Ending War: a recipe
Robert Hinde (2008)

Spokesman

This 45-page booklet by Robert Hinde, MAW President and deputy chair (recently chair) of the British Pugwash Group, is an excellent overview of the nature of war, its causes, the factors that maintain it as an institution, its machinery and the morality and legality of war. The final chapter discusses what can be done to prevent war including suggestions for what the individual can do. The conclusion ends with the words: ‘There are too many people who are against war and do nothing about it. Of course everybody cannot do everything, but everyone can do something’ (like joining Pugwash or MAW perhaps).

The book is well suited to use in schools and MAW is considering what financial support can be provided to promote its use there. Copies can be obtained (price £5 inc p&p in the UK and £6 abroad) from the British Pugwash Group, Flat A, Museum Mansions, 63A Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3BJ. Cheques should be addressed to the ‘British Pugwash Trust’. It is also available at www.pugwash.org.

A tribute to Elnora Ferguson who died in December aged 79

Elnora was known to many of us as a tireless worker for peace and justice with an immense enthusiasm for promoting the education of young people. The Universities of Birmingham and Coventry benefited greatly from her support, and both awarded her honorary degrees.

She was also a deeply religious person, living a modest personal life but with immense generosity in her commitment to the causes she championed.

Elnora’s life was very varied. She travelled the world with her husband John, always working hard voluntarily or teaching wherever she went. She was banned from South Africa during the apartheid period because of her work to promote equality.

Elonora with Professor Simon Lee, Vice-Chancellor of Leeds Metropolitan University at the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the university and The Peace Museum.

She was a director in the family business of Taylor and Francis plc which funded the Allan and Nesta Ferguson Foundation, which she chaired. The Foundation was a leading charity supporting education and peace work in Britain and internationally. A grant was recently awarded to the International Peace Bureau (Geneva) for its Disarmament for Development project with which MAW is involved.

But I knew her best in my role as a member of The Peace Museum board which she chaired. Elonora was indefatigable in overseeing this large and rather difficult project to establish a national peace museum (involving, of course, education work with young people). Beginning as a peace gallery in Bradford, this has led to the current plan to establish the multi-million pound Senator George Mitchell Peace Centre for peace and conflict resolution at Leeds Metropolitan University (of which The Peace Museum is part). The museum is also a major contributor to MAW’s series of Peace History Conferences at the Imperial War Museum.

The Catholic Orangemen of Togo

“In conflict with Cook over ethical foreign policy, Blair would always overrule his Foreign Secretary, especially if the interest of the UK arms industry could be invoked.”

Craig Murray, the former Ambassador of Uzbekistan, who gave such a riveting talk at our AGM in 2007, has just produced a new book. Craig has a passion for Africa and served in Nigeria and Ghana before becoming British ambassador in Uzbekistan. The Catholic Orangemen of Togo and Other Conflicts I Have Known is about his experiences in Africa, and takes us once again into the murky world of diplomacy, corruption and, in this case, arms deals and mercenar-

ies. As readable, and as shocking, as Murder in Samarkand, this book is also just as educational, particularly for those who insist on maintaining an innocent world view.

For various reasons, Craig has had difficulty getting this book published. However, from January 12th it became available in pdf form on over 100 websites (and from the editor if you email me), and Craig has had some hard copies printed, which are available from www.amazon.co.uk at £11.87.

Which War Was Fought Over a Bucket?

‘There really can be few worse reasons to go to war than over a bucket, but that didn’t stop the soldiers of Modena and Bologna from fighting over one for twelve long years. Of course there were complex political reasons for hostilities between Modena and Bologna but the symbol of the whole miserable business and the rallying call for the 40,000 combatants was a wooden bucket. Exactly at what stage in the conflict the bucket became central is uncertain. Some sources claim the receptacle was stolen from a public fountain in Bologna by an opportunistic detachment of Modenese cavalry around 1313 and that the twelve years of war that followed were centred on an attempt to get it back. Others claim that the seizure of the bucket was in fact the crowning achievement of the victors in the final battle of the war, which was fought outside Zappolino in 1325. That engagement proved a disaster for Bologna, even though their army outnumbered the Modenese by over four to one. Some 2000 soldiers died in the short, brutal fight, and in the immediate aftermath the bucket is said to have been taken from Bologna as a sign of Modena’s complete victory. Why they should choose a wooden bucket as their chief spoil is not so clear, however.

But regardless of when in the early fourteenth century the precious pail was taken from Bologna, its presence in Modena has been a source of civic pride ever since. For nearly 700 years this most unlikely of trophies has rested in the town, its current location being in the communal palace in the Chamber of the Confirmed. A replica also resides in the bell tower of the cathedral.

The bucket was even the inspiration for the city’s finest poet, Alessandro Tassoni, whose 1615 satirical poem ‘The Rape of the Bucket’ pokes fun at the inhabitants of the city for fighting over what must be one of the least valuable spoils from any war.’

This is an excerpt from Charge! The Interesting Bits of Military History by Justin Pollard, published by John Murray at £12.99.