



Pax Scotia

Issue 11

Inside:

Exploring trauma: the key to nonviolence

- P2

Non-Violence, Delusion and Kenmure St

- P3



A new report from the UK & Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) says a wide range of nuclear materials are being transported in increasing incidences around the UK and Europe, and from the UK to other countries. There is clearly concern that this offers more opportunities for accidents or malicious incidents.

Nuclear transport is of particular concern to the NFLA as radioactive materials are at their most vulnerable when they are being transported off site, as they are away from dedicated safe storage facilities and are in an 'uncontrolled' environment where they face a greater level of risk.

Road convoys in Scotland, such as the one pictured above, are questioned & new risks such as volatile temperatures due to climate change are noted. Find the full report at <https://www.nuclearpolicy.info>

Taking action – non-violently & for the sake of peace

By Marian
Pallister
Pax Christi Scotland
chair

Peace – what exactly do we mean by the word? Look it up in the dictionary and there are many definitions. There is 'freedom from war', 'tranquillity', 'mental calm', 'quiet', 'silence', 'concord', 'reconciliation' and 'harmony', to name just a small selection.

In this edition of *Pax Scotia* alone, we look at a range of meanings of 'peace'. Hugh Foy explores nonviolence as a means of seeking peaceful solutions (P3). June Graham reflects on a documentary that examines peace of mind (P2). And on July 25, Pax Christi Scotland will host a Zoom vigil to pray for peace in Korea – a peninsula that has been in a state of limbo for seven decades because an armistice has never become a peace treaty. The fragility of Korea's 'peace' is also threatened by the presence of unwelcome nuclear weapons (P4).

On our website, we reiterate the aims of Pax Christi International, which we of course share – to promote peace, to respect human rights, and to seek justice and reconciliation throughout the world.

Sometimes these aims may seem far too grand – and too difficult – for a small peace organisation in a small country. But we are part of something much bigger. Pax Christi International has over 120 members (two equally small members, Korea and Scotland, were granted membership at the same time, which is one reason why we feel such an affinity for their situation), and together we can move mountains.

Hugh Foy reminds us of the successful nonviolent protest that changed a very difficult situation in Glasgow. Neighbours came to together to achieve that peaceful outcome. If we as members of Pax Christi Scotland come together and use our voices, our emails, our letters, and our Zoom events, then we too can achieve many different forms of peace – all forms of 'the Peace of Christ', Pax Christi.

Marian Pallister

Pax Christi Scotland Peace issues

Exploring trauma – the key to nonviolence?

Pax Christi Scotland member June Graham, from the Isle of Lewis, reviews a film with a peace message

I signed up to watch the *Wisdom of Trauma** premiere and related talks for personal reasons. As I watched, it became apparent that some of the ideas were relevant to peace and justice. The message of the film was that unresolved trauma can isolate a person from themselves, others and their environment. One of the speakers made the further connection that being isolated from your true self is to be cut off from God. Unresolved trauma can lead to problems such as mental and physical illness, addictions and behavioural issues in school children.

This is not just a personal health issue. Some of the most moving scenes in the film showed prisoners acknowledging their childhood traumas as part of the Compassionate Prison Project. The film made the point that, rather than just looking at where people are now, we should ask how they got there. Viewing problems such as crime, homelessness and drug addiction in this way would help us build more compassionate systems.

When we think of trauma, we often think of domestic violence or sudden bereavements. However, it can also be subtle. The film suggested trauma is built into our modern way of life with emphasis on the individual over communities as well as mistaken advice such as letting an infant cry.

Even the way we treat the earth is a sign of the collective trauma that has separated us from the natural world.

In the related talks, speakers connected issues such as armed conflict and addiction in indigenous communities to trauma caused by historical injustices. One speaker talked about epigenetics** and how trauma experienced by a parent can be passed on to their children through switching genes on and off. Another suggested that racism grew out of unresolved trauma experienced by poor white communities before they emigrated to the US.

Some of the ideas presented in the film were potentially controversial, such as the use of psychedelics to treat trauma. The overall message was positive, that by acknowledging and working through trauma individually and collectively we could release energy for the common good.

*You can find *The Wisdom of Trauma* at <https://wisdomoftrauma.com/movie/>

** *Epigenetics is the study of how our behaviours and environment can cause changes that affect the way our genes work. Unlike genetic changes, epigenetic changes are reversible and do not change our DNA sequence, but they can change how our bodies read a DNA sequence.*

Non-Violence, Delusion and Kenmure St

Hugh Foy, Pax Christi Scotland executive committee member, reflects on the concept of nonviolence

In a recent interview, the questioner quoted the philosopher Susan Sontag, who once stated that 'to believe in pacifism puts you on the side of the politically delusional', a claim that many who self-identify as pacifists - and others who whilst avoiding that label are deeply committed to personal and political nonviolence - have heard many times before. It is a constant refrain, this accusation of delusion, naivety, ineffectiveness, and sometimes even cowardice!

The academic and activist Professor Richard Jackson (Director of the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Otago in New Zealand), who was on the receiving end of that quoted accusation from Susan Sontag, replied, 'Pacifism provides one of the few approaches that has the realistic potential to transform our violent global and domestic orders towards a more positively peaceful and socially just future...because it contains the possibility of expanding social possibilities beyond prevailing forms of political power rooted in domination.'

In that response, Jackson - a long-time advocate and academic researcher in nonviolence - speaks for many of us involved in JustPeace work and campaigning, whether secular or religious. It is a response that succinctly names the domination drive that motivates the forms of power in which violence often manifests.

However, it is also a response that points to a hope that there remains a different 'way', a way that relinquishes the tactics of violence, whether verbal, physical or passive aggressive, and seeks a counter-cultural alternative. This alternative places at its heart a challenge to and renunciation of the 'othering' born of fear of difference, and renounces the demonising that turns opponents into enemies.

As an alternative that intentionally commits to nurturing human dignity and the protection of dignity in the midst of all conflict, personal and political, it is also for us in Pax Christi the call to action and mission, and to all Christians to live out the Gospel Non-Violence lived and preached by Jesus.

Many will have seen the recent events in Kenmure Street in Glasgow that successfully freed two men who had been seized by immigration officials during a Home Office raid; a raid that took place on one of the holiest days in the Islamic faith.

The tactics used on the day were the very tactics of non-violence that so many believe are ineffective. Without in any way abusing the immigration enforcement officers who carried out this raid, members of the local community gathered and stood between the officials and the police (there in numbers to 'keep the peace') and demanded the release of the two men.

This community had prepared for such an event. Many are part of local refugee support groups and are trained, and they were the people who let their neighbours know what was happening and who directed the protest. The vast majority, however, were simply neighbours exercising their conscience, who when the chant went up, 'These are our neighbours, let them go', came on to the street to peacefully and respectfully say 'Not to our neighbours and not in our name'.

As a young man lay on the road under the immigration enforcement van for hours to stop the officers leaving with the detained men, the human rights lawyer Aamer Anwar negotiated the men's release and the agreement that they would not be pursued in future. All this happened while people shared water and food and talked, a community being community while it peacefully changed the world.

Susan Sontag clearly had never met anyone from Kenmure Street.

See interview with Professor Richard Jackson at <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/histories-of-violence-the-revolutionary-potential-of-pacifism/>

See also Pax Christi Scotland chair, Marian Pallister, writing on the Justice & Peace Scotland website: <https://www.justiceandpeacescotland.org.uk/Home/ctl/details/itemid/3458/mid/531/its-good-to-talk>

A Pax Christi Scotland Zoom Vigil in solidarity with Pax Christi Korea

Pax Christi Scotland has been working ecumenically to promote the Korea Peace Appeal, and on **Sunday, July 25 at 12 noon** our time, we will host a Zoom vigil to reflect on the Korean situation and to pray for peace.

This is in the spirit of Pope Francis's prayer intention for July – *'We pray that, in social, economic and political situations of conflict, we may be courageous and passionate architects of dialogue and friendship.'*

Our speakers are **Sandy Sneddon**, Church of Scotland Asia Secretary, Faith Impact Forum, **Anselmo Lee**, founder of Pax Christi Korea and Asia Coordinator at Asia Civil Society Partnership for Sustainable Development, **Bishop William Nolan**, Bishop of Galloway and a strong anti-nuclear campaigner, and **Nick Mele**, who spent many years in Korea as a US diplomat, before retiring to pursue peace outside of government as a faith-based activist with Pax Christi US and Pax Christi International.

The National Council of Churches in Korea has been exerting its strength on behalf of peace and reconciliation for the Korean Peninsula along with the ecumenical community and peace-loving forces in the world. The Korea Peace Appeal campaign will last until July 27, 2023, the 70th anniversary of the Korea Armistice (see link on our website: <https://www.paxchristiscotland.org/>).

Sorry - the timing is difficult because we are accommodating time zones around the world – but please join us & register with this Zoom link:

When: **July 25, 2021 12:00 London time**
Register in advance for this meeting:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81221304000>
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Peace Diary Dates (Don't miss details for late August & September events in our next newsletter)

July 1 – The Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy, which like Pax Christi International is a member of the European Peace Liaison Bureau, is organising an event on July 1, 17.00 hours UK time, with Ray Acheson (well known ICAN activist), speaking to Kristina Lunz, co-founder and German Co-Executive Director of the CFFP, about their new book 'Banning the Bomb, Smashing the Patriarchy'.

Get information at:

<https://centreforfeministforeignpolicy.org/cffp-events/2021/7/1/banning-the-bomb-smashing-the-patriarchy-an-evening-with-ray-acheson-and-their-new-book>

August 3 – A diary date: St Margaret's, Lochgilphead (Argyll & the Isles Diocese) is hosting ***Caring For Our Common Home – COP26 & rural communities***.

Aug 3, 2021 19:00 UK time

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81221304000>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

August 29 – Pax Christi Scotland has a distinguished international panel of speakers lined up to discuss Clause 6 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which addresses compensation for veterans of weapons of mass destruction tests, and restitution of radiation-damaged land. Details in our next newsletter.

September 18 – Diary date: The Committee for Interreligious Dialogue will hold an on-line colloquium entitled *Interreligious Dialogue in the Time of Pope Francis*, featuring Dr Peter Admirand & Fr Robert Afayori.

Our website & our postal address

Blogs, podcasts, past and future events – these are all on our Pax Christi Scotland website. All newsletters are archived there. You can pay your membership on the Membership page and make donations. Please explore and share:

<https://www.paxchristiscotland.org/>

Continued thanks to webmaster Chris Boles of Caledonian Computers -

<https://www.caledoniancomputers.com/>

See our change of postal address below left.

Where to find Pax Christi Scotland:

www.paxchristiscotland.org

<https://www.facebook.com/PaxChristiScotland>

[@PaxScotland](https://twitter.com/PaxScotland) (Twitter)

Pax Christi Scotland, c/o Xaverian Missionaries,
Calder Avenue, Coatbridge ML5 4JS

Pax Christi Scotland now has a Youtube Channel where you can find recordings of past events. Find us at:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCcmLpQv27Py_ul14szp95g

If you subscribe to the channel (just click on the word 'Subscribed'), you will be informed whenever a new recording is posted.