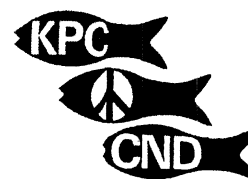


September-October 2026

KINGSTON PEACE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF KINGSTON PEACE COUNCIL /
CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

<http://kpc.gn.apc.org> <https://www.facebook.com/kingstonpeace>



Conflict is boosting heatwaves and oil profits

Effect of wars can no longer be ignored

With thousands of acres of Western Europe incinerated by wildfires and three quarters of the UK officially suffering from drought in the past month even right-wing commentators have had to accept, albeit reluctantly, that climate change is 'a factor'.

But the acceptance of contributory causes to this unfolding catastrophe still ignores the effect of conflict, despite the fact that we are now four years into what has become a NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine while the Middle East conflict continues to spread in line with Israel's desire for expansion and the Trump White House's stupidity.

A new study by Queen Mary's University London has calculated that the Israel-Gaza war has generated 33 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent or, put another way, the pollution created by 7.6 million petrol cars in one year.

But that statistic pales in the face of data for the Ukraine-Russia war which tips the scales at 311

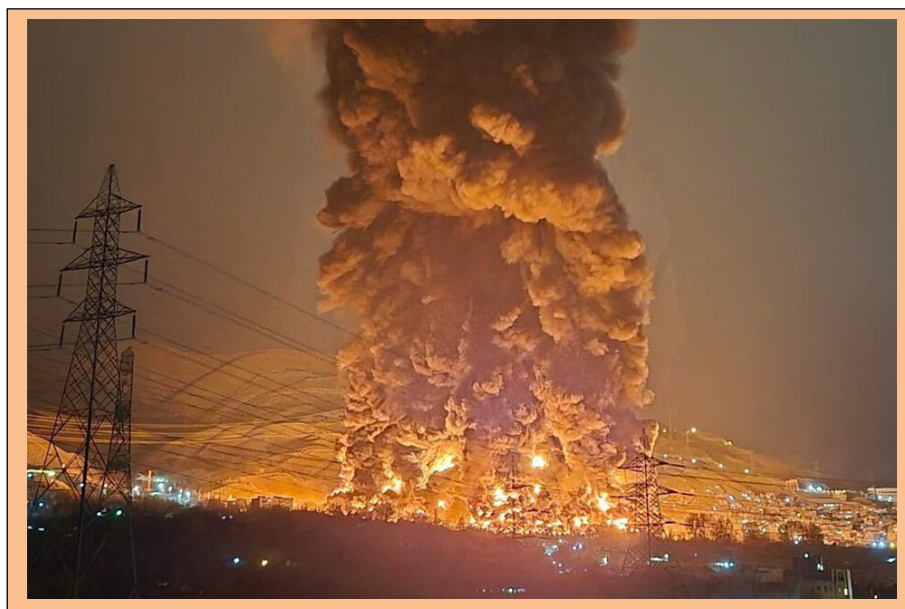
million tonnes of greenhouse gas equivalent emissions, comparable to that of France.

The calculation brings together the emissions from weaponry, devastating landscape fires, burning oil refineries, the building of defensive infrastructure and the rebuilding of structures that would be necessary following the conflict.

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Historic note

Albert Einstein ordered 1000 copies of the *New Yorker* magazine that featured the 1946 article by John Hersey describing in detail the effects of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima as he wanted to send them to scientists worldwide. The magazine couldn't fulfil his request as the edition had sold out so Einstein sent out reproductions instead with a note warning against atomic warfare.



Fire at an Iranian oil refinery, one of 30 such facilities attacked by Israeli forces this year.

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Conflict boosting heatwaves and oil profits

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Harmful emissions created by warfare are routinely ignored by international networks reporting on climate issues.

Man-made climate change is pushing up temperatures worldwide but Europe is the fastest warming continent heating up twice as fast as the global average.

With a pattern of regular heatwaves developing and food suppliers warning of the prospect of shortages in the near future western leaders would be better employed agreeing ways to secure water and food supplies than setting up yet another NATO conference to decide what additional offensive weaponry can be provided to Ukraine.

And then there's the current Iran War doom loop which goes like this: in addition to the greenhouse gas emissions created by the fighting there is the geographical fact that the war directly affects the supply of oil worldwide. And this has been the major win-win for the fossil fuel companies. Eight of the biggest oil companies made profits of more than \$90 billion in three months as a direct result of Trump and Netanyahu's illegal war against Iran. The price of a barrel of oil has continued to zig-zag up and down in line with Trump's almost weekly musings that the war with Iran is over, or it isn't, the Strait of Hormuz is open, or it's closed. All designed no doubt to rake in millions of dollars on the stock exchanges by those pre-warned as to what the President is going to say today.

Directly matched

Research published by ETH Zurich University matched emissions from the biggest named oil companies directly to deadly heatwaves. The research has been hailed as a giant leap forward in a legal battle to hold big oil accountable for the damage caused by climate change.

The research discovered that emissions from any one of the 14 biggest oil giants were by themselves enough to cause more than 50 heatwaves that otherwise would have been virtually impossible. A spokesperson for the Make Polluters Pay Campaign said: "We can now point to specific heatwaves and say: 'Saudi Aramco did this, ExxonMobil did this.'"

"We're talking about real people who died, real crops that failed, and real communities that suffered, all because of decisions made in corporate boardrooms."

Writing in *The Guardian* Bill McGuire of University College London points out that the 12 months to July this year saw the reversal across the world of 45 climate policies weakening measures such as carbon pricing, tackling methane emissions and the phasing out of petrol and diesel vehicles.

Alongside conflict and big oil there is another distinct group who must share the blame for destructive climate change. Fossil fuel lobbyists are identified as culprits alongside the gullible politicians and right-wing media who soak up the lobbyists' often well-remunerated blandishments.

"But we need our lobbyists too," argues McGuire. "Cue the world's climate scientists. At this critical moment the science has a duty to out-shout and out-shine corporate weasel words and government irresponsibility."

Burnham backs juries

Quietly, with no fuss or fanfare, Andy Burnham has done away with his predecessor's plan to limit trial by jury.

In the May/June edition of *Kingston Peace News* we criticised the intention of Starmer and then Justice Secretary David Lammy to abolish jury trials for cases where the sentence on conviction was three years or less. The reason given by Lammy was to help tackle the backlog gumming up the courts system.

A statement released by No. 10 in late July said: "There are no plans to scrap jury trials under Andy Burnham's premiership."

You might have expected more to be made of this positive news except, perhaps, it was felt counter-productive to draw great attention to the fact that a British PM had just decided to reinstate safeguards that had existed since before Magna Carta!

However, we are still in a two-steps-forward, one-step-back situation as a planned Westminster magistrates court hearing for 1500 - yes, 1500 - people charged under the Terrorism Act in relation to the proscription of Palestine Action, descended into chaos. People had received letters telling them both to appear and not to attend and hearings were, unsurprisingly, adjourned. Meanwhile more than 150 additional protesters were arrested outside the court, some under section 12 of the Act, which requires trial by jury!

Time for another quiet announcement from Downing Street?

Remembering Hiroshima



Members and supporters of Kingston Peace Council/CND came together on August 6th to commemorate the destruction 81 years ago by US atomic bombs of the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A silent vigil took place in the middle of the day in central Kingston (*pictured above*) and a remembrance event was held at Kingston Riverside in the evening.

Mayor of Kingston Councillor Thay Thayalan (who has visited Hiroshima) and Deputy Mayor Councillor Jane Lim attended the evening event representing the Royal Borough.

A minute's silence in memory of the victims of all wars has held, white flowers were strewn on the River Thames and KPC's Hilary Evans spoke to the assembled group.

Here is the text of her powerful speech:

‘Mr Mayor, Madam Deputy Mayor, Friends old and new. Welcome and thank you all for joining us this evening, the 81st anniversary of the atomic bombing of the Japanese city of Hiroshima, and as we also mark the anniversary in three days' time on August 9th, of the bombing of the city of Nagasaki.

In towns and cities across the world people are coming together on this day to remember these terrible atrocities which took the lives so horrifically of at least 340,000 people in August

1945 and in the months and years that followed because of their injuries or from exposure to radiation.

Setsuko Thurlow, now aged 94, was 13 years old and at school when the bomb dropped on her home city of Hiroshima. She was one of the lucky ones. She eventually managed to push her way out from under the rubble and this is what she remembered:

“As I crawled out, the ruins were on fire. Most of my classmates in that building were burned to death alive. I saw all around me utter, unimaginable devastation.

Processions of ghostly figures shuffled by. Grotesquely wounded people, they were bleeding, burnt, blackened and swollen. Parts of their bodies were missing. Flesh and skin hung from their bones. The foul stench of burnt human flesh filled the air. Thus with one bomb my beloved city was obliterated. Most of its residents were civilians who were incinerated, vaporized, carbonized – among them, members of my own family and 351 of my schoolmates.

In the weeks, months and years that followed, many thousands more would die, often in random and mysterious ways, from the delayed effects of radiation.

Continued overleaf

Whenever I remember Hiroshima, the first image that comes to mind is of my four-year-old nephew, Eiji – his little body transformed into an unrecognizable melted chunk of flesh. He kept begging for water in a faint voice until his death released him from agony."

I've omitted some of the most graphic horrors from Satsuko's description of this hellish scenario but perhaps I shouldn't have done - this is the reality of what nuclear weapons do.

We are here this evening to remember, but remembering alone is not enough. We are, perhaps even more importantly, here to say **NEVER AGAIN**.

80 years ago, the newly formed United Nations, which was established in a spirit of great hopefulness after the Second World War 'to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war', passed as its very first resolution

‘the elimination ... of atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction.’

In 1970 the UK and 190 other countries signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, essentially agreeing that those countries possessing nuclear weapons would work towards getting rid of them, while countries without nuclear weapons agreed not to acquire them. And yet 80 years after that UN resolution and 56 years after that international agreement to get rid of them, the world's nuclear-armed states have amassed the equivalent power of 145,000 Hiroshima bombs - enough to destroy the world many times over.

In this country, we're in the process of renewing our Trident nuclear weapons systems, in contravention of the international agreements we've signed up to. It was **very** disappointing to read that our new PM Andy Burnham will place the renewal of Trident at the heart of his vision of a reindustrialised Britain.

Can it ever be morally right to prepare to kill millions of people and pollute the planet for millions more?

Our Prime Minister carries the heavy responsibility of keeping the citizens of this country safe but what does long-term safety and security **really** mean? Do nuclear weapons really keep us safe, as we're often told? Fortunately, they haven't been used again in eight decades but we've had several very near misses:

by design, or accident, or miscalculation. In the words of UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres:

"We have been extraordinarily lucky so far. But luck is not a strategy. Nor is it a shield from geopolitical tensions boiling over into nuclear conflict. Today, humanity is just one misunderstanding, one miscalculation away from nuclear annihilation."

And what about the recent out-of-control AI hack – if that had been against nuclear weapons ... the consequences don't bear thinking about.

If we truly believe that possessing nuclear weapons keeps us safe, why shouldn't other countries use the same argument and acquire their own? How can Trump and Netanyahu with their own nuclear stockpiles insist that Iran shouldn't have them? What sort of hypocrisy is that? **The truth is these hideous genocidal weapons are not safe in anyone's hands.**

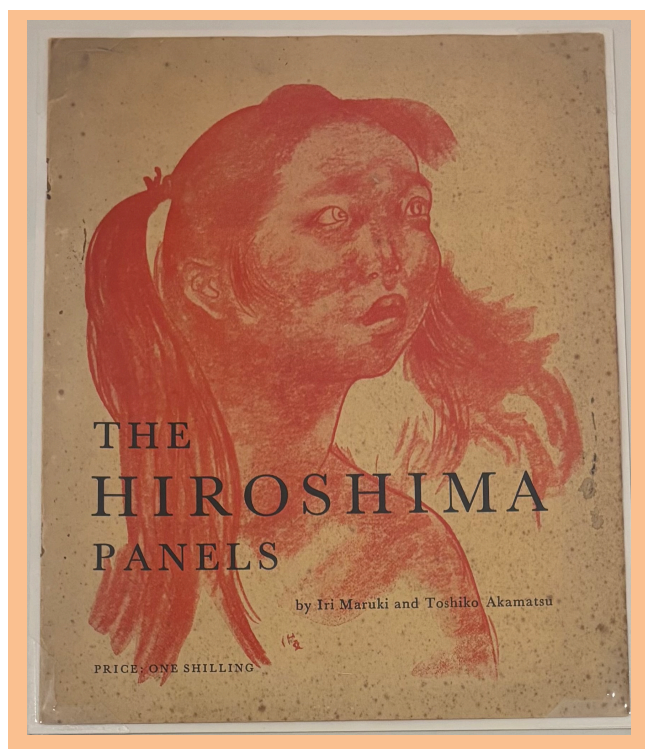
Genuine security means much more than military strength. We have seen clearly in recent years that the modern global existential threats are **climate collapse, pandemics, cyber-attacks, and growing inequality**. A much stronger emphasis by our political leaders on genuine diplomacy and adherence to international law would enable resources to be directed towards healthcare, education, housing and environmental resilience – the things that really make us all feel safe.

I'll end with a few more of Setsuko Thurlow's words: *'The development of nuclear weapons signifies not a country's elevation to greatness, but its descent to the darkest depths of depravity. These weapons are not a necessary evil; they are the ultimate evil.'*

Members and supporters, together with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Kingston gather at Kingston Riverside on the evening of August 6th. Picture: Steve Ransome



Art for Peace



The Hiroshima Panels by Iri Maruki and Toshiko Akamatsu, catalogue cover 1955

The Hiroshima Panels – art as immediately powerful for the 1950s as Picasso’s *Guernika* had been in the 1930s – were displayed during a tour arranged by Artists for Peace. This included an exhibition in Coventry organised by a City Council still grappling with the destruction wrought by bombing.

Among those sponsoring this initiative were John Berger, Jacob Epstein and Stanley Spencer.

This artwork features in a comprehensive exhibition covering work by the anti-fascism Artists International Association at the Towner Gallery, Eastbourne. <https://townereastbourne.org.uk/>

Comrades in Art: Artists against Fascism is the largest exhibition of work by the AIA in over 40 years. Although concentrating on the 11 founding members of the organisation it also features work by a wide range of artists who supported its campaigning for peace, including such names as Paul Nash, Dame Laura Knight, Laslo Moholy Nagy and Ben Nicholson.

The exhibition – which features painting, lithographs and sculpture, continues until 16th October and is very well worth a visit.

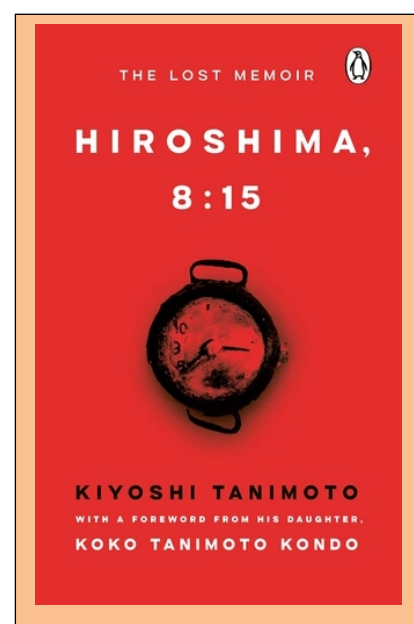
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Published just two days before this year’s anniversary *Hiroshima 8:15* (a reference to the time that the atomic bomb detonated) is a recently discovered first-hand account of the bomb and its aftermath written by Methodist Minister Kiyoshi Tanimoto.

Described as a ‘heartrending testimony of human suffering’ the memoir was written in 1947. Tanimoto was a few miles outside Hiroshima when the bomb went off and was uninjured.

He returned to his home to find his wife and child still alive and then began the harrowing task of rescuing people. He became one of the best known survivors and was featured by American journalist John Hersey whose account of the city’s destruction, filling an entire issue of the *New Yorker* magazine, brought the full horror of nuclear weapons to the public for the first time.

Tanimoto’s own account, originally written in English, was sent to Hersey who filed the manuscript away in Yale University library and it remained there, forgotten, until rediscovered by Hersey’s son.



Some positive news ...

- Musicians for Peace and Disarmament, since their foundation in 1983, have donated £108,300 to the peace movement. Their next concert will be in January 2027 at Lauderdale House in Highgate.
- Medical Aid for Palestinians has successfully delivered 70 million litres of clean water to 39 displacement camps in Gaza reaching up to 166,000 people each day.
- Volunteers moved tons of rubble and sandbags to create safe pools along the beaches of Gaza to provide swimming lessons for Palestinian children during the summer. During mornings there are classes especially for children whose parents were killed in Israeli attacks. In the afternoons the pools are open to everyone.

The Final Frontier

A *Guardian* article in July began: “Elon Musk is trying to own it, competing powers are trying to fight in it and nobody seems to be regulating it. “

The piece was referring to space and highlighted a number of worrying trends that had developed in recent years.

It took the form of an interview with American physicist Laura Grego who was warning: “People have to be aware of what is happening in space. Public knowledge has to catch up.”

The article goes on to look at Musk’s plans to launch a million – yes, a million – satellites - the Trump administration’s scheme for a Golden Dome defence umbrella covering the whole of the US - a \$1.2 trillion project that Grego dismisses as technologically unachievable - and the question of what laws, if any, govern the behaviour of nations in space.

In fact, there is law, enshrined in the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 that requires that space should only be used for peaceful purposes and no-one must site nuclear weapons there.

The problem, as always, is who is going to enforce it? Nobody owns space but if you literally flood it with satellites are you, in effect, appropriating it?

Thus far, the article reports, no country has crossed the line of attacking and destroying another’s satellites although technologies for rendering them inoperative have been developed.

Pre-emptive strike

The problem is that to do so might convince one country that such a move was designed to prevent the detection of a nuclear missile launch against it. The response by that nation might be a pre-emptive nuclear strike.

With so much kit zooming about in the heavens above us the chances of collisions or malfunctions must be multiplied.

This, notes the article, is an important consideration “when all of this stuff is circling the world every 90 minutes, at a speed at which a rogue fragment the size of a marble could take out any satellite in its way.”

I think that people want peace so much that one of these days government had better get out of their way and let them have it.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Boost for Billionaire Boltholes

The ultra-rich, whose business activities, investments and lifestyles contribute in no small way to climate change are increasingly taking steps to try and survive the global catastrophe that they are helping to bring about.

Admittedly, Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos et al are engaged in various projects concerning green technologies and land restoration but the great contradiction lies in the fact that the billionaire class invests massively in the fossil fuel industry, in new weapons technologies and in AI-run defence systems. These, together with their conspicuous consumerism, their personal jets and their luxury yachts all combine to outweigh their climate damage mitigation efforts.

But it seems their faith in a positive outcome for the future of our planet is somewhat limited, judging by the investment so many are now pouring into doomsday bunkers.

Needless to say, we are no longer talking about featureless grey metal enclaves behind blast doors protecting massive stores of canned food.

We are talking absolute luxury. It’s still behind blast doors but there the similarity ends.

Mark Zuckerberg, for example, is building a \$300 million compound in Hawaii with a 5000 square foot subterranean bunker with its own energy, water and food infrastructure. Bill Gates has a bunker beneath each of his various residences to make sure he’s never going to be caught out.

Companies specialising in these boltholes for the mega rich provide prospectuses for underground living with saunas, shooting ranges, bowling alleys, swimming pools and, in one case, a child’s go-cart track modelled on the Monaco racing circuit. Clearly, there is a need for many distractions once the world above is either irradiated by nuclear war or fatally overheated.

A representative of one of the companies now specialising in billionaire security comments: “Today’s next level secure estates go beyond traditional risks. We’ve expanded into protecting against artificial superintelligence, arguably the most profound existential threat humanity has ever faced.”

So, one wonders, is Meta CEO Zuckerberg – who argues for AI to be available to all – now actually having to protect himself against his own superintelligent creation?

Anti-Zionism officially allowed

The Employment Appeal Tribunal has confirmed that being anti-Zionist is regarded as a protected belief. This stems from the case of political sociology professor David Miller who was dismissed from his post at Bristol University in 2024.

Prof Miller had described Zionism as “inherently racist, imperialist and colonial”. The University sacked him and he took his case to an Employment Tribunal citing unfair dismissal and discrimination.

The Tribunal found in his favour but the University appealed against this finding and the case was heard by the Employment Appeal Tribunal last November. The result of that appeal was only handed down in mid-August and the three-person panel rejected Bristol’s appeal on multiple grounds and upheld Prof Miller’s claim.

In so doing it backed the original Tribunal’s ruling that his opposition to Zionism was a genuinely held philosophical belief protected under the Equality Act 2010 and that his dismissal was a disproportionate response to his expressing this belief.

Our Australia Correspondent, life KPC member Harry Davis, has recently had a letter published in *The Canberra Times* as follows:

Nuclear Weaponry

Andy Burnham becomes the British Prime Minister with a vow to ease the economic burden on the British people. Well, he won’t have to look far for the funds to achieve his goal. Britain spends a crippling amount of its purse on ‘defence’, ranking fifth in the world for military spending (International Institute of Strategic Studies, 2025).

It was Atlee’s Labour government that decided that Britain needed the new nuclear weapon, perhaps understandably as the nation had just survived a fight for survival. But it has worked out badly.

Britain’s nuclear deterrent is not even independent as Britain has no guiding satellites and would rely on US permission to use their satellites in any firing.

It has become quite clear that any use of modern nuclear weapons would be catastrophic for all life. If Britain gave up its nuclear weaponry it would not only gain hugely financially but would also lead the world towards a safer future.

Harry Davis

Report from RAF Fairford

The London CND coach travelled to RAF Fairford full of campaigners sharing their stories and experiences with each other. On arriving at the base we put up many posters and banners on the perimeter fences under the watchful eye of the police. The gate we were designated to was little used, unfortunately, but did give us a view of the longest runway and the planes using it. There were coaches from Oxford, Bath, Bristol and others who had come separately. The plaques and messages were moving and heartbreaking, the pictures of the children killed devastating. Drummers joined us and the chants rose from the people, SHUT DOWN THE BASES. STOP ARMING ISRAEL. We heard the terrifying sound of the B52 aircraft start their engines. We imagined the fear felt by the people of the Middle East on hearing this huge killing machine. The speakers were inspiring and informative. Sophie Bolt CND spoke of UK’s complicity in an illegal war and the continuing sale of arms to Israel. Chris Nineham of Stop the War spoke of the continuing clamping down on the right to protest and the censorship of the media on the continuing killing of Palestinians. We were being silenced as we fear arrest for stepping over these restrictive new laws. The trade unions have at last spoken up opposing the war and sale of arms. This was against the advice of the TUC. Fairford Action told us of the impact of the US airbase on their lives. They have the roar of the huge aircraft taking off and returning day and night and the pollution of the air by fuel being jettisoned before landings can be smelt. Even waterways show evidence of pollution coming from the base.

We were directed to leave at 3 o’clock. We gathered our banners and returned to London, Bristol, Bath, Oxford and elsewhere. A feeling of SOLIDARITY and the inspiration to do more. WE WILL BE BACK.

Sheila Wright

KINGSTON PEACE COUNCIL / CND

Subscription rates £8 annually,
£10 family membership,
£3 unwaged

CHAIRPERSON and SECRETARY

Positions vacant

Please offer if you could help as
secretary. At present several
people are sharing these jobs.

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Disclaimer: The views
expressed in this edition are not
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Peace Council/CND

Help with the stall

Our regular KPC stall in
Kingston Market Place is
held on the first and third
Saturday of each month. If
you wish to join us to help
hand out leaflets to passers-
by please let us know.
Contact Angie Cooper on
0208 399 5537 or email:
angecooper47@hotmail.com

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 12th September

Keeping the Peace, Activists, Pacifists and Peacemakers.

A London walk exploring the stories of those who challenged militarism and worked for peace, remembrance and reconstruction from the streets and squares of Bloomsbury. Starting point: Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL 2pm – duration 2 hours. Lead by humanist heritage expert Madeleine Goodall. Places are bookable from £14.

Contact: <https://www.conwayhall.org.uk/whats-on/>

Saturday 19th September

International Day of Peace (September 21st) will be commemorated on KPC's regular stall in Kingston Market Place. 11am – 1pm. In addition to the range of leaflets we will set up a Peace Tree inviting passers-by to leave a message on dove-of-peace shaped notes that are then hung on the tree. Offers to help on the day should be sent to Angie Cooper on angecooper47@hotmail.com

Quaker Silent Walking Vigil for Peace. Showing solidarity and care for everyone impacted by violence, conflict and war. Walk with us. Witness for peace. Central London. 2.00– 4.00pm. Register for updates and tell us you hope to attend the vigil [here](https://www.quaker.org.uk/what-we-do/peace-and-justice/silent-walking-vigil). Explore Frequently Asked Questions [here](https://www.quaker.org.uk/what-we-do/peace-and-justice/silent-walking-vigil).

Sunday 4th October

CND Annual Conference. Online. Free. CND's Conference and policy making event. Register: <https://cnduk.org/cnd-conference-2026/>

Saturday 17th October

ICAHN UK Conference. Empowering Palestinians in their Struggle for Justice. The event will examine what can be done to empower the Palestinians as Israel moves to the last stage of implementing its settler colonial and apartheid policies over them. We will also address how to respond to the criminalisation of those who demonstrate solidarity for Palestinians. Wesley Hotel and Conference Centre, 81-103 Euston Street, London NW1 2EZ GB. 10:15am – 4:45pm (doors open 9:30am). Tickets: Members & Students - £15, Non-members - £20. A drink provided on arrival, bring a packed lunch. Contact: <https://icahn.org/2019/10/01/upcoming-events/>

Wednesday 11th November

A Concert for Remembrance Day. Cadogan Hall. 5 Sloane Terrace, London SW1X 9DQ. The City of London Choir presents two British war requiems to commemorate the Armistice of 11th November 1918. *Dona nobis pacem* is Vaughan Williams' heartfelt response to his own experience of the First World War, written in the shadow of a looming second global conflict. A powerful and dramatic work, it starkly decries the cruelty of war; its insistent cry is for peace among nations and goodwill to all. Gerald Finzi was deeply affected by the deaths of close family and friends. His secular *Requiem* is an exquisite example of his gift for poetry and melody combined in a poignant lament for lost youth and for the centuries-old pattern of rural life, irreversibly changed by the destructive havoc of war. Bookable: ticket prices start at £24.50. Contact: <https://cadoganhall.com/whats-on/a-concert-for-remembrance-day/#details>

STOP PRESS

Recently *The Sunday Times* could barely contain its excitement that British made drones were being used by Ukraine to attack targets deep inside Russia. The article read like a sales pitch for BAE Systems, which in a sense it was. The UK's military top brass has been banging on for years that we should be ready for war with Russia. It seems that, using Ukraine as an excuse, they and the Establishment media, are doing all they can to make that a reality.