
THE BERTRAND RUSSELL PEACE FOUNDATION

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EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS LAUNCH CONFERENCE

The Russell Foundation called for the renewal of the mass peace movement in Europe in the summer of 1999. As we have reported in previous issues of *The Spokesman*, the proposal received widespread support and encouragement. Since that time we have consulted extensively about these matters, including at two international consultations held in the European Parliament in Brussels and at a series of national meetings. Now we are preparing for the launch Conference of the new European Network for peace movements which takes place at the Brussels Parliament on 31 January/1February 2002*.

Of course, we live with changed circumstances after September 11th. The onslaught against the twin towers of the World Trade Centre killed thousands of innocent people. Truly, this was a massacre of the innocents. Now, President Bush has launched a massive retaliatory strike against Afghanistan. The world will be fortunate if even larger numbers of Afghans, who are also completely innocent, are not killed in these reprisals. Worse, there is evidence that this new war could spill into neighbouring territories, launching what may become a prolonged war.

From the beginning, the rational response to these horrors was to take this problem to the recognised international fora, and to seek to reach a general agreement on the necessary measures to combat terrorism. Why did the United States not do this, and launch a war instead? Why do they refuse to support the establishment of an international criminal court? How can international law prevail when each proclaims his own gun rule?

The answer to these questions is contained in the answer to another. Why have the Americans sought to jettison the treaties which have up to now, albeit inadequately, controlled the nuclear arms race? They have been bent upon removing the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in order to launch what they call 'Missile Defence', but which is more commonly known as 'Son of Star Wars'. This is really an advance programme for war-fighting in and from space, which is contrary to the commitments made in the Outer Space Treaty.

Further, behind the militarisation of space lies the systematic elaboration of the American military doctrine of 'Full Spectrum Dominance'. This doctrine envisages the unchallengeable operation of United States forces 'in all domains

– space, sea, land, air and information.’ And, given the global nature of US interests, it asserts that ‘the United States must maintain its overseas presence forces and the ability to rapidly project power world-wide in order to achieve full spectrum dominance.’

European peace movements need to take urgent steps to link up with all those other peoples, including especially the American peoples, whose own safety is continually put at risk in this new and lethal conflict. That is why we have called a Conference to launch a new Network for Peace and Human Rights. We seek to share the experiences of all the peace movements, and to provide assistance in common and joint actions to promote nuclear disarmament and encourage peaceful relations between states and peoples.

The war on Afghanistan, the worsening situation in Palestine and Israel, Kashmir and the Caucasus, and the increasing international instability following September 11th, all threaten wider hostilities. But the peace movements are stirring. More than 300,000 marched in Perugia against the war with other large demonstrations in Naples and Turin, while 50,000 gathered in London and Berlin. Many other demonstrations against the war include those in Calcutta, Brussels, Amsterdam, Athens, Paris, Copenhagen and Stockholm. More are planned.

We need to develop links with one another in order to ensure the most rapid organisation of the opposition. Peace movements were always internationalist, but now, more than ever, we need to co-ordinate our responses with one another, and with those of the other actors in civil society.

*Information and registration forms for the launch Conference of the European Network for Peace and Human Rights are available from Russell House, Bulwell Lane, Nottingham, NG6 0BT (e-mail: elfeuro@compuserve.com) and from our web site (www.russfound.org).

ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT GROWS WORLD-WIDE

Many protests against the war on Afghanistan are taking place throughout the world. Often they receive little press coverage, although thousands of people participate.

The demonstration called by CND on Saturday, 13th October, was the largest seen in *London* for many years. Some 50,000 people walked on a glorious sunny afternoon from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square to support the demand to ‘Stop the War’, and for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Many members of the Muslim communities joined in the march. The British Government was taken aback by the size and spirit of the manifestation, although media coverage was grossly inadequate.

At the same time, more than 3,000 people responded to the call of the Scottish

Coalition for Justice not War to demonstrate in the centre of *Glasgow*. At Menwith Hill and elsewhere simultaneous demonstrations took place in support of the Global Day of Action against the Militarisation of Space.

Amsterdam saw one of the earliest demonstrations when, on 30th September, 10,000 people joined a peace rally in the medieval central square, the Dam. This was followed by a march on 20th October, when a larger number, including 170 different groups, marched for peace.

The largest manifestations of all were in *Italy*. A quarter of a million people marched from Perugia to Assisi on Sunday, 14th October, with other huge demonstrations in Naples and Turin. Earlier, 10,000 people protested in Rome.

In *Germany*, 50,000 people converged on the beautiful Gendarme Platz by the German and French Cathedrals in Berlin on Saturday, 13th October from three different parts of the city, with another 2,500 in Stuttgart. Earlier, 3,000 people joined a demo in Hamburg, and 6,000 protested in Kassel. 5,000 school students took time off to join protests as part of a pupils' initiative against the war.

5,000 people protested in *Brussels* on Sunday, 7th October, with a further demonstration on Friday, 12th October. 20,000 demonstrated outside the EU summit in *Ghent* on Friday, 19th October. In *France*, 5,000 people marched in Paris against the war on Thursday, 11th October. Protests also took place in Lille, Bayonne, Marseille, Cahors, Lyon, St. Etienne, Clermont-Ferrand, Annecy, Toulouse, Strasbourg and Brest. Committees/networks are operating in six major cities in *Denmark*. 4,000 people participated in 20 demonstrations in nine cities in the week after bombing of Afghanistan commenced on 7th October. In *Switzerland*, Berne witnessed some 10,000 people protesting against the bombing of Afghanistan. *Norway* had 1,500 people demonstrating in Oslo. In Greece, a mass rally was held in Syntagma Square, Athens on 29th September to coincide with the Washington demonstration organised by the anti-war coalition.

There have been widespread protests outside Europe against the Afghanistan war. Apart from neighbouring Pakistan, where intense anger against the bombing is felt and expressed with great passion and frequency, 20,000 demonstrated in *Jakarta*, the Indonesian capital, on 20th October. In *Calcutta*, 100,000 braved torrential downpours to take part in a peace rally over the weekend of 13/14th October, and in *Thailand*, 30,000 demonstrated against the war on 20th October. *Japan* has seen protests almost daily, with different groups holding their own demonstrations. *Australia* saw 2,000 people at a peace rally in Adelaide, with other gatherings in Melbourne and Canberra.

Useful sources:

Globalise Resistance (www.resist.org.uk) has photos from some of these demonstrations.

News and diary of activities in Britain are available at www.stopwar.org.uk. Act Now to Stop War and End Racism (ANSWER) in the United States lists hundreds of actions (see www.internationalanswer.org).

HIROSHIMA DECLARATION, 6 AUGUST 2001

A conference of local authority representatives met in Hiroshima on the 46th anniversary of its destruction. They called for the global abolition of nuclear weapons, and this year's Hiroshima Declaration celebrates that fact.

On the first August sixth of the new century, we, the citizens of Hiroshima, living witnesses to 'the century of war', hereby declare that we will do everything in our power to make the twenty-first century one of peace and humanity, free from nuclear weapons.

We believe that humanity means our willingness to listen to the voices of all sentient beings. Humanity also means nurturing children with loving care. It means valuing reconciliation in creating the human family's common future. It means rejecting violence, and reaching peaceful agreements through the power of reason and conscience. Only humanity can assure the abolition of nuclear weapons; only humanity can ensure that nuclear weapons, once eliminated, are never re-invented.

In the twenty-first century, Hiroshima intends to soar to new heights as a city of humanity. We intend to create a spiritual home for all people, a home with compassion, a source of creativity and energy for our planet's children and youth, a city offering a personal place of rest and comfort for all, young or old, male and female.

However, the calendar end to 'the century of war' has not automatically ushered in a century of peace and humanity. Our world is still darkened not only by the direct violence of local conflicts and civil wars, but also by innumerable other forms of violence, including environmental destruction, violence-promoting publications, images, and games. Now, through advanced science and technology, some are trying to extend battlefields into space.

We need our world leaders first to look at this reality humbly and unflinchingly. They must also possess a strong will to eliminate nuclear weapons, sincerity in abiding by their agreements, which are crystallisations of human wisdom, and finally, the courage required to make reconciliation and humanity top priorities.

Many *hibakusha* and their kindred spirits, feeling called upon to shoulder the fate of the entire human race, have sought the abolition of nuclear weapons and world peace with a will strong enough to cut through solid rock. For *hibakusha*, the living hell suffered fifty-six years ago remains vivid and present even today. Thus, communicating in living form to coming generations the *hibakusha*'s memories, their sense of responsibility, and their unrelenting will is the most dependable first step towards survival through the twenty-first century and on to the twenty-second century, connected by a bridge of hope.

To that end, the City of Hiroshima is investing in the revitalisation of peace education, in the broadest sense of that term. We are striving, in particular, to establish Hiroshima-Nagasaki peace study courses in major universities around the world. The basic framework for such courses will be constructed from the accomplishments of

the Hiroshima Peace Institute and similar institutions where academic endeavour based on unalterable fact have brought humankind closer to truth.

This week, the citizens of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are hosting the World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-city Solidarity. The conference has been organised for the express purpose of abolishing nuclear weapons, and realising world peace through truth-guided solidarity among cities, the entities that will carry most prominently the torch of humanity in the twenty-first century. It is no mere fantasy to believe that in the future, member cities of this conference will lead other municipalities in expanding the circle of nuclear-free authorities until ultimately, the entire Earth becomes one solid nuclear-free zone.

Hiroshima calls on the national government of Japan to play an active role as a mediator in Asia in creating nuclear-free zones and implementing confidence-building measures. We further expect that, as a matter of national policy, Japan will initiate an effort to conclude a global treaty that prohibits nuclear weapons forever. We demand that our government properly value the contributions made by *hibakusha*, wherever they may live, which should culminate in improved relief measures that respect their rights. Finally, we demand that our national government forge the will to abolish nuclear weapons and, in accordance with the preamble of our constitution, work with Hiroshima in the effort to create a century of peace and humanity.

On this first August sixth of the twenty-first century, it is by vowing to spread the peace of this moment through the entire twenty-first century and throughout the world that we pay our sincerest respects to the souls of all the atomic bomb victims.

Tadatoshi Akiba, Mayor, The City of Hiroshima

PERUGIA APPEAL

Hundreds of thousands of people joined the March for Peace from Perugia to Assisi on Sunday 14th October. Other big demonstrations took place in Naples and Turin. The March marked the climax of the 4th Assembly of the Peoples' UN in Perugia. These extracts are taken from the Appeal made by the Assembly. The full text and related appeals are available on the web (www.krenet.it).

On Sunday the 14th of October 2001, we, the women and men of the United Nations, will march along the road that leads from Perugia to Assisi to promote the globalisation of human rights, democracy and solidarity. Today, the world has at its disposal the necessary capacity to reach this objective. But what is needed is a change of course, to reconsider first and foremost the priorities of politics and the use of resources.

We are moved by the awareness that there are no inevitable processes, that 'another world is possible', and that in order to build it, it is necessary to promote

globalisation from the bottom up: a great world alliance of women and men, organisations of civilian society, community and local institutions dedicated to the refusal of every form of violence, in practice as in language, and to substituting the culture of war by a culture of peace, the culture of savage competition by that of co-operation, exclusion by acceptance, individualism by solidarity, separation by sharing, wealth creation by redistribution, and national security by communal security.

We are moved by worry for a world that seems to be going out of control, the prisoner of a painful web of tensions, crises and strident contradictions that are the cause of inexpressible human suffering. A world in which everyone talks of peace but no one does anything to prevent the outbreak of war, or to put an end to the most terrible violations of human rights, as in Palestine, Afghanistan, Sudan, Tibet or Burma. A world in which everyone talks about justice but entire peoples are condemned, like many in Africa, to hunger, thirst or illness. A world in which everyone talks about the environment but does almost nothing to stop the greenhouse effect, or the pollution and deforestation of the planet. A world in which everyone talks about liberty and democracy but which seems to be sliding towards a global authoritarianism, where the UN declaration and international law on human rights are treated by some states like the menu in a restaurant.

We are moved by worry for those millions of people without rights of citizenship: people who appear and disappear from time to time, when an inevitable tragedy occurs, people who 'exist' only if they become 'a public order problem' or an 'opportunity to cut costs' for a multinational company. We are moved by worry for a civilian society ever more under pressure from unrestrained competition, hit by an enormous growth in insecurity (be it economic, relative to a place in the workforce and income, or health, cultural, personal, collective, environmental or political issues) and by the sensation that every certainty is less certain, that we are at the end of all rules.

We are moved by worry about the globalisation process pushed by men and companies interested only in extending their power, and maximising their profits in the shortest possible period of time, without any attention to human, social and environmental costs.

After decades of world politics influenced by the economic, financial and commercial interests of the great industrial nations and the great companies, of deregulation and the law of the strongest, of privatisation, of the expansion of the market and its ideology, and of the de-legitimisation of the United Nations, the moment has arrived to redefine the priorities of the agenda of international politics and the use of resources by shifting the focus away from the interests of the few to the good of the global public.

The world needs governments and international democratic institutions determined to put a stop to the growing international disorder, and to manage the challenges of interdependence and promote the interests of the global public. The world needs governments determined to oppose and prevent war and gross violations of human rights, to eradicate poverty and guarantee to all access to the

basic human rights (the right to food, to water, to health, to education, to a home, to a dignified job...), and to guarantee freedom and the practice of democratic rights, pluralism in society, freedom of enterprise and information, alongside a determination to combat racism, xenophobia, and discrimination in all their forms, to combat epidemics, face the environmental emergencies (global warming, the destruction of biodiversity, desertification...) and to safeguard natural resources for future generations, to promote equality and distributive justice in the economy and global commerce, and to encourage scientific and technological research in the direction of human development, and making it possible for all humanity to benefit from the progress reached.

Today, more than ever, we must recognise that none of these objectives, which all maintain that they share, will be reached by the free action of the market and its globalisation, for the simple reason that the market has other priorities and objectives. What is needed, therefore, is that politics, civil society, and national and international democratic institutions take the initiative.

A great responsibility is left to the governments of the richest and most powerful countries of the world that, more than any other, hold the power, resources and the means to determine, for better or for worse, the living conditions and the future of the great part of humanity.

For this reason, we the women and men of the United Nations, aware of the responsibility and the rights that we share, and coherent with the international principles of human rights and the ideals of the United Nations Charter, firmly ask our governments to take on board another priority: the promotion of a different form of globalisation: the globalisation of human rights, democracy and solidarity... To face the great challenges that we have ahead of us and to globalise human rights, it is essential to rediscover and spread an authentic culture of solidarity and sharing. No human community can survive without solidarity: not even the planetary community we are part of. But care is needed: we are not dealing with the distribution of a little of the surplus that our world produces in abundance. That which is asked for today – to save humanity from a threatening drift – is a great investment for the promotion of justice (positive peace) and for the development of international co-operation at all levels. We have the resources. For decades we have invested in arms. Today the moment has come to spend the same resources to guarantee the real security of the people, of all peoples and the planet – rather than on Star Wars!

We denounce the irresponsible behaviour, immorality and cynicism of the governments that continue to deny the United Nations the resources and means to halt the conflicts that, from Jerusalem to Kabul, Gaza to Grozny, and Diyarbakir to Khartoum, devastate our community of humanity.

We denounce the illegal behaviour, immorality and cynicism of the governments that continue to increase the international traffic in arms (the six leading exporters being four of the permanent members of the Security Council plus Germany and Italy), who increase military spending and those who are today preparing Star Wars and provoking a new world arms race. The alternative

to war (outlawed by international law) and its proliferation is the creation of an efficient system of collective security, under the international authority of the United Nations, reformed and made more democratic, with an international police force and a civilian peace corps.

The demand for solidarity, justice and peace without frontiers from every part of the world demands of each of us living in the rich cities of the west, urging us to solicit our governments to change politics, but also to reconsider our model of development, and our personal and collective lifestyle, pushing us to reduce consumerism and eliminate waste and excess, to support equal trade and promote the ethical management of savings.

Globalise human rights, democracy and solidarity: this is the pressing request that comes from a multitude of women, men and local institutions all over the world. These ‘men and women of the planet’ ask nothing for themselves, but for all humanity. They are only the embryo of a global civil society that is growing in accordance with the values of peace and justice, human rights and non violence. They are an extraordinary resource for our common future. In their hands and ours there lies the possibility and the responsibility to change the world.

It’s not enough to ask. We need to act in person. By marching towards Assisi, as Aldo Capitini did forty years ago, we are renewing above all our commitment as free women and men, as associations and responsible local organisations, because peace and justice affirm themselves in a thousand daily actions, both individual and collective. ‘Everyone has a part to play’.

THE DRESDEN APPEAL

This short excerpts are from the Appeal of the Party of Democratic Socialism in Germany, which was adopted at the Second Session of the Seventh PDS Congress on 7 October, 2001.

The attacks in New York and Washington showed that no missile system, however perfect, and no outer space bristling with reconnaissance and killer satellites could have prevented the drama. New weapons systems do not bring security. They squander economic resources; they subordinate research and development to military goals. Thinking in military categories deforms intellectual and cultural life.

NATO is totally unsuitable for combating terrorism. It arose from confrontation and its self-image is unchanged. Whether it wants to or not, NATO contributes to frontlines emerging over and over again. Its new alliance strategy, including the possibility of giving itself a mandate for world-wide interventions, does not resolve any security problems. On the contrary, it creates new ones. The new Bundeswehr concept follows this strategy. One is as wrong as the other.

Heavily armed, the world will remain without peace. Disarmament gives

peace a chance. One fifth of today's military spending would suffice to ensure everyone a sustained basic supply of food, drinking water, education and public health services.

We propose disarmament, preservation and extension of international arms control treaties, resurrection of the ABM treaty and the Convention on Biological Weapons and all other conventions limiting weapons and weapons technologies; prohibition of arms exports, total nuclear disarmament, complete renunciation of the military use of outer space and no new missile systems. Lasting peaceful solutions to international conflicts must be found, especially in the Near and Middle East.

A world economic order that gives a free hand to the global players of the financial, industrial and commercial worlds, that gambles away the chances of the underdeveloped countries on the stock exchange and divides the world into attractive, less attractive and unattractive zones has been obsolete for a long time. Globalisation must be socially just, democratic and civilian.

We propose that Germany and Europe work hard for a balance of interests between North and South, East and West, poor and rich; for redistribution and international co-operation. This involves regulating the finance markets, combating poverty, promoting social development and the development of civil society, giving the economy a new ecological direction. The action programmes of numerous United Nations World Conferences have outlined how this can be done. The Kyoto Protocol is one. All these agreements must finally be implemented. It is important that people come together in resolving concrete problems, in networks, in individual projects and in an intercultural dialogue.

Since the end of the East-West conflict the USA as the sole remaining world power has used NATO as a military instrument of its global interests policy. But this has not even benefited its own security, to say nothing of European security.

The burden of preserving peace and international security should be shouldered by the entire community of nations. Internationally, security policy is the province of the United Nations alone. As long as the US administrations do not share responsibility and as long as they condemn their country to unilateral world dominance, the United States will remain, more than others, the target of global terrorism. PDS policy wants to prevent this.

Thinking in cold war categories under the motto that my enemy's enemy is my friend has to be put an end to once and for all. The PDS struggles to have the top priority of the United Nations Charter, outlawing war and the threat or use of military power, finally respected by all states in their international relations.

The United Nations and its subsidiary organisations can ensure world peace, reduce threats to individual states and set universally valid standards for a world-wide domestic policy. It must be restored to its role as the sole legitimate world organisation; it must be strengthened and at the same time reformed.

In order to survive, humanity requires recognised rules of co-operation in this one world. The Charter of the United Nations is the basis for human co-existence. This applies to Afghanistan just as it does to Macedonia and Kosovo.

All measures must be compatible with international law and the United Nations Charter. It must be implemented at last.

Terrorism must be combated internationally without respect of persons and their motives, regardless of which countries might be involved or which state interests might be affected.

Modern societies have banned retaliation and revenge from social relations; self-defence and assistance in case of need are subject to strict legal restrictions. This should also apply to preventive or repressive measures against terrorism. In a civil society, these are court and police measures, but never military strikes and war.

The Appeal ends: Mankind today has all it takes to eliminate wars, poverty and underdevelopment permanently. But mankind also has all it takes to wipe human life off the face of the earth once and for all. The looming war can still be the last throes of a millennium of violence and counter-violence. The present can still be stronger than the powers of the past. All it takes is peace!

CHOMSKY ON VANUNU

‘The kidnapping of Mordechai Vanunu by the government of Israel, the farcical trial, his imprisonment for 15 years, and the savage and sadistic punishment he has been forced to endure rank high among the current crimes of states that claim to recognise human rights and democratic principle. The tolerance of these crimes by Israel’s sponsors and allies is a continuing disgrace, for which they should be called to account by their citizens.

Vanunu merits enormous respect for his courage and integrity in revealing to the world what those who wished to know already knew, if not in detail, then in essentials: that with Western complicity, Israel had developed a substantial nuclear capacity, alone in the region. The nature and severity of the threat posed by these programmes is underscored by General Lee Butler, Commander-in-Chief of the US Strategic Command in the early 1990s, under the Bush and Clinton Administrations. “It is dangerous in the extreme”, he warned, “that in the cauldron of animosities that we call the Middle East, one nation has armed itself, ostensibly, with stockpiles of nuclear weapons, perhaps numbering in the hundreds, and that inspires other nations to do so”. It takes little imagination to spell out the likely consequences, or to recognise what they portend at the moment when this “cauldron of animosities” is on the verge of boiling over once again.

To free Mordechai Vanunu from the criminal torture to which he has been subjected is surely within the power of the United States and its allies. It is just as surely within the power of an aroused public to demand that there be no further delay in bringing this shameful episode to an end, so that those committed to peace and justice can welcome Vanunu and honour him for his contribution to the cause he has served so well, and to dedicate themselves with renewed vigour to carrying it forward, inspired by his example’.

COMMUNICATIONS

from Vassilis Dedotis

On April 6th, 2001, the Greek Parliament voted in favour of an important amendment to the Constitution: a provision allowing for civilian service and also conscientious objection.

This was a great step forward after some fifty years of persecution and harassment for those opposed to military service. Conscience objectors, almost exclusively Jehovah's Witnesses in Greece, first made their appearance here in the late 1940s. Since then, two people have been executed, five were tortured to death, 26 were sentenced to life imprisonment, 42 were sentenced to death, 68 were exiled, and over 3,000 served time in prison ranging from months to 14 years.

Personally, I served almost nine years in prison as a conscientious objector, and spent many years since working for better conditions in this regard. Although a law was enacted in 1998 providing for a civilian service, the recent amendment renders conscientious objection an indisputable constitutional right. Furthermore, legislation passed just a few weeks ago now allows for the criminal records of older conscientious objectors to be cleared. For this reason, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and many others for all your efforts and endeavours over the years, all of which have contributed to this fine outcome. They have certainly been appreciated, and have finally borne good fruit. It is hoped that the use of conscientious objectors in constructive forms of civilian service will prove to be a boon to Greek society.

from the poet John Kinsella

Recently, I've had to do a lot of travel between America, Europe, and Australia. Every time I enter a new country, I'm made aware of the anxieties of quarantine efficiency. With foot and mouth still prevalent in Britain – despite the propaganda from the Blair Government – and present also in Europe, there is a stronger than usual vigilance at American and Australian airports. It's the same atmosphere as when the early outbreaks of Creutzfeld-Jacob disease were discovered.

Quarantine isn't just about keeping diseases out, protecting a specific geography from physical contamination, but also about the preservation of 'home' values. It is about a mental and spiritual 'purity'. For Australia, it's another form of the 'White Australia Policy', and extends from microbes to

people and ideas. Information might be available via the net, media, or books, but that's quite different from allowing physical presence. Of course, the risk of remaining 'open' is that genuinely destructive forces may enter – but how often are these forces in actuality engendered from the inside, rather than originating in the feared 'outsider'.

It is worth considering the cultural politics of 'plague' diseases in farm animals. 'Mad cow' disease and 'foot and mouth' not only threaten the potential destruction of Australian rural industries, but Australian's self-image, its 'way of life'. These are diseases of an old world order, of a corruption and decay that Australia feels it might keep out.

Australia, as a nation, is itself a corruption of quarantine. It is the construct of intrusion and pollution: colonisation. In the same way that many non-indigenous Australians still refuse to accept collective and 'historic' responsibility for offences against indigenous peoples, so, too, do they work overtime on preventing 'offence' against the sanctity of their living conditions, of their spatial and metaphysical security.

The brutal incarceration of 'boat people' is a case in point. The fear is manifold: the risk of bringing 'exotic diseases' into Australia is only a peripheral one. The treatment of people as polluted herd animals is strikingly obvious if you've been outside the country for a while. They do it in the United States as well, and in Britain. It becomes an issue of power and protecting privilege. That's what quarantine is.

The contradiction inherent in this war against existing diseases is absurd. The Australian government, for example, will allow trials of genetically modified grains, and fight to keep out foot and mouth. Even outside the ethical questions regarding the interference of the structure of a living organism, doubts about safety should mean that no risks are taken. If our health is affected by GM foods, the weakened body becomes the potential host for new viruses, new mutations.

When first thinking about this letter, I'd just got back from driving out to look around the historical town of Saffron Walden in Essex, which proved as much as anything else a tour of both government and private test sites for GM crops and other kinds of genetic experimentation. Not far out of Cambridge, the Wellcome Trust has established a large facility which was heavily featured in local papers because of attempted expansion, opposed by ordinary residents. As with most such problems, the Government publicly supported only limited expansion, while in real terms overturning obstacles in order to maximise that expansion. This seems typical of the whole Government approach to biotechnology, mooted as an area with potentially great profits which Britain cannot 'afford' to miss out on. The Government then will sidestep public protest in order to secure long-term financial benefits. The experimental data that might contradict apparent benefits of particular biotechnologies are either suppressed or ridiculed.

Logically, we can choose not to alter the biology of an organism, in the same way that we can choose not to eat animals or use animal products, certainly given most social and cultural conditions. One may be alienated or ostracised by one's

cultural group, which at times I, as a vegan, certainly have been. But the choice is there. Of course, some environments shape the conditions of choice in a way that excludes such options, and I respect and accept that.

However, in the case of GM it is different – education, class, wealth, and cultural priority favour those making the choices. Scientists and politicians control the flow of information, and are themselves controlled by governments, bureaucracies, and corporations. The most altruistic scientist works within a regime established for purposes of profit or nationalism, or of shaping humanity in a particular image, to a particular agenda. We all take our own prejudices to acts affecting others, especially regarding decisions about what's for the common good.

Like it or not, I am a coloniser, an oppressor, a parasite, a deceiver, and an aggressor, just like the rest of humanity. But transgenics, genetically modified organisms, introducing a jellyfish gene into a monkey making its fingernails glow, are ludicrous. Life and matter are reduced to concepts of energy – the food simulators on *Star Trek* get people excited. Fantasy blurs with reality, it takes away the need for ethical decisions. Apparently. The use of animal parts with human compatibility to lengthen lifespans in one laboratory, ways of feeding the planet's increasing population in another. The equation cancels itself out. The different hands of science work independently, then create ethics committees seemingly to homogenise their response and disorder. Thoreau wrote: 'The mass of men serve the state thus, not as men mainly, but as machines, with their bodies'. And thus we are as consumers of these lies.

from Dr Andreas Toupadakis

These excerpts are taken from an open letter which sets out the reasons for Dr Toupadakis's resignation from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in the United States. The full text is available on the web (www.globalcomment.com).

This letter is an appeal to every secretary, technician, scientist, engineer, and any other person whose participation supports the world war machine to withhold their skills from weapons work and from activities that support or enable weapons work.

We have a moral obligation and duty to think, speak, and act first as citizens for a peaceful world, and next as scientists. The higher our education is, the higher our responsibilities are for a humane world. Should we talk about science before we even think about what our science is for? That is precisely what we are doing. And that is why I resigned from my position as a scientist in the nuclear weapons program at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory as of January 31, 2000.

My purpose in writing this letter is to make known the reason for my

resignation from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. It is simply that my conscience does not allow me to work for the development or maintenance of nuclear weapons. When I was hired by Lawrence Livermore, I was not adequately informed about the specifics of my job responsibilities. After being hired, I found myself expected to work on weapons maintenance in the Stockpile Stewardship Programme. I believe that I am not alone in having this experience of not being directly informed.

If many scientists knew that sooner or later they would find themselves entangled in nuclear weapons work, would they have joined the National Laboratories? I believe that, in not levelling with people, serious questions are raised regarding the integrity of our leaders. Upon realizing on the one hand the obviously questionable practices in the workplace, and on the other hand, the real mission of the national scientific laboratories, I decided to withhold my scientific skills and resign. I cannot forget what my ancient Greek teachers taught me, which I now see being practised worldwide: “*Science without virtue is immoral science.*” – Plato

How can we continue to go back home after work every day and look in our children’s eyes and tell them that we are working for a safer world for them? Have our hearts become stones? We have tried to justify our involvement in building and maintaining nuclear arsenals by claiming that we are doing it for peace. How can we have peace when, by our work on weapons, we are raising fear in the hearts of those who do not have the same technology for killing?

True peace is based on mutual trust. The argument that I have heard so many times from weapons scientists is this: since the last big war, we have not had another one, so the invention of terrible weapons of destruction has put an end to war because everyone knows how terrible it would be if they dared to start one. This is an error. Who has led them to this amazing delusion? Who has led them to lose themselves in the temporary daily demands of their scientific careers and to forget about the eternal demands of their conscience?

My fellow scientists and engineers, the national laboratories must change from labs of war to labs of peace, if there is to be a chance to avoid the extinction of all life on earth. Does non-proliferation work advance the goal of non-proliferation when, at the same time, we are building more weapons? Who are we trying to fool? Many scientists are hired at the national labs to do environmental or other work, seemingly not directly related to weapons work.

Those who work on environmental projects or non-proliferation projects at the nuclear weapons labs have not realised that such a thing is an illusion. What environmental work? What non-proliferation work? Last October 13, the US Senate voted down the 40-years-in-the-making Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Now, through the deceptively-named “Stockpile Stewardship” programme, not only are weapons expected to be tested, but new weapons are also to be made. In simple words: we are burying the waste so we can make more, and building more weapons so that other nations will follow our example.

We can not ignore these facts and go on with our science. Science, which ought always to be aiming at the good of humanity, is assisting in the work of

destruction, and is constantly inventing new means for killing the greatest number of people in the shortest amount of time. Science that is used to terrorize people, kill them, or make them invalids is immoral science. It must be abolished immediately. Those who participate in acts of violence against humanity by using, making, or servicing weapons in the name of human rights or under any other name, in every nation of our world, must remove themselves from their jobs today. If we do not act now, we may very well see our own children become victims in ways we have never dreamed of and never expected.

The contradiction between what we love to do and what we are forced to do by our fears has brought us into a state of despair. When we make our work the centrepiece of our existence, then we will find happiness.

I know without any doubt in my heart that the people who work on nuclear weapons are as good as people who work anywhere else. I have met some people with such beautiful souls that I find it impossible to explain why they would work on weapons. They are working on science in a detached way, not thinking about what will happen as a result, outside of the laboratory.

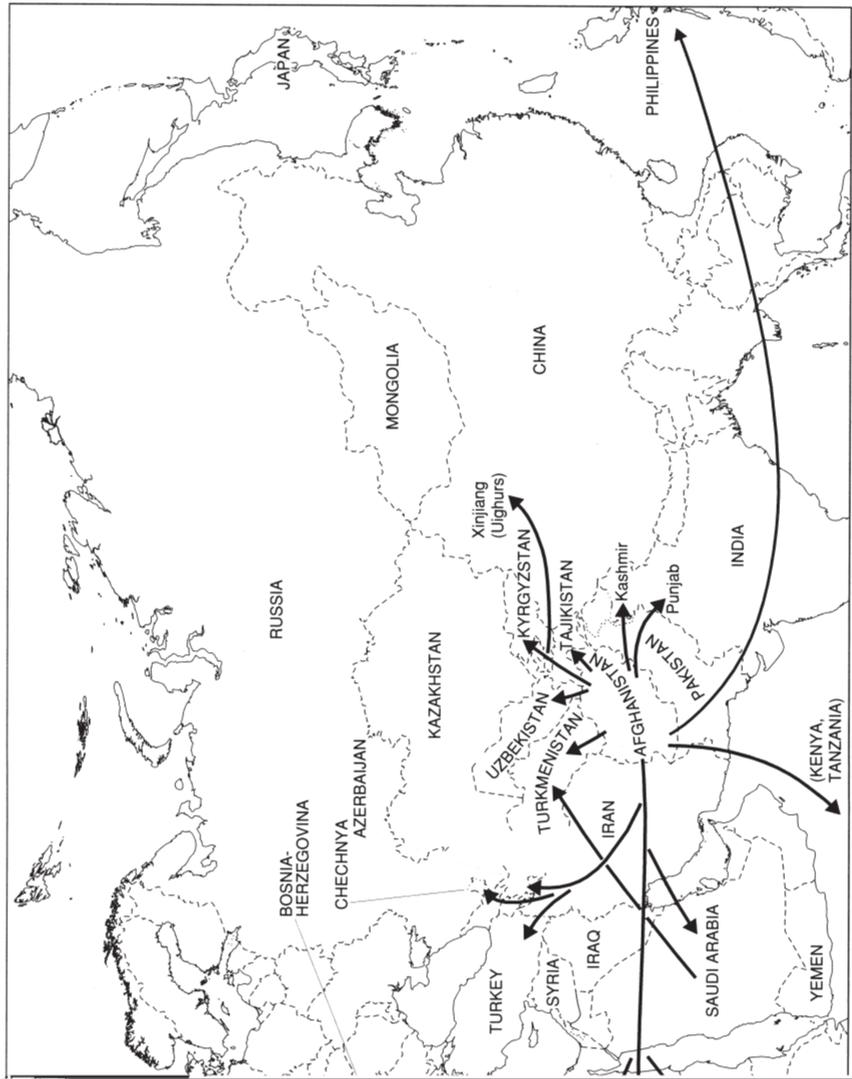
Recently, Einstein was chosen as *Time* magazine's "Man of the Century." Most articles describe only his contribution to the discovery of nuclear energy; however, they fail to even mention that he was a strong advocate of anti-war movements, a peace activist. I wonder how many scientists have ever read the Russell-Einstein Manifesto?

'We appeal, as human beings, to human beings: Remember your humanity and forget the rest. If you can do so, the way lies open to a new paradise; if you cannot, there lies before you the risk of universal death.'

We urgently need an international campaign to help scientists and engineers see that they must withhold their skills from war-science. I hope that my letter of appeal will start this campaign and that individuals from every nation will offer their support for the idea. My letter is a wake-up call to all those who can hear the call of their conscience.

Having contemplated these matters, and having recognised the real and misrepresented mission of the United States National Laboratories, I have decided to resign. I cannot live my life in a way that goes against my conscience.

REPEAT ADVERT
from last issue
(Endpapers 72
Job No. 11862)
BERTRAND
RUSSELL
from Routledge
page 2



of CIA-trained guerrillas and drugs outwards from Afghanistan after the 1979–89 Afghanistan war.