



NONVIOLENT NEWS

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AFRI EXPLODES ARMS MYTHS; WHAT PRICE NEUTRALITY?

The myth that the Republic is uninvolvement in the international arms trade has been exploded by a report issued by AFRI (Action from Ireland) in late July. "Links: Ireland's links with the arms trade and military industry" reveals that over a dozen companies in the Republic are involved in the manufacture and export of parts for weapons systems. The report is available from AFRI, price £5 including postage; AFRI, 16 Harcourt Road, Dublin 2. Phone 01-478 5100 / 478 5141; Fax 01 478 5142.

Despite clear denials of Irish involvement, e.g. in the recent White Paper on Foreign Policy, AFRI's report reveals that armoured vehicle technology, military avionics, radar equipment and gun turret components are among some of the products being made and exported by Irish firms. While these products can be categorised as 'dual use', i.e. they can be used for either civilian or military applications, it is clear that Irish components end up in military use. In one instance, Irish-made radar equipment has ended up in the armed forces of repressive states such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

The research shows a particular concentration of hi-tech electronics and aerospace firms in the Cork and Clare/Shannon areas involved in goods with a military end use. Many of the firms named are subsidised by taxpayers' money through the IDA/Industrial Development Authority. The report also details the detrimental long-term industrial and economic effects of reliance on military links although the employment repercussions of disengagement would not at the moment be significant. The report also covers the North where Shorts in Belfast may have increasing reliance on military production following the demise of work for Fokker.

"As a justice, peace and human rights organisation, AFRI appeals to the European Union, not to shy away from, but rather to tackle the issue of the Arms trade which wreaks such havoc, especially among the peoples of the Majority World. AFRI also calls on the government and the Industrial Development Authority to ensure that Ireland discontinues its involvement in the Arms industry and that the IDA ensure that companies do not engage in military-related production for export. Finally we appeal directly to the companies named in this report and to others who are involved in this area to contemplate the consequences of this lethal trade and refuse to be part of this destructive industry" said Joe Murray, coordinator of AFRI.

Meanwhile, Oxfam Ireland and Concern Worldwide have urged the Irish government in its presidency of the EU to support stronger EU involvement in international conflict resolution and prevention. They argue that the Common Foreign and Security Policy has substituted a humanitarian aid programme for political action to deal with the causes of war and conflict; *"it has focused excessively in recent years on the perceived threat to Fortress Europe and has largely neglected the global challenges of poverty and conflict"*. They argue that more determined preventive diplomacy should be combined with a concerted attempt within organisations such as the World Bank and IMF to ensure poverty reduction.

HIROSHIMA, NAGASAKI COMMEMORATIONS

The 51st anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing on 6th August sees the launch of a petition calling for a worldwide ban on nuclear weapons by the year 2000, ("Abolition 2,000") bolstered by a landmark decision by the International Court of Justice in the Hague on 8th July which declared the possession of nuclear weapons illegal. Irish events marking Hiroshima day include:

DUBLIN: Children will lay a wreath at the base of a cherry tree planted by Irish CND in memory of the victims of Hiroshima in Merrion Square at 1 pm. Participants will include the Lord Mayor of Dublin, the president of Irish CND, and members of the London-Dublin-Belfast Peace Walk.

CORK: A ceremony will be held at the city's Peace Park at 7.30 pm (South Mall end of Grand Parade), including a talk by Adi Roche and the laying of a wreath by the Lord Mayor of Cork. Details: Clare Benjamin at Irish CND, Phone 021-506 411, Fax 021-551544 (8 Sidneyville, Bellevue Park, St Lukes, Cork).

CITIZENS ASSEMBLY, BELFAST

Thursday 8th and Friday 9th August see a Citizens Assembly, inspired by Ulster's artistic community, taking place in the Mandela Hall in Queen's Students Union, and sponsored by Rostrevor Cross-Cultural Group. It kicks off on Thursday evening, 8th August from 7 - 10 pm with musicians, songwriters, poets, playwrights, dancers and speakers. On Friday 9th August there is a consensus politics session from 9.30 am - 5.30 pm. Creche and food available and all are welcome (no charge). Further information from Rachel at 01232 - 665161. Participants include; Tommy Sands, Roy Garland, Tony McAuley, Marie Jones, Peter Emerson, Kate Kelly, Denise Green, Roy Arbuckle, Sam McAughtry, Michael Longley.

On the Friday people can join any political grouping they wish; these will then choose their constitutional option and elect 1 man and 1 woman to represent them, wherupon the session will move to all-party talks. Each delegation will put forward their proposals, displayed on a computer screen; after a good debate; and when the list represents the diversity of opinion in the room, there will be a multi-option vote to see which option has the highest average preference amongst everybody.

IN THE LINE OF FIRE

"In the line of fire; Derry, July 1996" is the latest report from the Pat Finucane Centre (PFC); this is the result of over 100 witness statements and interviews regarding events in Derry following Drumcree. A conservative estimate in the report is that there were at least 332 civilian injuries from plastic bullets that weekend. The official RUC statistics show 18 RUC officers injured and they admit that at least 2,500 plastic bullets were fired in Derry; both PFC and CAJ (The Committee on the Administration of Justice), who helped take statements and who will be publishing their own report, would suggest a higher number of plastic bullets were fired but the relevant figure is the number of civilian injuries. The report also covers the death of Dermot McShane, and intimidation. It is available at £2 plus 50 pence postage from; Pat Finucane Centre, 1 West End park, Derry BT48 9JF. Phone 01504 - 268846, fax 266453.

GLENCREE SUMMER SCHOOL; HEALING THE WOUNDS

"Healing the wounds of political conflict: Forgiveness in the peace process" is the title of the third Glencree Summer School taking place at Glencree Centre for Reconciliation, Enniskerry, Co Wicklow from 26 - 28 August. The sessions include, *Healing the crimes of political violence* (including truth commissions and international experiences), *How do we move toward forgiveness* (a dialogue between different Christian projects), *Acknowledging past hurts and traumas* (the dynamics of the healing process), *Dialogue with political parties*, and *A Festschrift of political healing*. Residential attendance fee £75 - £95, non-residential including all meals £45, Monday only £15, Monday and Tuesday £30 (inc. meals). Closing date; 12th August. Contact; Susan Fitzgerald, Glencree, Exchequer Chambers, 19/23 Exchequer Street, Dublin 2. Phone 01 - 662 0355 / 679 7148, fax 679 8004.

KINGDOM OF THE LAMB RETREAT

A silent Eucharistic Adoration retreat on Christian nonviolence will be preached by Rev Fr Emmanuel Charles McCarthy at the SMA House, Maynooth from Friday night 13th - Sunday afternoon 15th September. This is a follow up weekend for those who have attended Fr McCarthy's 'Behold the Lamb' retreat at Knock and for those who have listened to this retreat on tape. £20 booking deposit payable by mid-August to; Margaret de Brún, 50 Upper Mountpleasant Avenue, Dublin 6 (subsequent payment by anonymous envelope donation). Enquiries about availability of tapes to; Peter and Vera McGuinness, 8 Moneynoe Park, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh, BT74 4ER. Phone 01365 - 323489.

NO TIME TO PLAY

A conference exploring children in work, here and in the developing world, will take place on Wednesday 13 November from 9.30 am - 5.00 pm in Stranmillis College, Belfast. 73 million children work worldwide; some of them live in your community. For further information contact: Stephen McCloskey, One World Centre, 4 Lower Crescent, Belfast BT7 1NR. Phone 01232 - 241879. E-mail: (Geonet) GEO2:ONEWORLDBELFAST or (GreeNet) belfastdec@gn.apc.org

GET THE SPIES TO DO THE WORK

One ludicrous fact from the McLibel (McDonalds) trial in London is that three out of four people present at a London Greenpeace meeting in 1990 were undercover agents of McDonalds; their involvement included distributing the factsheet which McDonalds objected to! McLibel Support Campaign, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX (Ph/Fax 0171 - 713 1269). Info and developments on the Web at <http://www.mcspotlight.org> [Source; Peace News, July 1998]

Nonviolent News is produced at least 10 times a year by INNATE, an Irish Network for Nonviolent Action Training and Education, 18 Ravensdale Park, Belfast BT6 0DA, Phone/Fax 01232 - 847108; your news welcome. Deadline for next issue; 1st September. Subscriptions; £5 or enquire for further details, or about resources available on nonviolence.