible, including restoring the art of diplomacy, to avoid such a catastrophe, not running blindly into it.” (Source: International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War)

For a very useful briefing on the AUKUS deal, with Kate Hudson, Paul Rogers and others go to:

<https://cnduk.org/aucus-why-we-say-no-emergency-online-rally/>

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Thank you to those who have already sent stuff for this newsletter.

Contributions for the December issue to jennyridd@yahoo.co.uk

I’d really appreciate some new contributors!

HELP REBUILD AND SAVE PALESTINE

Gaza is one of the most densely populated places on Earth. It has a population of approximately 2.1 million people and since 2007 it has been under a land, sea and air blockade imposed by Israel. Years of conflict and the blockade have left 80% of the population dependent on humanitarian assistance to survive. Access to clean water is not possible for 95% of the population, and there is an ongoing power shortage which impacts upon essential services like health, water and sanitation. Almost half of Gaza’s people do not have enough food, around 60% of children are anaemic and many children suffer from stunted growth due to malnutrition.

STOP THE WAR APPEAL

Help us raise £20,000 and build our movement for peace

The last 20 years have been marked by catastrophic Western military interventions. Yet despite the humiliating defeat in Afghanistan and the failure of the ‘war on terror’ our leaders have learned nothing. We are now witnessing an alarming escalation of tensions with China with a new partnership between the UK, US and Australia - AUKUS - a partnership which represents a significant military provocation in the Indo-Pacific region.

Stop the War has consistently opposed our government’s aggressive foreign policy agenda. We campaigned against the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, against the bombardment of Libya and Syria, against the support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen, and now we must step up our campaign against the push towards military confrontation with China.

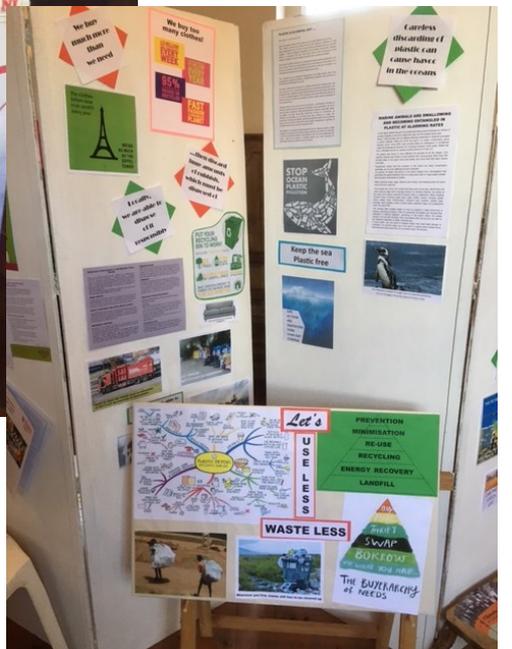
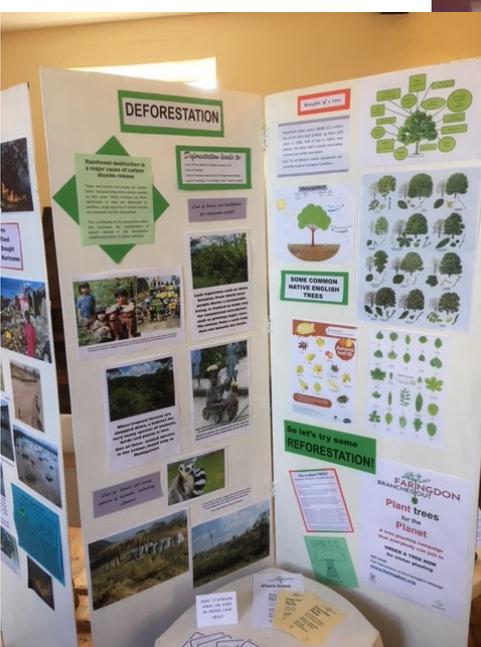
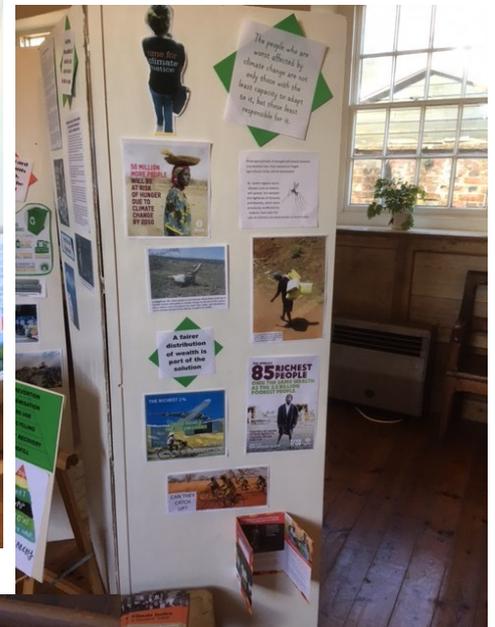
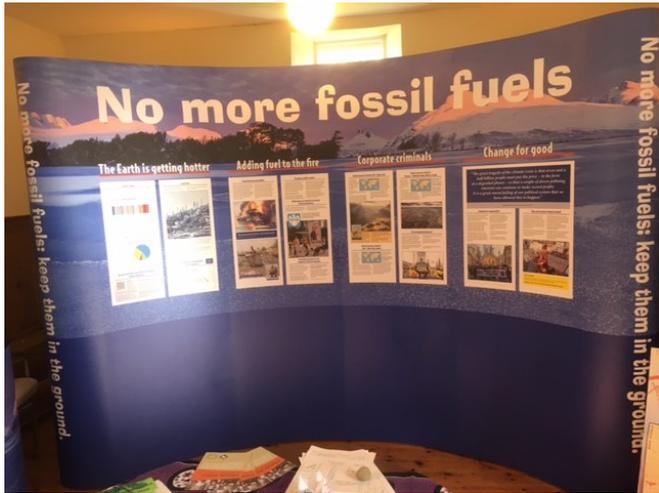
We have also played a key role in challenging the Islamophobia and the erosion of our civil liberties that predictable grew out of the ‘war on terror’. This must continue.

Twenty years after the start of the war on terror the need for a strong anti-war movement is as great as ever. This is why we need your help. We do not receive money from large donors or any sponsorship - your financial support is essential for everything we do.

Please go to website to donate.



A few pictures of the Climate Change Exhibition which was held recently at the Quaker Meeting House



Hope everyone managed to get in and have a look!

Motion at Faringdon Town Council meeting THAT FARINGDON SHOULD BECOME A NUCLEAR BAN COMMUNITY

(see <https://cnduk.org/nuclear-ban-communities/>;))

- Thanks to Cllr Burns & Smith for raising the TPNW – this is an incredibly important topic –highly relevant & highly current. Not a day goes by that there isn't news on this.
- You may have heard on the news today - the Colonel who defected from N Korea: He states “Kim Yong Un will never give up nuclear weapons while other countries have them. He simply wants Korea to be accepted as a nuclear weapons state – because of the status that goes with this” . Or, as Jasinda Ardern put it very succinctly in a private conversation, “while there's still countries thinking that this stuff is clever, then someone like Kim Yong Un will want to join in with the dick-swinging”. That comment is reminiscent of Trump's words – when he was slagging off the rocketman. “Mine is bigger than yours” – he said.
- IF all of this was just harmless “boys with toys” then maybe we could turn a blind eye to the incredible waste of money and resources that nuclear weapons represent – but of course it's anything but. A misunderstanding or tinpot dictator or crazy president could genuinely lead to nuclear holocaust and the end of planet earth.
- Two years ago this council declared a climate emergency – for good reason. Good for you. Cop26 starts in three weeks, and it's taking place *because* we realise that our behaviour represents global suicide, and we have to stop what we're doing. But it's not the only suicide mission that we're on. You may have been following the Earthshot series of programmes, where Prince William guides us through five areas where we have to change our ways – and if we don't , we destroy the planet. But there could be a sixth in the series: Nuclear weapons. Again – with nuclear weapons we're on a collision course with planetary suicide. Accidents – by definition – do happen.
- Last week, you may have caught the excellent documentary on R4 about the Manhattan project; leading directly to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Where Einstein says: “we can't uninvent nuclear weapons, but we can never use them”. Unfortunately, we still got the nuclear arms race and it's OK for a president to say “let's nuke em” – as if that's just fine. You may have heard of the Doomsday Clock. When Trump came to power, the minute hand immediately moved one minute closer to midnight. And of course, the military freely admits that they can never be used. The strategy that has prevailed since the fifties is MAD – mutually assured destruction. Using them means destroying the planet – end of the world as we know it. Nuclear winter. Mass extinctions – including humans.
- But the TPNW *does* represent common sense. The prevailing opinion nowadays from the non-nuclear weapons countries around the world would be similar to Jasinda Ardern's. We haven't avoided a world war *because of* N weapons – we've avoided it *in spite of* ... In other words, we're playing Russian roulette with the planet.
- There are moments in history when we look back on them we realise how important they were. When we finally said no to slavery. Yes to women's votes. Yes to carbon cutting. And now, no to nuclear weapons. Stop the Russian roulette, Stop the dick swinging, support the TPNW. In those countries that have not yet signed, there are many councils now all over the world that are circumventing their governments and unilaterally declaring their support for the TPNW – including Paris, Washington, Manchester and Oxford.

And now also Faringdon. We'd be in good company. Thank you.

Sjoerd



FAIRTRADE HAMPERS

Give a Very Special Present This Christmas!

What better way to cheer up friends, family & loved ones and show you are thinking of them than to give them a Fairtrade Christmas Basket!



Each basket is filled with a selection of fair-trade foods:

Chocolates, snacks, nuts, spreads, biscuits etc. and then wrapped up to look really festive! You can also ask for Fairtrade wine (specify red or white) to be included in baskets of £25 or more.

Order a standard festive hamper from £25 or go for a Special:

THE SPECIALS!

- **"Oh-So-Organic" hamper**, from £30, containing coffee, chocolate, nuts, spreads, olive oil, coconut milk
- **"Taste of Palestine" hamper**, £35, containing delicious olive oil, almonds, dates, couscous, freekeh, and za'atar, a traditional herb mix – highly addictive!
- **"Chocoholics" hamper**, £20 upwards, containing all things chocolate!
- **"Hot 'n' Spicy" hamper**, £25 upwards, sauces, nuts & cookies with a kick!

It's a great way to let people know that you care not only about them but also about the farmers and producers in developing countries who have been particularly badly hit by the COVID pandemic.

Please put your order in AS SOON AS POSSIBLE and before **Friday 12th NOVEMBER**

By phone: Karen Vogt 01367-241707

By email: karen@vogt.org.uk

In the Mustard Seed: Pick up an order form & return it to the shop

By post: Fill in an order form (available in Mustard Seed or on website) and post to 7, Leamington Drive, Faringdon, SN7 7JZ

Online: Go to www.mustardseed.org.uk

The Christmas baskets will be delivered to you (Faringdon and local villages only) on or before the weekend of Saturday 11th/Sunday 12th December

Payment (cash or card) on collection/delivery