

CATHOLIC WORKER



Rioting in Tottenham Goes National

When police shot and killed Mark Duggan in Tottenham, and then refused to talk to the family, the ensuing riots sparked a national debate. This article is an attempt to reflect on events that began in our locality.

After having the inevitable and frustrating conversation with my Granny about the riots - the one where she says, "it wasn't like this in the 1930s, children did what their parents said", "why do you want to live in Hackney?" etc, and I can't argue because she's my Gran - I needed to write something...

According to my Gran, there used to be lines of starving, emaciated men waiting in queues patiently to find work. Nowadays, the young don't even want to work. In the old days you would never have gone out if your parents told you to stay in, nowadays kids have no respect. They're not starving, they've got loads of stuff - they're just greedy, lazy and selfish.

So why the change, what has happened to make us (and she does include in me in 'the youth' still!) so disrespectful and selfish? And, depending on which media you read/watch, are these rioters disrespectful, (cont p5)

A Message From Lillian Lyons

It is important for both Michael and I to let you know how much we appreciate your support whilst my husband is locked up in Military prison. Every message, letter and show of face means the world to us and is really helping us to get through this crazy time in our lives.

I am sure most of you know why Michael has been punished by the Royal Navy so I won't waste your time regurgitating the details of his case, the intimidating Court Martials or the legality of his defence. Instead I will tell you a bit about how Michael's conscience led him to a incredibly unjust sentence.

Mike has served as a Medic in the Submarine Service for nearly 7 years. It sounds clichéd but he really (cont p8)

Mourn the Dead! Heal the Wounded! End the Wars!

On September 11th. a small group of Catholic Workers and friends made their way into the U.S. embassy in London. We went to the embassy on the 10th. anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Centre, to mourn the dead of New York City and those who have become roadkill in the U.S. backlash massacres that have followed. This is the 10th anniversary of the "war without end!"

As we approached the embassy we passed a pub full of English Defence League and met police barricades impeding our path. We soon realised that some of the key people presently prosecuting these wars were to assemble in the park in front of the embassy - PM David Cameron, Prince Charles, the U.S. Ambassador et al. We backed off and began to make our way to the far corner of the embassy. We were immediately tracked on CCTV and detained for "suspicion of possessing weapons".

While being detained we unfurled our banner "Mourn the Dead!, Heal the Wounded!, End the Wars!" (cont p7)



Discovering the Catholic Worker

It was while on retreat at Easter that I picked up the newsletter for London Catholic Worker. I had been trying to discern my next step in life, but I had never heard of the Catholic Worker movement. I started to read the lead article about the opening of their house of hospitality for refugees in London, not just a report on its opening, but a real testimony to the people who had inspired it and how they each had struggled (cont p6)

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London Catholic Worker:

We are: Angela Broome, Simon Watson, Henrietta Cullinan, Chris Goodchild, Scott and Maria Albrecht, Martin Newell, Soo Tian Lee, Sean O'Malley, Ciaron O'Reilly, Mirjam Johansson, Dan Viesnik, Andrew Russell, Paulo Oliveira

Dorothy Day House

16 De Beauvoir Road,
De Beauvoir Town, London N1 5SU
Tel: 020 7249 0041 Email:
londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk

We are: Dan Viesnik Michael Omari

Giuseppe Conlon House

49 Mattison Road, London N4 1BG
Tel: 020 8348 8212 Email:
londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk
Dorothy Day House and Giuseppe Conlon House offer hospitality to destitute refugees, mainly men. We run Peter's Community Café and the Urban Table Soup Kitchen. We organise regular non-violent resistance, and produce this newsletter.

We are: Martin Newell, Sean O Malley, Ciaron O'Reilly, Soo Tian Lee, Andrew Russell, Paulo Oliveira

Catholic Worker Farmhouse:

Lynsters Farm, Old Uxbridge Road,
West Hyde, Herts, WD3 9XJ
Tel: 01923 777 201 Email:
thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk

We are: Scott & Maria Albrecht and family, Mirjam Johanssen

The Farmhouse offers hospitality to destitute women. We vigil regularly at the nearby Northwood Joint Forces Military HQ. We also grow organic vegetables and have a poustinia.

Maryhouse is an extension of our work, and offers a home to four destitute women with children.

Peter's Community Café:

Open Mon-Weds 12noon-5.30pm
The Crypt, St Peter's Church,
Northchurch Terrace, De Beauvoir
Town, N1 5AT Tel: 020 7249 0041

Urban Table Soup Kitchen:

Open Sun. 2.30pm-4.30pm
The Old School Rooms, The Round
Chapel, Powerscroft Road, Hackney,
London E5 0PU

Peter's Cafe and the Urban Table are both attempts to imitate Jesus' practice of sharing his table with all comers. At the Café in particular we also hope to offer a space to build bridges between the disparate groups and individuals in our local community, as well as welcoming activists.

Anti-©opywrite For Action

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Render Unto Caesar?

Aside from numerous verses on love and forgiveness, Christian anarchists point to passages in Old and New Testaments to further validate their interpretation of Christianity. The most significant of these will be reviewed here – more can be found in Christian anarchist literature.

One example concerns one of Jesus' wilderness temptations, which reads:

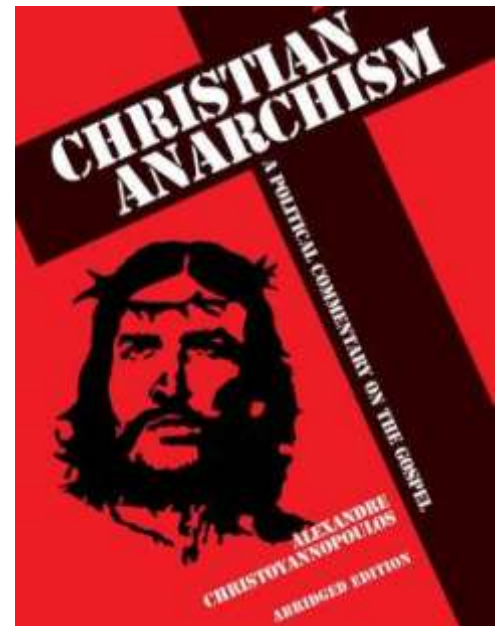
Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Jacques Ellul argues that according to this text, "all powers, all the power and glory of the kingdoms, all that has to do with politics and political authority, belongs to the devil." It is moreover important to note that Jesus does not deny that political power does indeed belong to the devil. Rather, "he refuses the offer of power because the devil demands that he should fall down before him and worship him." Jesus refuses political power because it would entail worship of the devil. So Jesus declines the possibility of changing the world through political channels. He rejects the state because he can only serve one Lord: it is not possible to serve both God and the state.

Ellul notices that a similar point is made in the Old Testament. Until Samuel, Israel had no king. Decisions were taken mostly by popular assembly: "people did what was right in their own eyes." But in 1 Samuel 8, they told Samuel that they wanted a king so that they could be like other nations and have more efficient military leadership. As Ellul explains, "Samuel protested and went to God in prayer. The God of Israel replied: Do not be upset. The people have not rejected you, Samuel, but me, God. [...] Accept their demand but warn them of what will happen." Samuel then warned them of all the abuses of power that would ensue, but they wanted their king. So, they chose an earthly ruler, a state, instead of God. That is, they opted for idolatry, for the service and worship of the state rather than God. (Note that even though he disapproved, God allowed them to freely reject him.)

Another important passage in terms of how to respond to fear and insecurity can be found in Matthew 26:51-52. Jesus has just been betrayed by Judas, and is about to be taken away. One of his disciples then draws out his sword and strikes one of the guards. But Jesus famously tells him to put away his sword, because "all who draw the sword will die by the sword." So once again, even in the face of



This above book is available on the internet

perceived injustice or insecurity, do not resort to any violence, because "it can only give rise to further violence." And as Ellul notes, the warning applies quite broadly. On the one hand, "since the state uses the sword, it will be destroyed by the sword, as centuries of history have shown us." But on the other, this can also be seen as a caution to Christians: "do not fight the state with the sword, for if you do, you will be killed by the sword." Violence should never be used, neither to hold political authority nor to overthrow it. And if violence *is* used, then no validation for it can be claimed from Christianity, because Jesus explicitly denounces it.

So, Christian anarchists understand Christianity to be strictly incompatible with the state and political power; for them, Christianity provides the blueprint for a non-violent, anarchist revolution. However, there are two important phrases from the New Testament that are frequently raised against Christian anarchists as if these self-evidently contradict their political interpretation: "render to Caesar," and Paul's instructions in Romans 13. These must now be analysed in turn to show why Christian anarchists consider them not as contradicting but as actually confirming their own interpretation.

It is important to recall the details of the "render to Caesar" episode before commenting on it. The story reads as follows: Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. They came to him and said, "Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn't we?" But Jesus knew their

hypocrisy. "Why are you trying to trap me?" he asked. "Bring me a denarius and let me look at it." They brought the coin, and he asked them, "Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?" "Caesar's," they replied. Then Jesus said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." And they were amazed at him.'

Ellul notes that in the first place, if they put this question to Jesus, it must have been because it was already debated, and Jesus must have had "the reputation of being hostile to Caesar." But aside from this, it must be borne in mind that "in the Roman world an individual mark on an object denoted ownership." Hence the coin did actually belong to Caesar. No surprise, then, that Jesus says "Give it back to him when he demands it." Nevertheless, as Ellul notices, "Jesus does not say that taxes are lawful."

So the key question is "what really belongs to Caesar?" Ellul replies: "Whatever bears his mark! Here is the basis and limit of his power. But where is his mark? On coins, on public monuments, and on certain altars. That is all. [...] On the other hand, whatever does not bear Caesar's mark does not belong to him. It belongs to God." For instance, Caesar has no right over life and death. That belongs to God. Hence while the state can expect Christians to abide by its wishes regarding its belongings, it has no right to kill dissidents or plunge a country into war. Therefore the "render to Caesar" episode seems to reinforce, not weaken, the case made by Christian anarchists. Some things do belong to Caesar, but many more essential things belong to God, and the state oversteps its mark when it encroaches on God's domain.

But then what about Romans 13? There, Paul does clearly assert: "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God." Does this verse and those following it not finally defeat the Christian anarchist fallacy? After all, this passage has often been used to justify the divine institution of civil government – including Nazi Germany.

Here again, however, Christian anarchists offer a compelling response. For a start, one must realise that Romans 12 and 13 "in their entirety form a literary unit." In both chapters, Paul is writing about love and sacrifice, about overcoming evil with good, about willingly offering oneself up for persecution. In doing so, he is mainly repeating the message that Jesus articulated not only in the Sermon on the Mount and other parables, but also in the very way he lived and died – indeed, Jesus' ultimate act of love and sacrifice was to subject himself to Roman crucifixion. But the point is that as John H. Yoder asserts, "any interpretation of 13:1-7 which is not also an expression of suffering and serving love must be a misunderstanding of the text in its context." And in Ellul's words, once one interprets Romans 12 and 13 as a coherent whole, one notes that "there is a progression of love from friends to strangers and then to enemies, and this is where the passage then comes. In other words, we must love enemies and therefore we must even respect the authorities." Hence Paul's message in Romans 13 is to call for Christians to subject themselves to political powers *out of love*, forgiveness and sacrifice.

It is also worth repeating Eller's point that to "be subject to" does not mean to worship, to "recognise the legitimacy of" or to "own allegiance to." Ellul thus comments that "we have no right to claim God in validation of this order as if he were at our service. [...] This takes away all the pathos, justification, illusion, enthusiasm, etc" that can be associated with any specific political authority. So no

specific government has any particularly special relationship with God, even though God will use it in his mysterious ordering of the cosmos. Therefore, according to Ellul, "the only one whom we must fear is God," and "the only one to whom honour is due is God" – not political authorities.

But anyhow, "the immediate concrete meaning of this text for the Christian Jews in Rome," Yoder indicates, "is to call them away from any notion of revolution or insubordination. The call is to a non-resistant attitude towards a tyrannical government." Paul is calling for Roman Christians to act as Jesus did. Besides, if you choose resistance, Eller remarks, "you could find yourself resisting the particular use God has in mind for that empire" – whatever that might prove to be. Thus Paul, just as Jesus did before him, is advising against a violent political uprising and instead encouraging Christians to cultivate love, sacrifice and forgiveness. Paul is endorsing neither the Roman establishment nor any uprising to



overthrow it, but reminding followers of Jesus that what matters is to focus on God and Jesus' radical and no less revolutionary commandments. Thus, Romans 13, when understood in its context, ends up supporting rather than discrediting Christian anarchists.

As already hinted, this touches on the core of the seemingly paradoxical understanding of Jesus' teaching by Christian anarchists. That is, Jesus' political subversion is carried out through submission rather than revolt. Jesus' crucifixion is the Biblical episode which best illustrates this. For Christian anarchists, the cross is the symbol both of state violence and persecution, *and* of Jesus' alternative to overcome it. To paraphrase from Paul, by submitting to his crucifixion – even uttering as his last words a call for God to "forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" – Jesus "makes a public example" of the state, "unmasks" it as violent and demonic and "dethrones" it from its power and perceived legitimacy. By submitting to his crucifixion, Jesus demonstrates that love and forgiveness, even – indeed, *especially* – in the face of violence and vindictiveness, must go to the very end. Hence Jesus' submission is subversive because it unmasks the true nature of the state and at the same time embodies his alternative to overcome it. At the cross, Jesus and his teaching, although seemingly crushed, are paradoxically exalted. However surprising this may at first seem, the cross thus symbolises Christianity's anarchist subversion. And of course, Jesus repeatedly demands of his followers that they take up their cross and follow him, in other words that they reject violence, accept persecution and nonetheless keep on striving to love and forgive both their neighbours and their enemies – just like Jesus did. This does not mean, however, that Jesus asks from his followers that they remain completely silent (cont p7) 3

Cardinal O'Brien at Faslane Protest

Cardinal O'Brien was at Faslane on Palm Sunday this year, with reverend Alan McDonald (former Methodist Moderator of Scotland) and Bruce Kent, for a service and demonstration. Afterwards, with Leona who had attended the service, he visited the Faslane Peace Camp. He spoke of his opposition to nuclear weapons, saying: "It is a message I'm all the more glad to repeat here at the gates of Faslane, which is the very heart of Britain's nuclear weapons industry."

The Cardinal said: "There is no better place to say that it is not courageous of Britain to have these dreadful weapons of mass destruction. It is shameful. If our government wished to truly be courageous it would unilaterally give up its nuclear deterrent, giving the witness and impetus for other nations to [follow]." And, speaking of his personal experience visiting Rwanda and Darfur he condemned corporations that manufacture and sell arms for profit at the cost of human life.

The Times has printed a letter from Cardinal O'Brien on the moral case for scrapping Trident:

A recent editorial in this paper on Trident, noting that "national defence is one of the cardinal duties of the statesman", caused me to reflect on the moral duties of a cardinal. In the debate surrounding the replacement of Trident, we have heard a great deal about the financial, diplomatic, military and political arguments relevant to retention or rejection. By contrast we have heard precious little about moral arguments involved. Sometimes the debate becomes so confused and nuanced that the moral considerations of any decision can be lost in the fog.

With Trident, the moral case is simple. It cuts through and across any others. In all circumstances to use a nuclear weapon would be immoral. Since to use these weapons is immoral, to threaten their use is immoral and to hold them with a view to threatening their use is also immoral.

We not only violate moral principles with our nuclear weapons but undermine our moral authority in the world. We were prepared to engage in a brutal war with Iraq to ensure that nation did not possess weapons of mass destruction. We did this in the belief that possession of such weapons is morally reprehensible, which it is, unless of course we possess them. Our moral hypocrisy fatally undermined our position in Iraq.

We must ask ourselves: "Are nuclear weapons useable?" The inherently indiscriminate and devastatingly powerful destructive force of nuclear weapons makes them qualitatively different from any other ordnance. Their first use, in any circumstances whatsoever, would be a crime against God and humanity. Likewise, a counter-strike in retaliation would be just as immoral, even more so, because it would be motivated not by defence but by the hollow and hellish vengeance of the vanquished. It is perhaps no coincidence that one of the British Trident fleet is named HMS Vengeance.

In war a primary duty of the military is to protect the innocent and non-combatants. This foundational aspect of military conflict through the ages is brutally and utterly violated when a nuclear weapon is deployed. Even a tactical use would be such a violation, yet Britain has no tactical nuclear weapons. Instead 200 identical warheads leased from the US and quartered for the most part in Scottish waters



Below: Cardinal O'Brien visiting the Faslane Peace Camp

comprise Britain's strategic arsenal. Each one eight times as powerful as the Hiroshima bomb.

We all accept that threatening behaviour is a crime. In the domestic context it instils fear and mistrust and destroys relationships, so too in the international context. To the Christian and to most people of faith, threatening someone with such awesomely destructive power runs utterly counter to the call of God: a call to love, peace and reconciliation, not destruction, domination and force.

I am a Christian minister and a human being who believes in the dignity and sanctity of human life. This pro-life message is at the heart of the Catholic Church and is one the Church champions, "in season and out of season". No one can uphold the teachings of Christ unless they speak out in defence of life, and mass killing of innocent victims at any time or place.

Life must mean life in all its fullness and at every stage, from conception to natural death, and any premature taking of life at any stage has deep moral implications.

This is why the Catholic Church opposes abortion, capital punishment, works to bring an end to the scandal of child soldiers, the trade in small arms and so much more. It is why the Church has consistently opposed the development of nuclear weapons, and why it demands their abolition, now more than ever. None of what I say comes from me alone, but from the highest moral authority in the Catholic Church; the Pope and the bishops working together and in Council.

The last Council was Vatican II more than 40 years ago, but its teaching on this subject rings down through the decades: "Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation."

This is moral teaching of the clearest kind, and my duty is to pass that teaching on. To act morally, to do the right thing, often takes courage, and sometimes means taking a stand that others do not agree with or accept. That is the test of leadership. Britain now has a golden opportunity to truly lead and to turn its back on the path of mass destruction.

In doing so we can assist others, particularly Russia and the United States who have shown much more willingness to be courageous than Britain in recent months, but who have so much farther to go to disarm. Rejecting Trident, not in 2024 but right now, will bring economic dividends at home and give moral leadership abroad. It would allow us, at last, to stand on the moral high ground and to invite the nuclear armed nations of the world to join us there.

Cardinal Keith O'Brien is President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Scotland.

Reflections on the Riots (from p1) selfish thugs who've never had it so good? Or are they victims of an era of austerity cuts, unemployment and a Tory government?

My own view is that, yes, they are disrespectful and selfish and do have it good in some ways—they have 'stuff' and possibilities of choosing differently— but I can't conceive of that in isolation from a much wider political and economic context. The government of today, cutting back services that have quietly helped to build a stronger sense of community, and the financial turmoil leading to unemployment are not mutually exclusive from greedy youngsters. All are an inevitable consequence of a society based on liberal capitalism. I'm not saying that people don't have a choice in how to behave, what I am saying is that it is impossible for everyone to feel a valued part of society when society is based on some getting richer at the expense of so many others.

Since my Gran was a youngster, consumerism and a culture of instant gratification have come to dominate our society. We all want more than we've got (even if we're good activists and it might only be for a moment), we all want to have. Some have an awful lot – they get good jobs (at the expense of others), push themselves to the top of their company (at the expense of others), can buy whatever they like and send their kids to university (also sometimes at the expense of others). Society works for them. But others don't get the jobs, don't get the promotion, get pushed out of higher education because there would be not worth in it if everyone got in and passed. It doesn't excuse violence and looting but points towards a motive, voiced by the teenagers involved.

But its not any individuals fault, or just a class thing. Our whole economic system perpetuates (lets call it what it is) greed and ownership at the expense of others. It made me really angry to see my neighbourhood all smashed up. My local electrical shop was looted in the riots for nothing other than greed. As awful as it is, they'll get back on their feet. But if a Curry's and PC World moved in up the road, they'd die a slow death and never recover. Shareholders getting richer at the expense of others, for nothing other than greed. And how may local convenience stores have died a death at the hands of Tesco? And its not only individuals who suffer.

The pursuit of profit inherent in our economy has seen mass pull out of investment for whole countries when stock market gambling is stacked against them.

And then there's the violence. State sanctioned violence (i.e. the police) protects the property of the haves. Does that subconsciously mean people think it's ok to perpetuate violence in order to 'have'? I don't know, I hate violence in all it's forms. Whether it's looting, looters getting beaten, police getting beaten, armies 'protecting' our country... It all creates further problems.

As some of the rioters themselves have said, it's about an expression of agency, or

power. For the section of society that functions reasonably, or very well, in our current economic and political set up, we express power day to day and when it is taken away we write, call meetings, march, sit-in and all manner of things. So when those that don't experience this day-to-day begin to feel a sense of their own agency through extreme 'fun', grabbing consumables in a violent and illegal way, it may be an immature adolescent response, not well analysed but it is an expression of power nonetheless.

A society that is based on accumulation of wealth (greed) and protection of that wealth, or property (power/violence), is going to see ugly manifestations of both at either end of the spectrum. What is needed is not just more investment in deprived communities from the taxes grudgingly paid by the haves, or teaching criminals a lesson – but a whole new way of knitting people together in a social solidarity, that does not base status on productivity or financial remuneration. You all value friends and family over your stuff, right? We just have to take that extra leap to put more people before our stuff.

The most obvious example, often romanticised yet a reality for some people I know, is subsistence farming – everyone is necessary and plays a vital role. You live off what you grow and make and share extra with others. There's no point hoarding produce that will go off so sharing becomes easier and greed ridiculous. You're physically tired at the end of the day and satisfied you've played a part. Small farming communities tend to create their own entertainment, another way of valuing members, rather than hyping up 'better' people.

So what about the city? Let's imagine! With no government blue prints, no big economic systems, just small local groups starting to figure it out for themselves. But this isn't pipe dream, it's already happening – especially in places like Hackney where gardening projects, lunch clubs, meals, youth arts projects, co-operative cafes, free shops and all sorts promote a sense of investment and pride. There's still a lot to do (obviously) but if our national focus was not economic growth perhaps we'd see the local community become more of a priority and the sense of solidarity rather than economic gain flourish.

By Jo Frew



Discovering the Catholic Worker

(from p1) and even died for their beliefs. It struck a real chord for me, with a longing to work more directly for justice and peace. It was their combination of direct service for people in real need with an active engagement in the wider issues of justice in our society. Shortly after, I visited Giuseppe Conlon House which confirmed this was a good place to be.

So here I now am, learning more directly of the practical running of this community and project. As a Christian, I wanted to be in a praying community, where this would be an important underpinning of the work. So the daily morning prayer time, open to all but in no way an obligation, was a welcome start to my experience. I also soon found that this was a community of real mutual respect, where each found their role with no one pushing them to do what they were not comfortable with. It has taken very little time for me to feel a sense of belonging and responsibility for the work which, I can now say “we” do here.

My first day’s work was at Peter’s Cafe, the community cafe we run in the crypt of St Peter’s church, Hackney. In this small basement room, with walls covered in campaign posters, all are welcomed to enjoy a hot drink and hot food, whether you have money or not. Running on Catholic Worker principles, the cafe relies on donations of food from local businesses and individuals to enable it to provide this service, while the cash income from paying customers pays for what has to be bought in, like milk and frozen food. The open welcome brings together those who would not usually come into such close proximity – the street sleeper, workmen from a nearby building site, the alcoholic who sits on a park bench, a social worker needing a neutral space to meet a client, a chronic illness victim who never gets out of the house, church members having a meeting nearby, as well as many other members of the public just passing by with their own stories to tell. We all can sit at a table, overhear each other’s conversations, grab forty winks on the soft sofa, get a hearty meal from the menu which, while simpler than most cafe’s makes up in the nutritional value of all on offer.

A twenty minute cycle ride brings me back to Giuseppe Conlon House and a couple of hours rest before our guests arrive for the night. Our week is structured by a few different rotas that ensure there are always people available to work, while others have a chance to rest. It is really heartening to meet so many people who come to take part

in the work once a week or fortnight or month, they bring a fresh face and experiences to the community. We could not manage without them. So I may be on the rota to help cook that evening, or to go pick up the leftover sandwiches and buns from a local bakery. At 9:00pm our gate is opened and our guests are welcomed in with hot food ready, always delicious and a testimony to the skills of our volunteers who have to cook whatever has been donated that day. We all sit and eat together, which is an opportunity for Catholic Workers, volunteers, visitors and guests to chat and get to know each other a little.

Sometimes we might then play a game or just chat about our news.

It’s hard to describe our guests, as they are all quite different with a variety of stories. They are not alcoholics or addicts, most have very easy-going temperaments, and are extremely courteous. They are from many of the conflict zones of our world, though most you don’t normally read about – Eritrea, DR Congo, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Iran, Zimbabwe, Ivory Coast, and Cameroon amongst others. There is always a lot of good humour around the dinner table and it is amazing how easily we all get along despite our variety of nationalities. At present we are converting more of the rooms in the building with the hope of having a section for female guests.

Around 10:30pm I head off to get ready for bed and at 11:00pm its lights out. Thankfully morning prayer is at a very civilised 8:30am, so working late is not as difficult. Then begins a new working day at LCW, likely to be completely different from the day before – DIY work in the church, planning meetings for resistance work, food pick ups, cleaning, football in the park or a welcome day off – certainly never a dull day and always with laughs and challenge. I would not want to be anywhere else!

By Andrew Russell



Above: The Last Supper—by Fritz Eichenberg



Right: Andrew in the kitchen at Giuseppe Conlon House

A visit to London's Arms Fair

On the morning of opening of the DSEi (Defence & Security Equipment International) arm fair in London, I left early from my bed, grateful for the hospitality of Giuseppe Conlon House, and made my way to the centre of London. At Tower Hill station there was a large queue of business men (they were all men) buying tickets to the Excel Centre where the fair is being held. I mingled with them and asked some of them – with BAE Systems badges on the lapels – whether they were buying or selling. It turned out they were from Saudi Arabia and their minder did not want me to talk to them – or them to talk to me. I reminded him we were not in Saudi and democracy meant that we could happily converse with each other.

The Excel Centre is in the east end of London – what used to be called the docklands – not far from the other London Catholic Worker –Dorothy Day House. I had vigiled and prayed the night before with about 150 locals from East London Against the Arms Fair outside the centre. Many of the elder ones at the vigil would be able to recall the devastation and loss of life visited on the docks and surrounding areas by German bombing in the Second World War. None of us wanted such devastation and death rained on others with weapons traded at the arms fair. Alighting at the station exit for the arms fair there was intense security and I looked around in vain for other protestors – there had been a call out to meet together on the platform at 10.00am.

As there was seemingly no one else there I mingled with the crowds of business men and made my way up to the entrance of the fair. There were large glossy display boards all around extolling the virtues of various weapons systems and arms companies. The closer I got to the entrance the heavier the security was getting and it was clear I would not get into the fair itself. Weighing up my option I got out a spray can from my bag and quickly sprayed “DSEi Kills” and “Stop the Arms

Trade” on two of the glossy arms displays before being quickly grabbed by the police. I did not however, go quietly. I spoke loud and clearly to the long line of arms dealers shuffling

slowing towards the entrance – urging them to reconsider their actions and speaking about the misery and death their mornings work will surely bring. I ran out of words pretty quick and end by asking them repeatedly, to simply go home to their families and to think about what they were doing. They all avoided eye contact.

I spent a few hours in the cells, have been charged with criminal damage and have a plea hearing date next month. There were many other actions against the arms fair that day and in the days following. Investigators from human rights groups who did manage to gain entry into the fair found cluster bombs and torture equipment on sale despite specific promises from the organisation that such equipment was banned.

Arms fairs such as DSEi are the public face of the arms trade – the mere visible tip of the iceberg. The vast majority of the work goes on hidden beneath the surface, outside of the spotlight. Our task as Christian peacemakers is to expose this rotten underbelly which is responsible each and every day for visiting yet more death and destruction upon the world – especially upon the poor. By Chris Cole : info@figtree.org.uk



Above: Chris Cole being arrested at the DSEi arms fair

Render Unto Caesar (from p3)

when faced with injustice. Jesus himself set the tone when he stormed and cleansed the Jerusalem temple – an event that fixed the resolve of the authorities to have him arrested and executed. In commenting on this event, Christian anarchists emphasise that this temple was Israel's most potent religious, political and economic symbol. Jesus' "direct action" against it is therefore a clear statement of opposition against such concentration of power and authority. For Christian anarchists, too much attention has been distracted from these broader political implications by endlessly debating whether Jesus' action was violent. Besides, they argue that very little violence was used anyway: only one Gospel mentions a whip, and it does so only in relation to the cattle in the temple. Thus if any physical violence was used, it was only to drive out the cattle – not to strike a human being. And if Jesus' verbal condemnation is nonetheless a form of violence, then that is the limit of violence that Jesus allows. Indeed, Jesus does repeatedly denounce in strong terms the religious and political authorities of his day. Christian anarchists only regret that today's self-proclaimed followers of Jesus rarely repeat such courageous denunciations of political, religious and economic power.

This is the second part of a serialisation in our newsletter an article by Alexandre Christiannopolous, taken from the book "New Perspectives on Anarchism", edited by Nathan Jun and Shane Wahl (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2010), pp. 149-167.

Mourn the Dead, Heal the Wounded, End the Wars (from p1)

Daniel and Miriam took turns playing the violin as we maintained a respectful silence. We could hear opposing chants of the English Defense League and "Muslims Against Crusaders" We circled for shared reflection, mourned the disengagement of civil society within our countries waging war on the peoples of Afghanistan and Iraq.

We called to mind brothers and sisters persecuted and in chains for exposing the nature of these wars and refusing to maintain complicit silence or service the war machine: Bradley Manning accused of releasing 'collateral murder' footage: Wikileaks' Julian Assange who distributed the footage: Michael Lyons presently in Colchester military prison for refusing deployment to Afghanistan after seeing footage and cables.

October 7th will mark ten years of U.S. war on the people of Afghanistan. We plan to say no by putting out bodies in the way of those who continue to wage this war. As Phil Berrigan would say "Hope is where you're ass is!" and we plan to plant our asses the way of the daily grind of killing the innocents.

By Ciaron O'Reilly ciaronx@yahoo.com

A MESSAGE FROM LILLIAN LYONS

(from p1) did join up because he thought he could help people. In fact he saw an advert on TV of a Navy Medic jumping out of a helicopter giving humanitarian aid in an unnamed war zone. The medic wasn't carrying any weapons just a box with a big red cross on it. He was sold.

He had just turned 18, he had no knowledge of current affairs, the legality of the war or any war for that matter. I guess you could say he was naive and he'd probably agree but who isn't at that age?

Mike was never going to stay in the Military, and as he grew up and matured this was certain. Slowly he developed a keen interest in the issues facing the countries involved in these invasions and I guess you could say this snowballed, the deeper he dug, the more he read the more detached he became from his job, his employers and his colleagues.

In 2009 he started to ask his superiors about notice periods and was told February 2011 would be the earliest time he could give a years notice to leave the Navy. I think this was somewhat prompted by his initial learnings of the political reasons behind the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In march 2010 he was given an order to deploy to Camp Bastion in Afghanistan leaving the 30th March 2011. His initial reaction was shock as he had made it quite clear to his superiors that he was planning to give notice to leave. They also knew Mike's opinion on the Afghan War but despite this he still felt he had a sense of duty and so we started to plan for his deployment.

In the next couple of months he discovered Wikileaks, he read and read about the 76,000 military documents that had been leaked on the internet and published in analysed form in various newspapers. These documents detailed the military's under-reporting of civilian casualties caused by Nato troops, both in the air and on the ground.

Examples included the convoy of US marines driving down a six-mile stretch of highway firing at everyone they saw, 19 unarmed civilians were killed and a further 50 wounded. Closer to home there were the allegations that Royal Marines had shot innocent drivers and motorcyclists on eight separate occasions over a six-month period, and that Ghurkhas had called in an air strike on a family compound, leaving seven innocents dead. These were just some of the reports.

Within days Mike had to attend a 2 week advanced medic course to prepare him for deployment to Afghanistan so he didn't have time to gather his thoughts about the leaked documents or analyse how he felt. The only way I can describe Mike's reaction to this information is sickened.

On the last day of the course he had a heated argument with an Army doctor who was giving scenarios of when a Royal Navy Medic would need to administer aid. One scenario was of a Afghani Child that had been carried to the Military hospital by her family, the child had a birth defect and was in pain. Mike was the first to speak up saying he would treat the child. The army doctor answered quickly 'the child's birth defect is untreatable Lyons, how would you approach this?' Mike answered back even quicker, well if after I have covered all possibilities and still I cannot treat the condition I would at least offer pain relief, support and compassion to her and her family. The doctor wasn't happy, this would be a waste of resources, you would have to turn them away, she said.



Above: Able Seaman Michael Lyons, who refused to be sent to Afghanistan. He is currently serving a 6 month sentence in Colchester military prison.

This was the first thing Mike told me when he got home that night. I just cried. We both got very upset and he said I don't agree with what's happening, I don't agree politically and I don't agree morally, I cannot be part of it, I can't be in the Military knowing this is what they stand for. I guess I am a Conscientious Objector. These were his exact words, they are ingrained on my memory because this was the moment I have never been more proud in my life.

He told his superior and they asked for it in writing, he did this immediately and the captain accepted the statement and agreed that Mike was a conscientious objector. However as it was passed up the chain of command something went very wrong. A few days later the decision had been overturned by someone, we still don't know who further up the chain. Mike was furious and advised his chief he would be appealing the decision. He handed his second statement to his chief the next day and detailed the reasons why he was a conscientious objector, the chief promptly handed this back to Mike and said he would not pass it to the appeals court until Mike had toned it down and written in a less emotional way!

Whilst we were waiting for a date for the appeal Mike was due to attend a weapons training course, here he would learn how to use an SA-80. Mike called it a learning to Kill course. Mike's conscience would not allow him to complete the course and he asked to be put on non-combatant duties whilst his appeal was pending, he explained why he was a conscientious objector in detail. He was returned to unit.(cont p9)

LILLIAN LYONS (from p8) On December 17th 2010 Mike's appeal was unsuccessful, we were all in shock, he was honest sincere and correct. The judge even had to adjourn the court half way through as Mike got so upset when speaking about the details of the casualties of this war. They gave no reason why they had chosen not to believe Mike and we have yet to receive any. Technically the appeal is still pending because Liam Fox secretary of defence has the final say and Mike has not received any formal decision in writing.

Just after the appeal the Navy chose to charge Mike with wilful disobedience for refusing to complete the learning to kill course.

Since then It has been a very hard journey, we have both lost a lot of friends through this, Mike has received threats and been the subject of bullying from his colleagues, getting into arguments on a daily basis about the legality of war and reporting back to me every night about how astonished he is by the level of racism within the navy.

His chief called him a cancer worried that he would spread his message of love and peace among the ranks! Michael has however been very discreet about his views and has never tried to push them on to anyone else, he has simply defended the Afghani people when they often became the subject of race hate within the office where Mike worked.

Despite the difficulties Mike has faced he is completely at peace with all of his decisions. He says that he has a clear conscience and if he had done anything differently he wouldn't be able to live with himself so he is happy and proud of what he has made a stand against.

I am so proud of my husband, he is the most compassionate, kind, loving and moral man I have ever known. I agree with everything he has done and I am appalled by the way the Navy have treated him.

One thing sticks in my mind about this last year and it's really personal but I want to share it with you because it shows how strong Mike's convictions are. He said to me just before the sentencing that if he hadn't had stood up for what he believes in, or if he had gone to war or stayed in the Military he wouldn't have been able to start a family with me. He said I would never want my children looking up to me if i had been part of this destruction, this death and greed And I couldn't be the husband that you deserve either. One day Michael and I will start a family and our children can be proud of their father. Michael is locked up unjustly for having a conscience but i feel like the luckiest woman in the world simply because that man is my husband.

By Lillian Lyons

See the new "Veterans for Peace UK" website for more info: <http://veteransforpeaceuk.wordpress.com/>

EASY ESSAYS by Peter Maurin

A PERSONALIST COMMUNITARIAN

A personalist is a go-giver, not a go-getter. A person who tries to give what they have, and does not try to get what the others have. Someone who tries to be good by doing good to the other fellow. Someone other-centered not self-centered.

Who has a social doctrine of the common good. Who spreads the social doctrine of the common good through words and deeds as well as words, for they know that deeds speak louder than words. Through words and deeds they brings into existence a common unity, the common unity of the community.

THEY AND WE

People say "They don't do this, they don't do that." Always "They" and never "I". People should say: "They are crazy for doing this and not doing that But I don't need to be crazy The way they are crazy."



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Location, Location, Location

The sun has just gone behind the wall of the church next door. I'm sitting with the back door open allowing the warm October air (yes, really) in. For some reason there is a filing cabinet in the garden, along with the sunflowers, pumpkin, kale, garden table and chairs, not to mention the compost box, pieces of an old coal bunker, an assortment of cardboard boxes and other unsightly rubbish. The pumpkin grew from seeds that came out of the compost when Conor was forking out some of the fertile soil onto the newly made vegetable beds.

I happen to know there are some old wooden pallets on the flat roof of the extension. They are for the chickens to scratch on which Conor is planning to put there, in the chicken coop our friend John has built. The day after the pallets went up, some other friends brought round some office furniture for us, and apparently totally randomly, some rolls of chicken wire. Seems like its providence. We rely a lot on providence. We've run out of bread a few times recently, only to be saved by an unexpected gift of manna from heaven! Its 'just in time providence' - God doesn't like to let us know in advance what we are being sent, or before we really need it. I don't know how we're going to get the chicken coop through the door of the room where its been made - I think its too big. Anyway, hopefully we will get some eggs.

All of this speaks to me of putting ourselves in the right place, and trusting God. Estate agents say there are three things that matter - location, location and location! And our location has turned out to be vital recently.

It was vital when Mark Duggan was shot and the riots kicked off in Tottenham: our friends were phoning and emailing to ask were we alright, and the local shop keepers on Green Lanes were out in force to protect their livelihoods (Jo Frew shares her reflections on the riots elsewhere in this newsletter). Ciaran and Conor went on the next night to vigil for Michael Duggan and his grieving family, as well as for peace in our neighbourhood, with local Church people and others.

It was vital too on September 11th, when a group of us (not including me, I was chained to the cooker at our Urban Table soup kitchen!) put themselves in front of the US

Embassy in Grosvenor Square for the Anniversary of the attacks on the Twin Towers, only to find themselves praying for peace in the space between the EDL and Muslims Against Crusades. Location mattered too when the DSEi arms fair returned to the ExCEL Centre in Custom House, east London, and Giuseppe Conlon House played host to an assortment of activists in need of a bed in between planning and acting to disrupt the arms fair (see Chris Cole's article on p7) and when we joined over 100 others for a silent vigil outside the DSEi Arms Fair, to pray for healing where the sickness is, in the same way that we would go to visit a sick friend or family member, and pray for them, as well as when we vigilled and prayed outside the British military spy base at GCHQ during the Greenbelt festival. It mattered too when Catholic Workers were in the risky position of being the only organised group willing to take the risk of being outside the High Court when Wikileaks founder Julian Assange was inside appealing his extradition order.

Location matters for our guests - they have no money, so travelling around this big city is tricky - we've been blessed to have a bike project making use of our basement space and giving our guests a solution to their problem by providing rebuilt bikes.

Location matters when we find ourselves sharing our lives with the poor, oppressed and afflicted: with refugees and the homeless. From them we learn of the harsh realities of the society we live in, our sinfulness, and our need to change, for conversion, repentance.

Sometimes it feels as if we are surrounded here with an ocean of suffering: only by the grace of God are we able to keep standing, to ride the wave, to keep hope alive. That small thing seems miraculous at times, a miracle that perhaps germinates during that half hour we spend together in the mornings, reading the scriptures and in silent prayer, learning the truth of those words of Phillip Berrigan, "Don't just do something - stand there" - or sit there. Put yourself in the right place, at the margins, where the pain is, where it all seems so fragile and tentative and risky - and you may find real life, life to the full, in the struggle to keep hope alive. And maybe even God. *By Martin Newell*

DVD FOR SALE:

"Fool for Christ - the story of Dorothy Day"

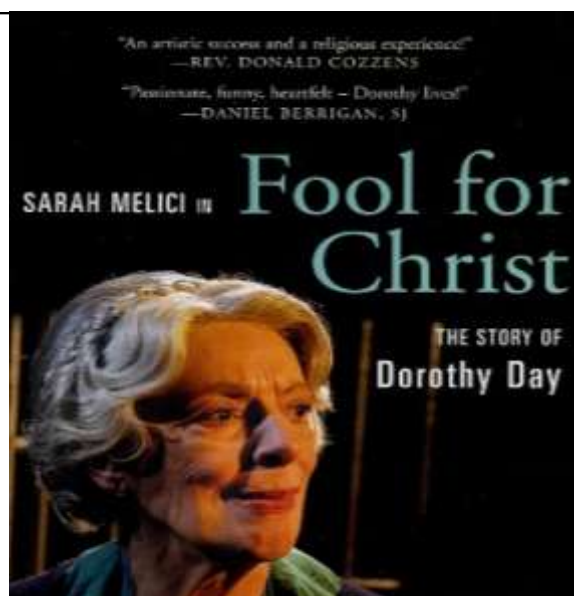
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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Regular Events:

Vigil Thursdays 3.30pm
Northwood Town Centre
Contact CW Farmhouse
for more details

Bible study: Tuesdays
6.30pm arrivals tea/coffee
7.00pm Bible study starts
Giuseppe Conlon CW House,
49 Mattison Road, Harringay,
London N4 1BG

Saturday morning football:
10.30am
Finsbury Park - corner near
Manor House Tube station:
check first before coming

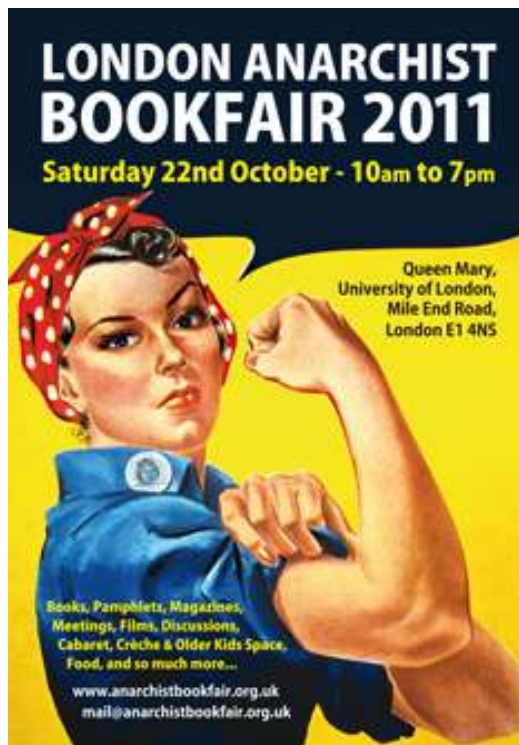
October 8th and 9th:
Rebellious Media Conference:
Central London.
MAIN SPEAKER - Noam Chomsky.
On "Media, Activism and
Social Change".
See
www.radicalmediaconference.org
for more info.

Giuseppe Conlon House: (GCH)

tel:0208 348 8212 E: londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk

Catholic Worker Farmhouse

tel: 01923 777 201 E: thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk



Pilgrims of Peace

by Spencer Crowther
(withthanks to Peter Maurin)

In a world of pilgrims
we are called to be pilgrims of
peace.

A pilgrim of peace
wants to give their piece
of the pie

rather than take
the other person's.

A peace pilgrim
is a go-giver

rather than a go-getter.

A peace pilgrim
is their neighbours keeper
rather than a keeper
of the status quo.

A peace pilgrim
wants to function
in a functional society,
rather than acquire
in an acquisitive society.

A peace pilgrim
doesn't get stuck in
with stocks
but gets stuck in.

A peace pilgrim
doesn't just try Christianity
but gets tried as a Christian.

A peace pilgrim
wants to end depressions
with expression
in a depression

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Dorothy Day House & Guiseppe Conlon House, and Urban Table Needs

FOOD:

- Dry goods, rice, pasta
- Instant coffee, tea bags
- Tuna & corned beef
- Sugar & salt & pepper
- Tinned tomatoes & fruit juice
- Cheese and eggs
- Breakfast cereals

OTHER

- Handyman / woman
- Plumber, electrician
- Soap, shampoo & all toiletries.
- Cleaning materials & equipment
- Football boots and kit

OFFICE:

- Book keeper
- Help with producing and sending out newsletters

HOUSEHOLD GOODS:

- Bike locks & bike lights
- Single sheets and single duvet covers
- Paint for walls

- **MONEY!** - see p11 for standing order form.

- **New full time community members, volunteers and participants in vigils etc!**

"Prayer - without this, all the rest is useless"

CW FARMHOUSE NEEDS:

- Food, esp. juice, milk, cheese, butter, cooking oil
- Toilet paper, nappies, baby wipes
- New members & help with gardening, cleaning, cooking, DIY
- People to take part in vigils & round table discussions
- Visitors to use our poustinia (for a donation)
- **MONEY! -and of course your prayers.**

SUPPORT OUR WORK

The London CW is part of the radical, pacifist Catholic Worker movement started in 1933 New York & inspired by the Gospel vision and practice of our founders, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. There are now over 150 CW houses and communities in the US and about 10 other countries. Check out the US-based CW website www.catholicworker.com, and come visit us!

CW houses and our finances are independent. There is no 'headquarters' or central organisation. We in London are a network, not an organisation.

To donate to Dorothy Day or Giuseppe Conlon House make a cheque to "London Catholic Worker".

To donate to the Farmhouse, make a cheque to "Catholic Worker Farmhouse".

Standing Order form overleaf.

OTHER CATHOLIC WORKERS IN THE UK: OXFORD :

St Francis CW House, 227 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4
Tel: 01865 248 288 - and see their page on our website.

We are not paid for this work: it is a gift of the heart. We receive nothing from the government. For reasons including our political witness, we are not a registered charity. Between us, we now have 4 houses hosting 42 destitute refugees not allowed to work or receive social security benefits - among the most disenfranchised in our society. We also run a community café and a drop in soup kitchen. So we continue to rely on our supporters and readers donations, to pay our rent on houses and other costs. Our voluntary poverty means that think we can do all this for £76,000 this year. (London - £40,000: Farmhouse - £36,000) Please make out a Standing Order and give generously to support our work with the crucified of today's world. You will have your reward. (Luke 16:39)