

ROUND-UP OF RECENT MEETINGS IN LONDON

Owen Hardwicke recently attended meetings in London addressed by two outstanding speakers. Both speakers stimulated large audiences with their thoughts, which they have also expressed in recent books.



Johan Galtung



George Monbiot

Johan Galtung, Director of Transcend and founder of international Institutes for Peace Research, spoke at the AGM of the World Disarmament Campaign. The WDM was founded by Fenner Brockway and Philip Noel-Baker, and the original Wrexham Peace Group founded in 1980 was affiliated to WDM. Galtung resists the notion of *conflict resolution* in favour of the realistic *management* or *handling* of inter-state conflict so that it does not slide through suspicion, hatred and demonisation into violence and war. He demonstrated how the goal is really the *transcendence* of conflict, whereby peace may be seen as the context in which differences can be treated creatively.

George Monbiot addressed the One World Trust at the House of Commons. George is perhaps best known for his book *Captive State* and also as a columnist for *The Guardian*. With enormous passion, but also with a surprising humility, he professed the theme of his latest book, *The Age of Consent*. Here he sees the real possibility of "the voice of the people," which is already beginning to emerge internationally, ultimately challenging the power of this world. Currently, power is in the hands of a relatively small number of politicians, who are not representative and who are led by economic and other vested interests. George goes on to outline changes in the shape of the UN, IMF and WTO to enable the consent of the people to be a truthful reality.

Other recent events in London have shared something of the same vision. The major annual lecture organised by CAFOD (Catholic Agency For Overseas Development) was given by Cardinal Rodriguez of Honduras on the theme of "Globalised Solidarity". He is well-known as a champion of the poor and is thought of as a possible successor to Pope John-Paul.

The Movement for the Abolition of War also held its AGM recently, addressed by its President, Sir Joseph Rotblat. Sir Joseph introduced the new book he has written with Prof. Robert Hinde, *War No More*. This meeting was held in conjunction with Peaceworkers UK, one of the 90 member organisations of the International Nonviolent Peaceforce, which is moving towards the establishment of an unarmed standing force capable of intervening in conflicts where appropriate.

The campaign to establish a Ministry for Peace had its latest meeting at the House of Commons. John McDonnell MP explained how his 10-minute rule Bill had fared. A new draft is being drawn up to include a Commission for Peace, outside of Parliament, to act as a watchdog for the initiatives of the new Ministry, and campaigners are now working to achieve cross-party support for the Bill.

The Peace Movements are alive and well; but they all need wider personal involvement and a lot of hard work. Let no-one think it can be left to others; all of us must be alert and active. There are many important books to read, all of which can be found on the shelves at the Peace & Justice Centre.



Cardinal Rodriguez



Sir Joseph Rotblat

BOOKLIST

Johan Galtung (with Carl Jacobsen)
Joseph Rotblat & Robert Hinde
George Monbiot
Milan Rai
Oliver McTernan

Searching for Peace.
War No More.
The Age of Consent.
Regime Unchanged.
Violence in God's Name.

Pluto Press 0745319297.
Pluto Press 0745321917.
Flamingo 0007150423.
Pluto Press 0745321992.
Darton, Longman & Todd
0232524947.

Noam Chomsky

Power and Terror.

Seven Stories Press 1583225900.