



# Pax Scotia

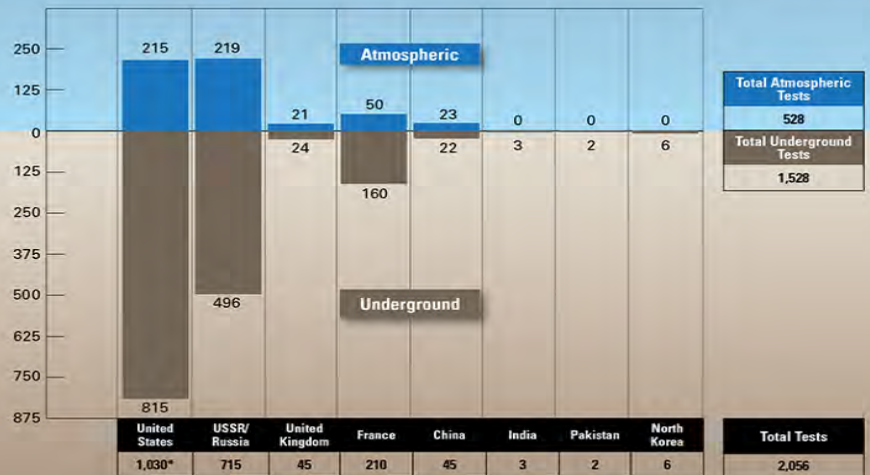
Issue 12

## Inside:

Cross-border collaboration to achieve peace - P2  
Nuclear inheritance of Indigenous Peoples - P3

## Nuclear Testing Tally 1945–2017

Arms Control  
Association



\*The United States total does not include the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

**On August 29**, Pax Christi Scotland's on-line event will explore Clause 6 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons – seeking compensation for victims of nuclear testing and reparation of lands damaged by nuclear testing (see P4). The table above shows the number of tests between 1945 and 2017. A podcast on our website describes the very first test. These new fact sheets offer guidelines: [http://hrp.law.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/TPNW-VA-factsheet\\_7-21.pdf](http://hrp.law.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/TPNW-VA-factsheet_7-21.pdf) & [http://hrp.law.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/TPNW-ER-factsheet\\_7-21.pdf](http://hrp.law.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/TPNW-ER-factsheet_7-21.pdf)

## No first use – A useful steppingstone?

By Rosalyn Mauchline  
Pax Christi Scotland  
executive committee  
member

I recently attended the international launch of a new initiative - NoFirstUse Launch Global.\* Their focus is on the adoption of no-first-use policies by nuclear-armed states and building support for no-first-use in nuclear allied states. As an organisation, Pax Christ Scotland obviously would wish to see an end to possession of nuclear weapons, as Pax Christi International has discussed in relation to this initiative - but as we all know, that effort is a marathon not a sprint and there are many challenges to be overcome.

And so, the launch of NoFirstUse explored why an agreement on not using the weapons as a first strike can be an important step towards nuclear disarmament, and that it is important in its own right, as the possibility of an 'accidental first strike' has already been averted on more than one occasion.

We saw short videos of support from international speakers ranging from scientists to politicians. For me the most memorable was retired Royal Navy Commander Robert Forsyth, who in 1970s was employed in a Polaris Submarine. He described how he was responsible for the 'permission to fire' key that would have released 48 300kiloton warheads.

He described how he did this on understanding that he would only be asked to do so as a counter-attack in retaliation against an incoming Soviet attack. He said he would have withheld permission had this been part of a first strike, but was shocked to discover that first strike had 'secretly' been part of UK policy all along but 'had not been openly declared as such'.

He added that first strike remains policy in a 'case of last resort'.

Robert Forsyth feels that for the present day commanders of UK nuclear submarines, this is an impossible situation, as submerged for long periods they will not know the consequences of the launches and 'cannot make the legal and moral decisions' they are required to make. That's why he fully supports this being the time for a universal no first strike use policy. I recommend listening to his account on YouTube\*\* and we would like to hear YOUR thoughts.

*Rosalyn Mauchline*

- [https://nofirstuse.global/why-no-first-use/?fbclid=IwAR3Ksi4Dd0LRE4RFFZrBqHFSB3YK4yFLfKoaUvoB1h7dIYp83\\_uDCLdNNo4](https://nofirstuse.global/why-no-first-use/?fbclid=IwAR3Ksi4Dd0LRE4RFFZrBqHFSB3YK4yFLfKoaUvoB1h7dIYp83_uDCLdNNo4)
- \*\* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWNTfV7Azp4>

## Pax Christi Scotland Peace issues

### Solidarity: working across borders to achieve universal peace

**Elio Pagani** of Pax Christi Italy has written an extensive report on the work of the organisation in Italy – a country which to date has refused to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Because we share the task of seeking universal peace and the abolition of weapons of mass destruction, Pax Christi Scotland recently joined a Europe-wide on-line meeting organised by Pax Christi Italy. Here we explore Elio Pagani's report. We share some actions, could replicate others. Together we can achieve our goal of a nuclear-free world.



Left: **Elio Pagani**

Right: the emblem of  
**Pax Christi Italia**



#### The situation in Italy

A partially secret treaty called "Stone Ax" is in force between Italy and the USA. There is, or has been, indirect hosting of ships with nuclear weapons in eleven Italian ports.

Although the Italian government has consistently refused to sign the TPNW, around 200 local authorities (out of 7904 municipalities, 20 regions and 88 provinces) have issued resolutions asking the government to sign the treaty. In a recent poll concerning the hosting of US nuclear weapons by Italy, 87% of Italians asked the government to sign the TPNW, with 76% asking that US weapons located in Italy be removed.

Italy, like the other 29 members of the NATO Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) and as a supporter of the Nuclear Sharing System, considers the presence of the B61 bombs to be legitimate and is preparing to accept their replacement with the new B61-12 bombs; is deploying the F35s that will carry them; is specifically training Italian pilots; and is expanding the bases that will host them, while trying to maintain an unacceptable level of secrecy. Prime Minister Mario Draghi recently gave full support of the country's membership of NATO, of which it is a very active member.

**Pax Christi Italia** participates in peace conferences, activates campaigns and demonstrations, and its coordinator has denounced the nuclear situation in interviews on TV and the press, calling for the Italian government to sign the TPNW. He has talked with Pope Francis on the subject of disarmament, welcomed the Vatican's ratification of the TPNW, and has successfully sought the support of the Italian Bishops to seek the Italian government's ratification of the treaty.

An 'Armed Banks' Campaign has been relaunched – a movement that, like Don't Bank On The Bomb, seeks banks' divestment from companies involved in production of nuclear weapons. Pax Christi Italia, like Pax Christi Scotland, works with other Catholic organisations to seek support for a non-nuclear world. PCI takes a very firm stance against NATO and suggests that signing the TPNW is not compatible with NATO membership. Elio Pagani's report concludes that NATO's hostility to the TPNW '...represents a clear political position that needs a political response expressed in a real non-violent conflict that calls those responsible for these choices by name and that goes beyond the limits of action based on advocacy and simple "Active Citizenship".'

## Nuclear tests: The legacy inherited by the world's indigenous peoples

**Marian Pallister**, Pax Christi Scotland's chair, reflects on the horrific effects suffered by the world's most vulnerable people.



As you will see on Page 4 of this edition of *Pax Scotia*, Pax Christi Scotland will host a Zoom conversation that explores the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons' clause seeking compensation for veterans of nuclear testing, and reparation of lands affected by such tests – and as the table on Page 1 from the Arms Control Association shows, over 2000 such tests have been carried out around the world since 1945.

We know that UK service personnel (mainly men) who were present at such tests were affected by radiation, and they took those effects home. The health of some of their families was severely compromised.

But the majority of those who suffered were Indigenous Peoples. Peoples treated without respect in the United States, Canada, Australia, the South Pacific, North Africa and elsewhere. Peoples often not even told about the nuclear tests that were to take place; not told about the possible immediate effects – let alone the potential long-term effects on their health and their lands.

The consequences for peoples who are already three times as likely to be living in poverty compared to their non-indigenous counterparts have been, and continue to be, devastating.

In the early years after testing took place, birth defects were monstrous. Instances of cancer were catastrophically high. And of course, livelihoods were lost because their lands were so badly affected by radiation. Some of these effects continue to this day.

Nuclear nations' governments have mostly refused compensation. Now the TPNW makes it a legal requirement. No money can make up for lost babies, early bereavements, lack of fish in the sea. But surely **we** can raise our voices to make sure justice is done?

August 9 is the UN's International Day of Indigenous Peoples.

One of Pax Christi Scotland's main aims is to address discrimination in all its forms, whether on our own doorstep or around the world. If we seek compensation for our own nuclear test veterans, we must seek compensation for all.

### Indigenous Peoples affected by nuclear testing & uranium mining

*All Indigenous Peoples have experienced effects described referring to Australian Aborigines.*

#### **Australian Aborigines, Maralinga:**

About 1,200 Aboriginal people were exposed to radiation during testing. Radioactive fallout caused sore eyes, skin rashes, diarrhoea, vomiting, fever and the early death of entire families. The explosion caused blindness. Long-term illnesses such as cancer and lung disease were found in the 1980s, a time when some Elders grew restless and walked back into their still contaminated country.

<https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/history/maralinga-how-british-nuclear-tests-changed-history-forever>

Native Americans

Mexico

South Pacific Islands – Marshall Islands

(<https://www.atomicatolls.org/>)

North Africa

Russia

China

North Korea

India

Pakistan

Iran

Israel

DR Congo

Central & South America

<https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/nuclear-war-uranium-mining-and-nuclear-tests-indigenous>

## ***Pax Christi Scotland explores TPNW's Clause 6 – our nuclear test veterans & the world situation***

Licorne test, 1971, French Polynesia.

**PHOTO:** The Official CTBTO Photostream



The United Nations International Day Against Nuclear Testing is on August 29 – and Pax Christi Scotland will mark the day with a Zoom conference that explores Clause 6 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

That's the Clause in the treaty that seeks compensation for veterans of weapons of mass destruction tests, and restitution of lands damaged by nuclear testing.

As you can see on the UN's official website (<https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-nuclear-tests-day>), little consideration was given to the devastating effects on human life or the dangers of nuclear fallout from atmospheric tests. From the first tests in 1945, there were tragic and terrifying effects – and little respect given to indigenous peoples on whose lands tests were often carried out. Today's weapons are even more powerful and destructive. On August 29 we will be joined by UK test veteran **John Lax**, the widow of a Scottish test veteran who campaigned for compensation, **Mary MacPherson**, **Dr Becky Alexis-Martin**, a lecturer in cultural and political geography at Manchester Metropolitan University, with expertise in the cultural and social effects of nuclear warfare, & **Jonathan Frerichs**, a Pax Christi International representative at the United Nations in Geneva for disarmament, & a consultant for the World Council of Churches' Commission of the Churches on International Affairs.

Join us at 7pm UK time by registering for our Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcldOGrrzsoHNwirKCodEFi7E-C124EVC0n>

You'll get an email with the joining link for the meeting.

## **Peace Diary Dates**

**The effects of climate change on peace; the devastation of nuclear tests; & the importance of dialogue**

**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/meeting/register/tZMtdO6pqzsjG90EMh9Aub3\\_pCB0Z8dw2v52](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMtdO6pqzsjG90EMh9Aub3_pCB0Z8dw2v52)

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

\* Nuclear weapons and climate change links will be the focus of a Pax Christi International campaign ahead of COP26. Watch out on our social media pages for links to videos.

**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. **See opposite.**

**September 18** Diary date: The Scottish Bishops' Conference's 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. Pope Francis has said 'To dialogue it is necessary to know how to lower the defences, open the doors of the house, and offer human warmth.' It is the aim of the Committee to offer that human warmth. Link details to follow.

## **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 annual membership fee 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](http://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](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.