



FARINGDON

PEACE GROUP

NEWSLETTER (4)

BLACK LIVES MATTER

“We stand with protestors outraged and sickened at the death of George Floyd, yet another black man killed by racist police. President Trump has responded to the furious protests at continued state violence with still more violence, threatening to deploy the military and seek ‘total domination’.

Our Government has licensed the type of crowd control equipment used in violent attacks on protestors and journalists in the United States. The UK’s own rules say that arms exports should not be licensed where there is a clear risk that they might be used in repression. Cancelling these licences would send a clear message against US state violence and racial injustice.

Tell your MP to demand an end to licensing crowd control equipment to the US.

At the same time as we urge an end to the UK’s support for state violence elsewhere, we must also call for it to be tackled at home. The UK has no moral high ground here, but its own problems with deeply entrenched racial discrimination and inequality. UK black families and activists have been fighting for justice for decades to end the disproportionate use of force on Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people, the disproportionate number of deaths of black men in custody, and the lack of police prosecutions.

Please show your solidarity by emailing your MP Thank you.” (Campaign Against Arms Trade)

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE

More contributions for next newsletter to jennyridd@yahoo.co.uk please by 22nd July

MEETINGS ON ZOOM?

It looks as if Lockdown, followed by social distancing, might go on longer than we had hoped, so it has been suggested that we hold some meetings via Zoom, with a speaker when possible.

So, what do you think? If you would like to take part, please let Helen know asap helen.holly007@gmail.com

The system is that you will need an invitation, sent via email from Zoom, initiated by forwarding your email address.

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Liz suggests that we might hold a Zoom meeting on the theme of ‘Black Lives Matter’. This meeting will probably be scheduled for the autumn, which would give people time to ponder. Liz is compiling a list of resources that will be available in about a month. This will include a workbook called “Me and White Supremacy - How to recognise your privilege, combat racism and change the world” by Layla Saad. One can read through it alone or get together with a group of people you feel comfortable with and sharing your thoughts. It would make ideal preparation for a meeting with Holiday Phillips or equivalent talking about how to take this moment further while the world has finally paid attention.

If interested in the list of resources, and in taking part, please email Liz at lizrothschild@phoncoop.coop

ARMED FORCES DAY

Armed Forces Day will mostly be marked online this year. You might like to watch the feature-length film *War School* on Youtube which is free to view until the end of June. There is a short trailer and also lots of materials to see on the Was School website.

From Liz:

I have been increasingly disturbed as the figures emerged about the impact of Covid-19 on our BME community. The stark inequalities of our society are being revealed. Then George Floyd died in such a brutal way and thanks to mobile phones the murder could not be hidden from the world. Alongside this, I have been part of a process at the Women's Programme I am involved with (Women in Power UK) to examine why we were not attracting many women from the BME community and this has led to a very insightful report by Holliday Phillips and a lot to reflect upon. As part of that process a group of us from that programme are undertaking a consciousness raising process using the book *White Supremacy and Me* as our guide. It is a wonderfully clear and unflinching invitation to look at how all of us are complicit in various ways often unconsciously. All of this led me to want to head off to Faringdon marketplace on the 9th June.

What happened was fascinating as so many of the responses that are discussed in that book were revealed in our series of short interactions with passers by. There was a feeling that the banners should say All Lives Matter and clearly they do. But what recent events have shown is that not all lives are valued or cared for equally. Accusations of reverse racism remind me of being accused of being sexist as a feminist when of course the term is only applicable to a group that is exerting power and control over another. The point that blacks also harm blacks was made as if this justified the harm that whites do to blacks in our society. It was an education and most of our exchanges ended amicably. There was a definite fear that we would bring a huge rabble in with us and threaten people's health when in fact there were three of us all masked which most others weren't. It was also clear that the way demonstrations had been reported coloured people's responses to us. They talked about damaging war memorials and defaecating on walls rather than hundreds kneeling in prayer or standing in solidarity with our BME brothers and sisters.

Now is not the time is a much heard trope when in fact now is never the right time to protest in the eyes of some and the BME community has waited too long for its patient legal requests to be heard.

I would be very interested in undertaking a process involving the peace group and maybe other local groups on zoom to educate ourselves and consider how we can improve our own practice. For example when I ran the celebration of women's suffrage a few years ago I tried a bit but not hard enough to get a BME speaker. I regret that. I did ensure some BME faces were represented in our wall of honour but I now intend to increase that number to reflect the percentage in our population. What are the ways each one of us can act on this in the everyday? I look forward to hearing your thoughts and am pleased just to be able to initiate some conversation.

lizrothschild@phonecoop.coop



No Comment



Army Cadet Virtual Open Night

Monday 5th July, 1900-2100

"Bored, fed up and needing something different? Come and see how you could make friends, take on challenges and have fun while you go on your own adventures! Come and join us!"

Our Detachments

- Newlands Avenue, Didcot
- Friday Street, Henley
- Faringdon Road, Shrivenham
- Thames Street, Wallingford
- Springfield Road, Wantage



To register interest and receive joining details email 2501hruss@armymail.mod.uk

This appeared in the Guardian in April, but my attention was redrawn to it by a mention in the current CAAT news. Thanks to both

The government has quietly drawn up proposals to lend other countries £1bn of public money so that they can buy British-made bombs and surveillance technology.

The move has been attacked by arms-control campaigners who say that taxpayers' cash may end up fuelling conflict and human rights abuses.

The plan was revealed in a single sentence slipped into this month's budget. Unveiling a new £2bn lending facility for projects supporting clean growth, the government also announced the creation of "a new £1bn (fund) to support overseas buyers of UK defence and security goods and services"

It is understood that the fund will be overseen by UK Export Finance, which gives loans to help foreign countries, especially those with developing economies, buy British goods and services.

Even in times of crisis, the government is showing that it will go to any length to sell as many weapons as possible," said Andrew Smith of Campaign Against Arms Trade. "The arms deals being supported with this money could be used in enabling atrocities and abuses for years to come. Government should be regulating and controlling arms sales, not using public money and doing everything it can to promote them."

The government sees the defence industry as a major contributor to Britain's post-Brexit economy. The Department for International Trade has a specialist team to promote UK arms sales.

In 2018, the latest figures available, the UK won arms contracts worth £14bn. Between 2008 and 2018 the UK was the second biggest arms exporter in the world, with 19% of the market share. Three-fifths of arms sales over the period went to the Middle East.

Some £5.3bn of arms have been licensed to Saudi Arabia since the war in Yemen began. There are concerns that the Saudi-led coalition, which is fighting Houthi rebels in the country, may have committed human rights violations by targeting civilian infrastructure.

Smith said the crisis in Yemen showed how policies to promote UK arms sales could backfire. "over the last five years we have seen the devastating impact of UK-made fighter jets, bombs and missiles on Yemen. The war has killed tens of thousands of people and created the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. Those arms sales need to end now, but so do the policies that allowed them to happen in the first place". The Treasury did not respond to requests for comment.



COVID 19 WHAT NEXT?

I think by now most people know that a pandemic was predicted by scientists as far back as 2008, but nothing was done to prepare for such an eventuality, and the government's response has been deemed criminally negligent. I can provide more details if you want them, but the main question now is, what of the future? This issue is being taken up in various forums, but, at the time of writing, specifically on Radio 4. I don't think many people would want to 'return to normal' if this means people having no home and sleeping on the streets, or working in the gig economy without the rights of those in properly regulated jobs, or where nurses have to go to food banks.

So, after all our clapping for our front-line workers, going back to 'normal is not an option. If what we want is a more equitable society in an environmentally-friendly world, just how are we going to get there? What needs to be done, and who is going to do it? Faringdon Peace Group supporters will have some suggestions, and I hope these will be sent to the Newsletter so that we can have an exchange of views over the next few months while we are recovering from Covid-19.

We might also ponder why we continue preparations for nuclear war, but are so ill-prepared for dealing with this silent, but very real threat to our lives.

Another world is possible! *Jennie C.*

You might also like to read Ian Sinclair's article on the government's response to Covid-19 in the June/July edition of Peace News. Ian has spoken on two occasions to our Peace Group.

Let me know if you would like a copy and I will send it to you. Jennie, 01367 710308



No fete in 2020,
but remember
those in the
past!
**HERE'S
TO 2021!**



JOIN OUR VIRTUAL GRAND PEACE FETE ON JULY 4th!

Full details and links are on GRAND PEACE FETE WEB PAGE. Google "Faringdon Peace" and then click on FETE POSTER. ALL the suggested activities can be carried out in your own time. The timings below are all virtual times! Here's some of the activities to look forward to Many thanks to Zoe Williams for putting this programme together.

All Afternoon: CURRY KITCHEN . Why not cook a delicious veggie curry on the 4th July - as tasty as the ones you would normally get at the Fete?

2pm: Words of Welcome from Bruce Kent. Always a highlight.....

2.30pm: Music with one of our regular Musicians : Trevor Williams

3pm: Face painting . On the website you'll find a Face Template that you can colour in, OR you could photoshop a photo of yourself. There will also be a link where you can upload and share your works of art!

3.30pm: Origami . On YouTube that there are instructions for 'origami peace dove' and 'origami peace symbol' . Make it - take a photo - and share it!

4pm: Circle Dancing with Lilly Sell Youtube Video put together especially for the 2020 Virtual Fete! Link on the Website .

4.30pm: Learning to juggle With Trev Williams ! Link on the website

5pm : Make a hedgehog hole: Close-boarded garden fencing prevents wildlife from getting in or out of your garden. Hedgehogs need a much larger territory than your garden can provide – make a hole at the base of your fence and let them and other wildlife in (after discussing with your neighbour). A hole of 13cm (5 inches) is big enough!

ALL AFTERNOON : Visiting Stalls: Yes - that's right. Lots of lovely links on the website to many of the Stalls that would otherwise be part of the Fete.

SOME THINGS DON'T STOP FOR COVID!



Transport of highly dangerous nuclear material on our Oxfordshire roads.

This was seen at Junction 9 on the M40 on June 20th 8.30-9.30am.

The deadliest cargo on our roads.

FARINGDON FOOD BANK

Not surprisingly, demand from the Foodbank has risen during this crisis. However, they are now fully stocked, with barely enough space for food they already have, so no more donations are needed until further notice.

HERITAGE OPEN DAY POSTPONED

This will go ahead nationally in September as planned. Normally the Meeting House is opened and receives a healthy number of visitors. But this year, Faringdon town council has decided that we should not open any buildings here.

So Heritage Day in Faringdon will not take place until September 2021

THE MUSTARD SEED IS OPEN!

9.00 - 1.00 Monday - Saturday

Do call in to see what you've been missing! Only one customer at a time in the shop and we ask that you wear a mask or face covering to protect the stock and our volunteers.

Many thanks to all who have supported the shop during the closure - it made a big difference!

I will continue to take orders and deliver to anyone who is not able to get out. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need anything.

karen@vogt.org.uk 01367 241707

FLORENCE BAKER. One of the lesser known campaigners against slavery

Lady Florence Baker, née Flora Barbara Maria von Szász, or Sass. Born 6 August 1841 in Nagyenyed, then in Hungary, now Aiud in Transylvania, in present-day Romania.



It may just be the long exposure times of 19th-century photography, but pictures of Florence portray an icy calm imperturbability.

The details of Florence Baker's early life are sketchy. As an orphan she was sold into the Ottoman slave trade, and in 1859 found herself on the auction block in Vidin, in present-day Bulgaria. Blond, blue-eyed and polylingual, she caught the eye of English traveller Samuel Baker, who bought her.

Baker, a middle-aged widower, took her with him as he headed to Africa to search for the source of the Nile. Along the way, Florence learned Arabic, brokered peace when their team of locals mutinied, and nearly died of sunstroke. They didn't find the source of the Nile, but she and Samuel were the first Europeans to see Murchison Falls and Lake Albert in Uganda. When Samuel went back to England in 1865 to be knighted, she went with him as his wife. Explorer David Livingstone wrote snarkily: "Baker married his mistress at Cairo and by all accounts she deserved it after going through all she did for him." It's said that a scandalised Queen Victoria refused to receive them at court. Between 1870 and 1873, the Bakers made another expedition to east Africa to try to suppress the slave trade – presumably a cause Florence felt strongly about. *(thanks to The Guardian for this)*



The Murchison Falls on the Nile



Baker's Fort today

Now, you may be wondering what significance Florence Baker has. Just that she interests me on various counts. Firstly, I've spent considerable time in Transylvania and still have good friends there; secondly that I, (the-complete-non-historian) once gave a talk about Samuel Baker ... and I have a lingering admiration for Florence.

However, it is of course mostly because of their connection with northern Uganda. The Quaker project (GYDA) in which I am heavily involved is in Gulu the main town.

[Samuel Baker served as the Governor-General of the Equatorial Nile Basin (today's South Sudan and Northern Uganda) between April 1869 and August 1873, which he established as the Province of Equatoria. He is mostly remembered as the first European to visit Lake Albert, as an explorer of the Nile and interior of central Africa, and for his exploits as a big game hunter]

When a group of Quakers including Janie, Steve and I visited GYDA, we were taken to visit a rock outcrop known as Baker's Fort, just a few miles from Gulu, which had been used as an overnight stopping place on the slave route. We were told that any slave misbehaving was tied up and thrown off the rock, around which wild animals roamed at night, to await his fate. I have never been to a place with such an atmosphere of foreboding; the sort of place where you feel cold even though the sun was hot (actually, very hot)

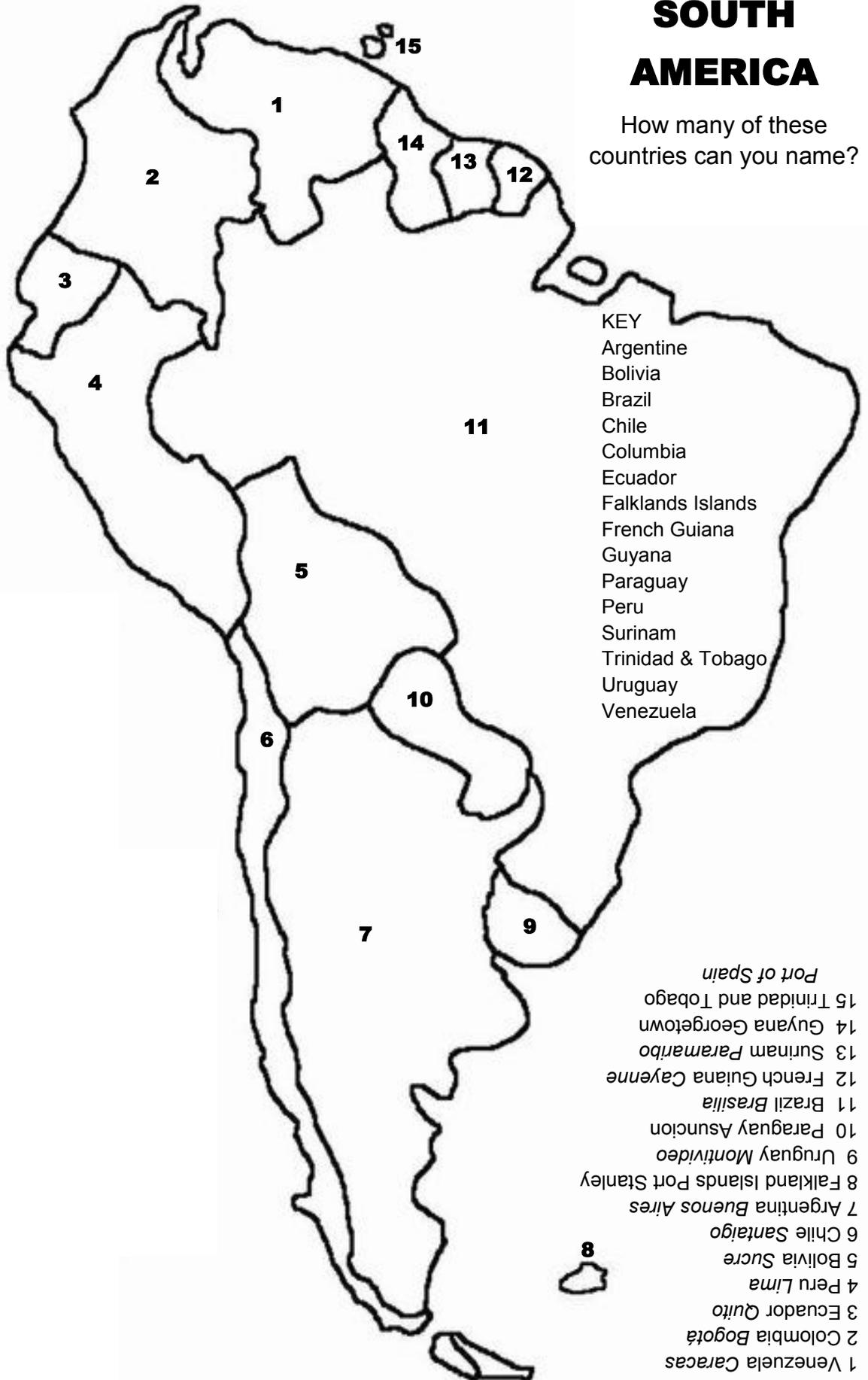
"Florence kept diaries of her travels in English, but has been overshadowed by her husband and still lacks a definitive biography. In the writings of others she emerges as a person of enormous resourcefulness and sangfroid, whether serving afternoon tea to guests in the jungle or preparing a last-ditch defence against the king of Bunyoro's army."

Jenny

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR WORLD?

SOUTH AMERICA

How many of these countries can you name?



Countries

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15

and their capitals