



Around Europe

Quaker Council for European Affairs

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Faslane 365 - UK Green MEP and Co-President of the Intergroup for Peace Initiatives, Caroline Lucas, arrested

Caroline Lucas pictured here before her arrest with fellow UK Green MEP Jean Lambert. said: "The irony is extraordinary - I have been arrested for breaching the peace when I am peacefully trying to draw attention to the immoral, illegal and counterproductive breach of the peace which is Britain's Trident nuclear weapons system."

What's more likely to cause a breach of the peace - sitting down in a road or stockpiling 200 nuclear warheads, each with a destructive capacity 18 times greater than the bomb which killed 200,000 in Hiroshima? Britain's Trident nuclear warheads are deadly weapons of mass destruction which cost billions and are completely irrelevant to global geo-politics today."



In its October edition, *Around Europe* reported on the first few days of the Faslane 365 campaign - a campaign which, by blockading the Faslane nuclear weapons base in Scotland, is applying critical pressure for the disarmament of Britain's nuclear weapons - rather than their replacement as planned by the UK Government.

The Campaign started on 1 October 2006. Since then (at the time of writing) there have been 473 arrests and 4 prosecutions.

One of the people arrested was UK Green MEP, Caroline Lucas, who took part on 8 January 2007 in the 24 hour slot of the blockade organized by parliamentarians. Some 60 MPs, MEPs and local politicians participated.

Quaker groups have taken an active part in the Faslane 365 initiative. Two Quaker groups have held the blockade on 27/28 October and 12/13 November 2006 respectively with arrests at both. After the first of the two Quaker blockades, Jenny Wistreich reported that after 'a powerful Meeting for Worship (held at midday), the demonstrators were told that anyone else arrested would be detained for three nights.' She goes on to say: 'After a while, two women were arrested but the other three were told that whatever they did, they would not be arrested and so might as well go home.' Among those arrested at the 27/28 October blockade was long-term QCEA supporter Margaret Hodson from Bristol.

So far, few of the demonstrators who have been arrested have been charged or prosecuted. There appears to be evidence then, that the authorities are taking this protest seriously, that it worries them, that they do not really want to make too many arrests for fear of unfavourable press coverage, and that the protest is being seen.

There are a good few months to go - it will be critically important to ensure that the protest continues right to the final date of 30 September 2007 and that each blockade and each arrest receives the publicity it deserves. Those demonstrating against the replacement of Trident are campaigning for peace and survival for us and for the generations to follow.

In this Issue:

Matt Loffman joins QCEA	Page 2
Challenges to Peacebuilding: A review	Page 2
Obituary: Jean Van Lierde	Page 3
QCEA Study Tour	Page 4

Martina Weitsch



Matt Loffman joins QCEA



Working for QCEA is a challenge I'm excited to take up and hope that over the year I can make a positive contribution to the good work done here.

I have been a Friend since I was born and hold many Quaker values close to me (if there are such things!). My degree was in Government and I have a long-standing interest in international relations, particularly in conflict resolution and using peaceful means to solve political crises. I thoroughly enjoyed attending the QUNO Geneva Summer School last July and developed a lot of respect for what Friends are achieving in the political sphere.

The opportunity to work for QCEA is one I'm eager to grasp and one which will be rewarding and hopefully inspiring.

Matt Loffman

Challenges to Peacebuilding: Managing Spoilers during Conflict Resolution - A review

Spoiling is, essentially, any party's action, violent or non-violent, which, either intentionally or unintentionally, disrupts a peace process. 'Challenges to Peacebuilding' aims to tackle the important issue of 'spoiling' as a major obstacle to peace processes around the globe. It is a collection of essays by various authors, often originating from the country under evaluation, which brings together a broader than usual perspective on spoiling from all levels: local, national (governmental) and international (third party). It does this through offering a variety of case studies to help illustrate and support the arguments made.

What was most striking about this book was the predominance of the theme of the impact of '9/11' and the US 'War on Terror' on how governments and the public have altered their perceptions of these so-called 'spoilers'. Increasingly, those who might have previously been termed 'spoilers' are now referred to as 'terrorists,' along with all the subsequent implications this term has for negotiations with and action against parties so named. One author goes so far as to say that 'intrusive' US foreign policy with regard to the global 'war on terror' has added a completely new dimension of potential 'spoiling' to international peacebuilding; the events in Madrid in 2004 are cited as a very good example of this.

It was interesting to see such a broad view of the different forms that spoiling can take, from false myths about the 'enemy' to third party intervention and even assassinations. It is explained that not all spoiling is violent, neither is it always intentional and it most certainly is not always direct. There is a good deal of investigation into the 'devious objectives' which some local, national and international parties might have in prolonging conflict i.e. 'the spoils of spoiling' as it were. However, there is also some practical reflection on why some peace processes collapse when others succeed, and on what can be learned from past experience.

This book really challenges the way most people think about peacebuilding by giving a faithful analysis of the possible motivations, actions and reasons why peace processes might fail or, at worst, serve to re-escalate violence. Indeed, a poorly planned or executed peace process can itself be a sort of 'spoiler'. However, what is most challenging for Quaker thought in this book is the ease with which it is accepted by all authors that violence is a natural by-product of a peace process. One author comments that, by definition, so long as there is a peace 'process' there is evidently no 'peace', but surely a peace process does not need to occur only during a conflict but also before? At no stage does any author seem to consider the important possibility of a pre-emptive peace process - before any violence ever breaks out - with the aim of preventing a violent conflict from ever occurring.

This is a challenging and thought-provoking book as well as a good overview of the nature of effective peacebuilding. I recommend it.

Sarah Barnett

JEAN VAN LIERDE

15 February 1926 - 15 December 2006



Jean Van Lierde, Honorary President of the European Bureau for Conscientious Objection, and founder of this European CO network in 1986, humanist, anti-fascist and anti-militarist died on 15 December 2006 at the age of 80. He lived for the peace movement and the struggle against colonialism, and for the liberation and freedom of all people.

Born in Charleroi, of a Walloon mother and a Flemish father, he grew up in a poor Catholic family. He joined a resistance movement against the Nazis at the age of 15 but, as a pacifist, he rejected the idea of his group killing German soldiers who had surrendered. Growing up in the Christian Democratic movement, where he always had close friends, he became involved at the end of the war with progressive movements, pacifists, socialists and communists. He became the first conscientious objector in postwar Belgium, was banned by his country and by his priest for this and started his lifelong struggle for the recognition of conscientious objection, first in Belgium and in Europe, later with War Resisters' International (WRI) worldwide. He supported the Buddhist non-violent movement in Vietnam and campaigned for the liberation of imprisoned pacifists in the Soviet system. He went to prison as a "deserter" and worked in the coalmines of Marcinelle as the first objector in an "alternative service", he joked. His Belgian

CO law became reality only in 1964.

With the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) and WRI Sections in Belgium he had meanwhile organised the rescue of French and US deserters seeking refuge from the Algerian and Vietnam wars. He became advisor to the first President of the former Belgian colony of Congo and campaigned for the investigation of Lumumba's murder, also, until recently, searching in the archives of the Belgian government. He created a research institute in Belgium with a global reputation - Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques (CRISP) - and a "Peace House" for peace and non-violent groups at rue van Elewijk 35 in Ixelles, where for more than 30 years dozens of Belgian and international organisations have worked together as collective owners of this space.

A European pacifist has left us, a Belgian who always refused to speak any language other than French. His sense of humour nevertheless made him friends around the world. "The world he left would still have needed this deserter" wrote Marc Metdepenningen in "Le Soir" on Monday, 18 December 2006.

We will miss him.

Gerd Greune, EBCO President



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