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CONFERENCE ON PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Practical steps have been taken towards realising the European Conference on Peace and Human Rights which the Russell Foundation proposed last summer. It has been agreed to organise a consultation about the Conference amongst peace movements, NGOs and other interested parties. This is due to take place at the European Parliament in Brussels in May.

We hope that a full-scale Conference will be possible before the end of the year, or very early next year. It has been suggested that Berlin might be a suitable venue, and we have been discussing with those who have expressed an interest in the proposal.

The international situation has been deteriorating in recent months, since the questions below were first framed and circulated. There has been increasing concern not only about the continuing ethnic friction in Kosovo, but also about another full-scale war, this time in Chechnya. Many people were already able to express their concern about these matters when they replied to our original letters.

Of course, the agenda for the proposed Conference will be determined by agreement between participating organisations and individuals, beginning in the consultation.

Supporters of the Conference are cordially invited to contact the Russell Foundation if they would like to participate in the consultation, or to be represented there. Do you have a paper which you would like to submit to the consultation? If you are unable to travel to Brussels, but would still like to submit a paper, please do so. These may be sent to: The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation Ltd, Russell House, Bulwell Lane, Nottingham, NG6 0BT, England, phone 00 44 (0) 1159 784 504, fax 00 44 (0) 1159 420 433, e-mail: elfeuro@compuserve.com

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Some questions which might figure in the consultation

(i) Ending the Arms Race

1. The increased tension is giving rise to calls for increased spending on armaments and the military in one country after another. How can we avoid entering a new arms race?

2. Agreements on nuclear disarmament are among the casualties of this renewed tension. Should we renew the campaign for a nuclear-free zone in all Europe? What can be done to revive the movement for comprehensive disarmament?

(ii) After the War against Yugoslavia

1. International relations have gravely deteriorated since the bombardment of Yugoslavia. It is clear that, over a period of time, official policy in the United States and parts of the West has increasingly openly favoured confrontation rather than co-operation. What would be the necessary basis for the restoration of co-operation as the cornerstone of international policy, instead of confrontation?
2. Is it possible to restore a joint focus on 'our common European home', and how could such a policy guarantee security?
3. The environmental impact of the war has been most severe. What measures should be taken to overcome the effects of depleted uranium weapons, and the pollution of much of the Danube Basin? What reparations will be needed to accomplish this work? What steps can be taken to overcome the blockage of the River Danube, and restore access and trade?
4. The ethnic cleansing of Serbs and Roma from Kosovo has not been checked, leave alone reversed. There appear to be violations of the UN resolution which governs the occupation of Kosovo. What steps are necessary in this respect?

(iii) The Evolution of Nato

1. During the Yugoslav war, Nato conducted its Jubilee Summit in Washington. Very serious changes were made in its aims, and the range of responses it envisaged. These changes follow a systematic expansion of Nato eastwards, and the establishment of a subordinate Partnership for Peace, all of which are widely seen as extending United States influence.

But the United States is situated between two oceans, and its policies in the Pacific are no less forward than those in the Atlantic area. These threaten China, as well as Russia. How far do the subordinate allies wish to be drawn into this accelerating confrontation?

2. The internal structures of Nato are based on an alleged 'consensus'. But in the recent war the North Atlantic Council was bypassed by the Commander in Chief, who followed a United States agenda. The French Defence Minister issued a report on the lessons of Kosovo, complaining that parts of the military operations 'were conducted by the United States outside the strict framework of Nato and its procedures'. The United Nations has an elaborate rule of unanimity (the veto) to ensure that it is difficult to usurp control of agreed missions. Why does Nato have no such mechanism? How do subordinate allies influence affairs, when the military power is so overwhelmingly concentrated? Do the European States

approve of this unequal relationship, and how would they propose to ameliorate it?

A short answer to all these problems was widely canvassed during the Cold War. It proposed the simultaneous winding up of both the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and Nato. Has public opinion abandoned the hope of any such response? Is it possible that this could be placed on the agenda once again?

(iv) Reform of the United Nations

1. The United Nations was sidelined at the beginning of the Nato action. If world opinion ignores this fact, the effectiveness of the international body will be gravely impaired. How can the United Nations Organisation assert its authority over regional military alliances such as Nato?
2. Clearly the United Nations has attracted criticism because there is a contradiction between its commitment to uphold national sovereignty, upon which the UN Charter rests, and to enforce the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which implies a basis for intervention and enforcement which has not been legally established. What proposals are relevant to address this difficulty?

The Government of the United Nations was based upon a Security Council in which the five permanent members each possessed a veto. This reflected the balance of real power at the end of the Second World War. Now we have a completely different balance of power, in which the United States sees itself as a universal law giver, and frequently undertakes military action without reference either to its allies, or to the UN as a whole. What should be done about this? Of the other powers, Russia and China are obviously qualified as permanent members. Is India? Japan? The European powers are represented by Britain and France, both of whom have nuclear forces. But should Europe now be represented by the European Union, possibly by the revolving Presidency? What other groupings of states ought to be involved in decision-making? What, if any, other reforms are possible and necessary to restore world confidence in the UN?

3. UN agencies reveal a widening gap between rich and poor countries, and between rich and poor within countries. Evidently this is a source of continuing tension. Non-governmental organisations have expressed great concern about this problem, as have various international gatherings. What can be done to make these concerns more effective?
4. Having passed the Jubilee of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, what steps are necessary to render this more enforceable, and where necessary to improve it? What measures are required to enlarge the rights of women?

The implications of the recent war spread into many other areas, and pose very serious problems for the future of Europe and the wider world. Other problems may be identified and structured in the Conference agenda in advance, at the

forthcoming consultation. But we should in principle invite people to organise workshops on other questions of importance, subject only to the willingness of others to participate in them.

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Comments and proposals for the agenda of the Conference

Bruce Kent, Hague Appeal

It is 'a necessity to revive the pan European peace movement of the 1980s'. We do not, of course, start from scratch. A lot has been going on... But we have to have a common platform. A nuclear free Europe? An OSCE Europe? A Europe as a region of peace under the UN Charter? Do we call for the abolition of NATO, or a NATO under the authority of the UN? Where does the Council of Europe fit in, and what do we have to say about a Europe of economic justice?

The 'old' END Appeal was in one sense simple and clear. A democratic Europe free from both military blocs and nuclear weapons. Now we have a much more complicated situation, yet we need something direct enough around which to rally the very different groups.

Odd Andreassen, Norwegian trade unionist

We should consider the use of new technology to establish an international network for peace and human rights, as well as using the media. We should develop links with trade unions, women's movements, ecological movements, etc., and prioritise contacts with 'No to Nuclear Weapons' in Norway.

Lord Avebury, Liberal Democratic Party, England

I hope you will not confine your examination to Europe, or to the OSCE region, because there are plenty of large conflicts in other parts of the world, as well as potential conflicts of enormous peril such as Kashmir, where the powers on either side are armed with nuclear weapons, and of course Palestine, which could draw in the US in support of Israel against the Muslim world.

Walter Baier, Chairman, Communist Party of Austria

We consider that the implementation of the Cologne Decisions of the European Union, for which detailed provisions are to be negotiated by the end of the year 2000, would give the European Union the role of a military alliance in close co-operation with Nato. There should be an analysis of the Cologne decisions and the subsequent political processes.

Jaime Ballesteros, OSPAAAL, Spain

Our agenda should include opposing the new NATO/UN neoliberal imperial world order together with strengthening respect for international law, the sovereignty of states, and the UN General Assembly.

Noam Chomsky, USA

Chechnya is doubtless a horror story, but a very convenient choice for Western intellectuals, because it is someone else's crime. A much more striking example in the '90s I think – hence always ignored – is Turkey, which is right within Nato, under the jurisdiction of the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights (which regularly hands down sharp condemnations – though little punishment). Atrocities and ethnic cleansing there through the '90s well exceed anything charged to Serbia in Kosovo, and it was done with the enthusiastic and decisive participation of the 'third way' folks, increasing as atrocities increased.

Second, I think one should not ignore US strategic planning under Clinton, about which we know quite a lot, though it has been largely suppressed by the media and journals since the documents were (partially) declassified about two years ago. I'm referring specifically to the astonishing plans of Clinton's Strategic Command, reviewed in my book *New Military Humanism*.

Roger Cole, Peace and Neutrality Alliance (PANA), Ireland

PANA envisages a reformed United Nations, and regional groupings of the United Nations such as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, as the forum for international security concerns. We therefore hope that invitations to the Conference will be sent to peace groups, non-governmental organisations and progressive political parties in all the OSCE countries.

Elettra Deiana, Nella Ginatempo, Women's Forum, Communist Refoundation Party, Italy

In our opinion, the search for some normative guidelines to rule international relations and to face the conflicts that break out in different parts of the world in a peaceful and diplomatic way has gone quite far forward. It has produced forms of rights with which we could face and solve the various controversies and conflicts positively.

On the whole, from a formal point of view, from what is written on paper, we should have the necessary instruments, even though they have to be enriched and reinforced. If they do not work, it is for political reasons: because of the context of relations on a global scale – the end of the Soviet Union, the Gulf War, and, most of all, the Balkan War – that has long since shaped a new form of 'supranational' sovereignty with absolute powers. It is the sovereignty of the Nato 'superstate', proceeding towards an advanced construction due to the close alliance that has been established between the United States and the countries of Western Europe. Nato wants to replace the UN, by weakening its functions and removing the instruments of international rights.

If this is how things are, we wonder how it may be possible to make the obligation to avoid recourse to war, given Nato's new strategic concept which is binding and operative for all Western powers.

We need a great deal of cultural work and we need 'counter'-information to

clarify the ideology of humanitarian interference, ethical fundamentalism, the war to defend human rights which at the same time is in violation of international rights.

The 'Constituent' for Peace' on which we are working is intended as a step in this direction, together with the 'Document for Peace' which we have drafted.

We think that these themes should be part of the agenda for the European meeting, to which we now give our full support and ensure our participation.

**Goyo Dionis, Equipo Nizkor
(international human rights organisation), Spain**

We are interested in participating in the following fashion:

- regarding the peace question — Nato's role and possible UN Security Council reform and its relationship with the European defence institutions;
- regarding the human rights question – the *ad hoc* Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the universal criminal jurisdiction of the ICC: elements of crime, particularly the crime of aggression; victims issues; and the political consequences of the advancement of international human rights law after the Pinochet case.

Waltraud Fritz-Klackl, Austria

Questions of war and peace should be central. The trend towards militarisation (new Nato doctrine; EU-WEU integration; military tasks for the European Union) should be analysed in depth. A realistic action programme for disarmament should be drawn up. Much attention should be given to conflict prevention and conflict resolution. Experiences with present mechanisms should be analysed. What new mechanisms can we propose?

The non-democratic decision-making in the European Union should be analysed and criticised. The main economic trends within the European Union, and on a global scale, should be considered in the context of the discussion about human rights in the European Union and member states. It will be important to focus on the inter-relationship between social and economic rights on the one hand, and civil and political rights on the other. What role should the non-governmental sector play in the efforts for disarmament and for implementing human rights? What is the role of neutral and non-aligned countries in conflict prevention and disarmament? The discussion of experiences with regional arrangements as regards disarmament, conflict prevention, economic co-operation, and so on should also be included.

Pierre Galand, European Forum for North-South Solidarity, Brussels

We need to take into account not only the danger to Europe posed by Nato's new round of reliance on militarisation in its security concept, but that posed to other continents, as well. People in Cuba, Venezuela, Panama, Congo and India have reason to be very worried.

A. Geranios, Physics Department, University of Athens, Greece

The agenda could include the connection between nuclear power and nuclear arms (the production of Pu-239, tritium, and depleted uranium from the reprocessing plants).

Hubertus Guske, Ecumenical Peace Forum of European Catholics, (OFEK), Berlin

As an activist in OFEK, I would like to put special value on the following aspects of the Conference discussion:

1. An examination of all aspects of the Kosovo war and its lessons;
2. Proposals for national and international rules which exclude all wars;
3. Only the United Nations should have a monopoly of force for the solution of international conflicts;
4. The institution of far-reaching disarmament measures, and banning the arms trade;
5. Forbidding the production, possession and use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons;
6. That NATO must be a purely defensive alliance, otherwise it should be dissolved;
7. Do not misuse religion to support particular political interests. Encourage the leaders of religious communities to be peacemakers.

International Appeal of 15th May**(Francoise Diehlmann, Catherine Samary, Suzanne de Brunhoff)**

Our group is closely concerned with some of the questions you raise. They are: The Balkans and National Questions; Evolution of Nato; Reform of the UN. When you look for papers/speakers on these questions, our group can help.

Elisabeth Kumpf, OFEK, Leipzig

Some proposals to work on:

1. Organise an international body of media people who will give reliable information about national and international conflicts;
2. Set up means to force governments to use negotiation rather than violence;
3. Prepare international research to identify potential problems to prevent them leading to armed conflict.

Milos Nikolic, Yugoslav Democrats' Appeal, Belgrade

- 1) What is the significance of the Nato bombardment of Yugoslavia, within the global strategy of the US administration?
- 2) What are the main bases of this strategy – economic, political, military?
- 3) Are there any relevant differences between the global strategy of America and the policies of countries of the European Union? Why do some European governments follow the US policy?

- 4) What is the legality of the methods chosen by the US administration to pursue its aims in Yugoslavia and elsewhere?
- 5) What dangers does US policy hold for international peace and international relations, on the one hand, and for the development of human rights and democracy in individual countries, on the other hand?
- 6) What are the consequences of the global strategy of the US in general, and Nato bombardment of Yugoslavia, in particular?
- 7) How could concrete problems concerning relations between the lack of human rights in individual countries and national sovereignty be solved internationally?

Marta Peskova, Christian Peace Conference, Prague

It seems to me in a way outdated to speak about 'our common European home'. It would be more timely to speak about 'our common global home'.

Could not the concept of 'mutually advantageous co-operation' be introduced into the debates? Nowadays, the profit-oriented economy is advantageous mostly for one side only – the stronger, more influential, with better know-how.

Our concepts of security are challenged and brought into question. 'Security' today cannot be understood only in terms of the military and the balance of power. It has to include economic security, for example. The new Nato concept responds to the new situation in a way which might be rather dangerous. Which new concepts of security are needed to correspond with the post-Cold War era and with the global aspects of the present development?

Oliver Ramsbotham, England

On Nato, I quite agree that both expansion and new out-of-area roles require radical reappraisal of relations with Russia and with the wider international community which have hardly as yet been begun to be addressed.

On humanitarian intervention, I believe that this represents a 'threshold issue' which may serve to define the kind of international collectivity that is beginning to emerge in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War. Although many across the world seem to support the idea in principle (including, for example, many Muslims), in the present state of evolution of the international order few are able to envisage its present implementation with equanimity. Essentially, when it comes to the protection of threatened people in other countries, legitimacy and effectiveness are more often than not still pulling in opposite directions, since the former assumes an already existing genuine international community, as exemplified perhaps in the tradition of international humanitarian law, whereas the latter is still dependent on great power politics because only they have the military means. The British government has been arguing that a right of humanitarian intervention exists at least since the time of the 1991 Kurdish intervention. You no doubt remember the interesting difference of opinion between Major/Hurd and Peres de Cuellar then – strikingly similar to the disparity between Blair/Cook/Robertson and Kofi Annan earlier this year.

Ernest Rodker, Campaign to Free Vanunu

The conference agenda could include Israel's nuclear weapons and the case of Mordechai Vanunu.

Michael Stanton, England

Questions relating to key issues like conflict prevention and control of arms sales are, I think, related to a strong and influential United Nations authority. If it were possible to renew the UN...there would be a firmer basis for agreed international policy on concerns like human rights. It seems that a central, crucial question is how to renew the UN so that it can function on the basis of agreed principles and not be defeated by countries seeking their own strategic or other advantage.

Rae Street, CND, Britain

The question of 'ethnic cleansing' should be widened, certainly in ex-Yugoslavia to acknowledge the injustices committed by the Croats against Serbs and Muslims, which continue, and also into questions around Chechnya, and the peoples and states in that region. (Others have made the same point)

Regards Nato, isn't 'expansion' a better description than 'evolution'? Security in the Asian region should be considered under a whole separate head. I have plenty of material from Japan on this. Indeed, Nato problems should be broken down under more headings, such as the democratic deficit; nuclear policies; out-of-area policies; influence on other areas of tension such as the Middle East; undermining the authority of the United Nations; winding down Nato.

Nor should we overlook other military alliances, particularly the Western European Union (with its nuclear-armed policy) and the European Union with its common foreign and security policy (CFSP). Tony Blair recently announced the core of a European army: who would that be used against?

We should add conflict prevention and confidence-building measures to 'Reform the UN', and include how to strengthen the work of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

It is US hegemony which leads to the arms race, including weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons, and weapons in space. How can we combat this? The section on nuclear disarmament needs references to international law, the International Court of Justice, and the Non-proliferation Treaty. The latter two demand urgent steps towards negotiation for a global ban on nuclear weapons 'in good faith'.

Probably, there should be an extra heading on weapons in space.

Gyula Thurmer, Hungarian Workers' Party

1. Prepare reports on the new members of NATO – on the new security problems and threats;
2. Do not deploy nuclear weapons on territory of the new NATO member states.
Do correspondents from the Czech Republic wish to say anything about these matters?

HIROSHIMA DECLARATION

The Hiroshima Declaration for a Nuclear-free 21st Century was adopted on 5 August 1999 at the World Conference against A and H Bombs.

The call for a '21st century free of nuclear weapons' is being heard worldwide. At a time when new moves threatening world peace are gathering momentum, the most important task for us, who live in this world now, to ensure the future of the humanity is to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons. We have worked for world peace through efforts for the prevention of nuclear war, the elimination of nuclear weapons and for the relief of and solidarity with the Hibakusha. We call on the people of the world to join us in making further advances into the 21st Century.

In the early 1990s, when the Soviet Union collapsed and the US-Soviet military confrontation came to an end, some people thought, 'now is the time to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons'. Nearly 10 years since then, however, there remain more than 30,000 nuclear weapons in the world.

The United States, as the only remaining superpower, has overwhelming military superiority. It has repeatedly made it clear that it will maintain its nuclear weapons for the foreseeable future. It has not just opposed the elimination of nuclear weapons. It also still maintains the first nuclear strike policy. In fact for several years the United States has alluded to the possibility of a nuclear strike against Iraq and Libya, thus increasing the danger of nuclear weapons being used. It has also developed and deployed new nuclear weapons, strategic bombers and penetrating warheads. Furthermore, it is conducting subcritical nuclear tests, in violation of the spirit of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Meanwhile, the successive nuclear tests by India and Pakistan last year and the subsequent armed clashes between these two countries are a striking manifestation of the emerging danger of nuclear weapons proliferation and regional nuclear war. One of the major factors provoking countries to possess nuclear weapons is a major contradiction in the present nuclear weapons monopoly system, which allows and justifies the huge nuclear weapon systems retained by certain countries. There is a danger that nuclear weapons proliferation will accelerate even further if the United States and some other nuclear weapons states continue to refuse to pledge no first-use of nuclear weapons and refuse to give assurances that they will not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states.

The Government of Japan, the A-bombed country, has a responsibility to take the initiative in ridding the world of nuclear weapons, but instead it continues to rely on US 'nuclear deterrence', turning its back on the abolition of nuclear weapons.

This situation must not be carried over into the 21st century. The peoples of the world can only be free from the threat of nuclear weapons when the

elimination of nuclear weapons has been achieved. This is an urgent task upon which world peace and the future of humanity hinge.

The NATO military attacks on Yugoslavia, disregarding the UN, claimed numerous human lives and were strongly denounced by the international community. They contravened the principles of respect for national sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, peaceful resolution of international disputes and other rules of peace established by the United Nations Charter.

In the background of this is the new US world strategy of interfering in other countries' affairs and carrying out pre-emptive strikes against them, and of mobilizing its allies in the name of 'response to regional crises'. In an effort to establish this system on a global scale, the United States in the Asia-Pacific region pressured Japan to enact War Laws in order to implement the Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Co-operation, while in the Europe-Atlantic region the US, along with its Nato partners, adopted the 'New Strategic Concept'. These developments represent a dangerous departure from the concept of the 'defence of allies' which used to be the premise of these military alliances.

These moves have been promoted under the 'nuclear umbrella' of the US, which alone among the large nations continues to maintain foreign bases stocked with nuclear weapons. US nuclear weapons continue to be deployed in the territory of Nato allies. There is also a growing danger that nuclear weapons will be brought into Japan and that the 'Three Non-nuclear Principles' will be further emasculated under the Guidelines for Japan-US Defence Co-operation and by Japan-US secret arrangements on nuclear weapons. It is obvious that military alliances are the stumbling block to preventing nuclear war and eliminating nuclear weapons, the demand of the people in the world.

The politics of hegemony, in which nuclear weapons and military alliances are the main elements, take a heavy toll on the livelihoods of the people, because of the huge burden of military expenditure. It also aggravates the evil effects of 'globalisation', which, led by the major powers, exacerbates poverty, unemployment, hunger and environmental destruction on a worldwide scale.

We must do our utmost to stop the use of military force and interventions which disregard the United Nations. We must work to preserve and establish the peace order as provided for by the UN Charter, including principled application of the right of national self-determination and the resolution of disputes by peaceful means. This, along with the elimination of nuclear weapons, is a major issue affecting world peace into the 21st century.

In the upheaval of the 20th century, the movement and public support for a world without nuclear weapons are developing more extensively than ever. Even some of those people who used to speak of the 'necessity' of nuclear weapons are beginning to call for such weapons to be abolished. Thus there is now a new set of circumstances, and the possibility for fundamentally changing power relations in favour of a total ban on nuclear weapons and their elimination is increasing.

The non-aligned countries, which represent over 100 countries, are continuing

to call for talks to get nuclear weapons to be eliminated in a fixed timeframe. There is growing participation in the 'New Agenda' coalition, which called on nuclear weapons possessing countries to make a decision to eliminate nuclear weapons. Among the nuclear weapons states, China is proposing that an international treaty be concluded to prohibit nuclear weapons. Even in Nato countries, voices calling for a review of the US nuclear first-use policy are being heard.

Movements for establishing and expanding nuclear-free zones and for making municipalities and ports nuclear-free are developing in many places in the world. Hibakusha's international speaking tours, atomic-bomb exhibitions in many quarters of the world, and Hiroshima/Nagasaki Day actions are developing, along with a variety of joint non-governmental organisation initiatives to urge the nuclear weapons states to make a decision to eliminate nuclear weapons. At the International Citizens' Peace Conference in The Hague, in which a wide range of peace movements from all over the world took part, the unanimous demand for the abolition of nuclear weapons was involved in the 'Ten Fundamental Principles for a Just World Order'. In the US and other nuclear weapons countries, as well as in India and Pakistan, movements opposing nuclear weapons are developing.

A major advance in the worldwide people's movement and in public support is critical if the 21st century is to be free of nuclear weapons. It is time now to encourage voices in favour of a 'peaceful 21st century without nuclear weapons' in all regions, in workplaces and in schools in every country. It is also time to pressure national governments and the United Nations, so that the earliest possible decision on the elimination of nuclear weapons, and the implementation of that decision, will be the order of the day of international politics.

In the Nato countries which took part in the bombing of Yugoslavia, protest is developing against damage from military bases, accidents in exercises and environmental destruction caused by these military operations. This led to the growing public opinion and the growing movement against the strengthening of the military alliance, for removal of military bases and against the first-use of nuclear weapons. In the US and its allies, objection has been voiced to Nato's offensive strategy. Their actions went beyond the alliance's scope of action in 'self-defence'.

A broad movement against the Guidelines for Japan-US Military Co-operation, supported by the public, is developing. The 'Guidelines' opens the way for Japan to participate in US interventionist wars, giving rise to strong criticism from the Asian countries. The struggle of residents and municipalities is continuing tenaciously against the expansion and strengthening of the US bases and military exercises in Okinawa and other parts of Japan. The Japanese people's struggle to defend the peace principles of Japan's Constitution, which renounces war, based on a critical reflection on Japan's war of aggression against the Asia-Pacific countries, is in accord with main stream international moves to defend the peace order based on the UN Charter.

The United States is unilaterally using military force in pursuit of its world dominance, without regard for international law and the UN Charter. The people of the world, irrespective of their positions, are getting more apprehensive and critical of this approach. The scourge of the two world wars, including the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, must not be repeated, and we must firmly defend the peace order established in the UN Charter. The essential task in achieving a peaceful 21st century is to build an international movement, supported by the public, that will be able to hold in check outrageous actions by the US Government.

We call on the world to endeavour to achieve the following tasks to set the 21st century free of nuclear weapons:

- A pledge from all nuclear weapons states to commit themselves to the elimination of nuclear weapons; the earliest possible signing of an international treaty completely banning and abolishing nuclear weapons; and the convening of a 4th Special Session of the UN General Assembly devoted to Disarmament focusing on the elimination of nuclear weapons.

- The renunciation of the policy of the first use of nuclear weapons by all nuclear weapons states; immediate de-alerting of nuclear warheads; a ban on all kinds of nuclear weapon tests, including subcritical tests, and a halt to research and development of nuclear weapons in all their forms; the establishment, expansion and strengthening of nuclear-weapons free zones; making countries, municipalities, ports and harbours nuclear-free; the prohibition of the bringing in of nuclear weapons to foreign countries; the removal of nuclear weapons already deployed in foreign territories.

- The investigation and study of the damage from the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and other cases of damage caused by nuclear weapons, making the findings known to the world; state compensation for the Hibakusha and other nuclear weapons victims; a ban on the use of nuclear energy for military purposes; and the eradication of the damage caused in relation to the nuclear fuel cycle.

- Opposition to interventionist and pre-emptive strike strategies; rejection of co-operation in war; eradication of the damage from foreign military bases and forces and compensation for such damage; removal of foreign military bases; opposition to the strengthening and enlargement of military alliances for aggression; and the dissolution of military alliances.

- Cuts in military expenditure and an improvement in welfare and living conditions; and independent and democratic development of the economy and society.

Let us strengthen our movement in every country and every locality to develop activities devoted to the period for the 'International Joint Action for a 21st Century Free of Nuclear Weapons' that is set to continue until the end of year 2000. Let us develop international concerted action for the elimination of nuclear weapons, focusing on the two UN General Assembly sessions in 1999 and 2000. As the first wave of this action, during the UN Disarmament Week (24 to 30

October, 1999), let us each urge the Government in our own country, as well as all the other governments and the United Nations to take action for the elimination of nuclear weapons. Let us use the Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 2000 and other opportunities to develop common actions that will wield influence on international politics.

Let us take action in our workplaces, in our neighbourhoods and on campuses using a variety of approaches, including the signature campaign in support of the 'Appeal from Hiroshima and Nagasaki'. Let us encourage grassroots dialogue, exchange and common action in every country, beyond existing frameworks among a wide range of organisations and individuals. Let us use these activities as a springboard for the widest possible solidarity with other international initiatives and campaigns, and develop them into international common action against nuclear weapons and for peace. Let our campaign transcend differences of thought, political belief, religion, race and nationality.

Let us make the 2000 World Conference against A & H Bombs a place where movements worldwide that are working for these goals can assemble.

From Hiroshima, the first victim city of nuclear weapons, we again call for broad co-operation and solidarity among the world's anti-nuclear and peace movements.

No More Hiroshimas! No More Nagasakis! No More Hibakusha! No More Wars!

CHALLENGE TO NATO

The Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) in the German Bundestag has challenged the constitutionality of the German government's approval of the new Nato strategy. When the application was handed over at the Constitutional Court legal policy spokesperson of the PDS in the Bundestag, Dr Evelyn Kenzler, explained: 'The new Nato strategy is a strategy of military intervention in the political, economic and geo-strategic interests of the US and its allies. The war against Yugoslavia which was illegal under international law was the first anticipated application of this strategy. The PDS is an anti-war party. We consider it our task by all means at our disposal including legal ones to challenge such dangerous and illegal developments and violations of peace that are dangerous in terms of foreign relations such as in the case of Yugoslavia.'

'According to the application the Constitutional Court is requested to state that the German Government, through its approval of the new strategic concept of Nato at the Summit of the heads of state and government in Washington on 23 and 24 April 1999, violated Section 59 paragraph 2 sentence 1 of the Basic Law (German constitution) because it did not start the approval procedure as decreed by the constitution. According to this Section of the constitution treaties regulating political relations of the Federal Republic of Germany require approval by or involvement of the bodies responsible for federal legislation – in this case the Bundestag – in the form of a Federal law. Therefore, an amendment

of the Nato treaty also requires a law adopted in the Bundestag approving of it as had the North Atlantic Treaty itself which was ratified by the Bundestag on 24 March 1955.

‘The PDS evaluates the exclusion of parliament from the amendment of the Nato treaty as an expression of shifting the principle of the division of power in favour of the executive in foreign policy and a delegitimization of parliament in international relations.’

EGON KRENZ

The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation issued this statement in protest at the imprisonment of Egon Krenz.

The trial and imprisonment of Egon Krenz is unworthy of the Federal German authorities, and will do nothing to foster the spirit of reconciliation for which so many people hoped during the days which led up to the unification of Germany. To imprison the former Head of State of the German Democratic Republic is to criminalise that Republic as a whole.

But not only is this an ahistorical approach to the problem of political assimilation: it also seriously over-simplifies the issues which were involved. The late Robert Havemann, perhaps the foremost critic of authoritarianism in the East German state, was more than once offered asylum in the Federal Republic of Germany when he was victimised for his oppositional position at home in the GDR. More than once he made the same response: that in spite of his serious disagreements with some of its policies, he was not going to leave the territory of the most civilised state that had ever existed on German soil.

The legal foundations of the Krenz trial do not appear to be solid. It smacks of ‘victors’ justice’. This is absolutely not what is wanted. To rectify the political mistakes which drove some of the policies of the German Democratic Republic, we need exactly the same tools that should be normally and freely used in the former Federal Germany, which is to say, in both cases, open and fearless political criticism.

This was the standard applied by Robert Havemann, and it remains a better standard by far than the misuse of the criminal law.

Egon Krenz should be released, and without delay.

THE TRIAL OF MORDECHAI VANUNU

Ken Fleet gives an update on the recent developments in this case.

Ever since the Israeli whistle-blowing technician, Mordechai Vanunu, was kidnapped, tried in secret, and sentenced to imprisonment 13 years ago, he has attracted tremendous support from peace activists and defenders of human rights from all over the world. At last there are signs that this pressure is beginning to tell.

The authorities held Vanunu in solitary confinement from the beginning of his captivity on the excuse that he might otherwise give away more nuclear secrets. Mordechai always maintained that he had told all he knew to the *Sunday Times* back in 1986, and that there was no more to reveal. Neutral observers have never seen any reason to doubt him, but the Israeli authorities insisted on inflicting this cruel punishment right up to 1998, when they backed down grudgingly in the face of an appeal to the Supreme Court.

Now another small crack has appeared in establishment hostility to Vanunu. Towards the end of last year the Israel State Attorney decided to release an edited transcript of the Vanunu trial proceedings for publication in the newspaper *Yediot Ahronot*. Officials in the defence establishment were upset about the decision, and Shimon Peres, the former Prime Minister responsible for the kidnap of Vanunu, was furious. He is clearly scared that the publication will open a public discussion on Israel's strategic policy and reliance on nuclear weapons, and increase the acute anxiety felt by its Arab neighbours.

Until now, not much has been known about the Vanunu trial, since it was conducted in conditions of oppressive secrecy. The 60 page verdict handed down by the Jerusalem Court was not published, neither was the record of proceedings. The parts of the 1200 page transcript of the Vanunu trial now made available have been heavily censored. Information about the Dimona nuclear plant where Mordechai worked, operational details and the evidence of his kidnap have all been deleted. Nevertheless, some of the testimony provides useful support for Vanunu's cause.

Peter Hounam, the *Sunday Times* journalist who wrote the Vanunu story, testified in Vanunu's defence. He was sceptical when he first heard the story in London in August 1986 from Vanunu's contact, Oscar Guerrero. But he took the photographs Guerrero gave him to a professor of nuclear physics, who concluded that they showed a nuclear production line and bomb. As a consequence, Hounam made a special journey to Australia, where Vanunu was staying.

Eventually Vanunu agreed to come to England himself. Here he met a number of nuclear experts who clarified various details of his information.

The *Sunday Times* decided they would publish the story on 5th October, but in the week before, while it was being prepared, Vanunu disappeared, and was not able to speak at the press conference and on television as had been arranged.

The *Sunday Times* journalists had been very worried about their informant's safety. They arranged to move him around different hotels and kept their location secret, but this did not prevent Vanunu being snared by a classic honey-trap.

Peter Hounam was particularly suspicious of a woman called 'Cindy', whom Vanunu had met in London. Rightly so, because 'Cindy' turned out to be in the pay of the Israeli Government. Despite friendly warnings from the journalist, Vanunu allowed her to lure him to Rome where he was captured by Israeli agents, and forcibly shipped out to Israel in chains.

A major preoccupation of the Israeli authorities was to prevent Vanunu revealing details of the illegal kidnap. If he did, it would be difficult for the

British and Italian authorities to ignore this violation of international law on their own territories. So the Israelis went to great lengths to prevent Vanunu being heard, after his arrest, at his trial, and subsequently. But now we find the kidnap confirmed by the two members of Israel's Security Service, Shin-Bet, who interrogated Vanunu. At the trial they testified that they first met him on a beach, 'shackled to a stretcher', confirming Vanunu's own testimony that he was bound in chains.

These agents spoke of Vanunu's honesty and openness. At the trial he affirmed that his goal was to 'bring this matter under orderly supervision... Now Peres can no longer lie to Reagan and say that we don't have nuclear weapons, now everybody knows'.

The Americans already knew privately all about Israel's nuclear capability. But the *Sunday Times* publicity catapulted this knowledge into the centre of the public domain. Israel's repeated advocacy of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East was shown up for the sham it was, for all to see. Israel had always maintained that it would not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons into the region. Foreign Minister, Shamir, reiterated this policy at the United Nations General Assembly in October 1981. This pledge was now exposed as completely false. Is that why the Government was so vengeful? Shimon Peres authorised Vanunu's forcible repatriation and gave evidence against him. Abba Eban, the Chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, also testified for the prosecution. He complained that Vanunu's disclosures meant that now there was more 'suspicious supervision over Israeli sources of material'. But surely such supervisions were justified since the Government had been caught out in its dissembling?

While the Israeli authorities have done everything in their power to silence Mordechai Vanunu, he continues to be an embarrassment to them. But nothing can excuse the oppression and pain to which they have subjected him. Justice cries out for the immediate release of this prisoner of conscience. There must be no let-up in the campaign to win the active support of international public opinion.

It is only such continuing pressure that will win Vanunu's freedom.

On 2nd February the Hadash Deputy, Issam Makhoul, was permitted to lead a debate in the Knesset, Israel's Parliament, on 'Israel's Nuclear Policy'. Public debate had previously been ruled out-of-order by the Speaker on the grounds that it might jeopardise Israel's security. The Speaker withdrew his objection after Mr Makhoul appealed to the High Court. It seems that, at last, the cloak of secrecy is gradually being forced aside.

The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation is part of The Campaign to Free Vanunu, which can be contacted at 89 Borough High Street, London SE1 1NL.