

## Catholic Peace Action

A journal of nonviolent resistance at  
The Ministry of 'Defence'  
(and other places)

May 1999

7 Putney Bridge Road  
London SW18 1HX

Dear Friend,

### 24 May Invitation

Happy Eastertide, the Lord is risen!

Because of the hope we share in the Resurrection we are able to continue our work for peace, which sometimes brings us to places 'we would rather not go.'

Five of us were arrested on Ash Wednesday; spent six to eight hours in Charing Cross Police station, and were charged with committing 'criminal damage'. On 24 March, the five entered a plea of 'not guilty' at Bow street magistrates court. In court we were told we had each caused £36 of 'damage'.

The articles following tell of this day of witness. The five are Sr. Mary Lampard, Dan Martin, Roger Morbey, Trish King and Fr. Martin Newell.

Our next day in court is Monday, 24 May at Horseferry Road magistrates court, 10 a.m. This is near Lambeth Bridge; nearest tube is Victoria, Westminster or Pimlico. (From Victoria take the 507 bus.) We invite you to a prayer service starting at 9:15 a.m., across the street in the public gardens. Do come and join us if you can, or send a message, which will be shared.

Our Defence will be based on different aspects of national, international and the moral law. We plan to call expert witnesses. Maybe the Court will 'hear' us this time. Maybe in the face of injustice the way of creative nonviolence will be tried before recourse to bombs and bullets. Maybe...

We can only but try. We live in hope.

Yours in solidarity,

CPA

Catholic Peace Action

(Dan and Carmel Martin, Pat Gaffney)

'This is what the Lord requires of you: to do justice, love tenderly, and walk humbly with your God.'

Micah 6:8



Fr. Martin Newell is escorted to a police van. Chris Cole raises a banner for peace.



## 'You are only doing this for the publicity'

By Fr. Martin Newell

I have heard this said by many people, and certainly by police and courts. And this was a question I have had no easy answer to, although I did not find the question too disturbing. But...

As I followed Dan up the steps and began to write in thick, black lines 'Repent', this act suddenly became much more personal. Full of meaning and intention, to convey the Ash Wednesday cry, the litany 'Repent, and believe the Gospel', 'Remember you are dust, and unto dust you shall return'. As earlier that day, I had marked the heads of the individual bodies of our people, so now I marked the 'head' of our 'Corporate body'. A head which, under cover, in the darkness of moral and spiritual blindness, forgets its own mortality and assumes the position of god or devil, waiting to reduce to dust all that our God made good, by a nuclear Armageddon.

Personal but between me and God and everyone else, complicit in these preparations of genocide

and those who have come together to witness to our faith in the God of Life, who will destroy Death forever.

Yes, to seek publicity, in order to convey the message, 'Repent', but not merely or only that. A personal and communal act. My Act of Penance to begin the discipline of Lent. With prayer and fasting, and almsgiving, to do penance.

This question has always haunted me, in the back of my mind: What would I have done, had I been alive in the Germany of the 1930s?

Let this be a beginning, on my own small journey of resistance to the nuclear Holocaust which threatens not only the Jews, but so many millions of other innocent, and not-so-innocent people.

'Rejoice for the Kingdom of Heaven is upon you'.

*The author is a Catholic priest, 31, working in the parish of St. Margaret's, Canning Town, East London.*

### Ash Wednesday Reflection

By Patricia King

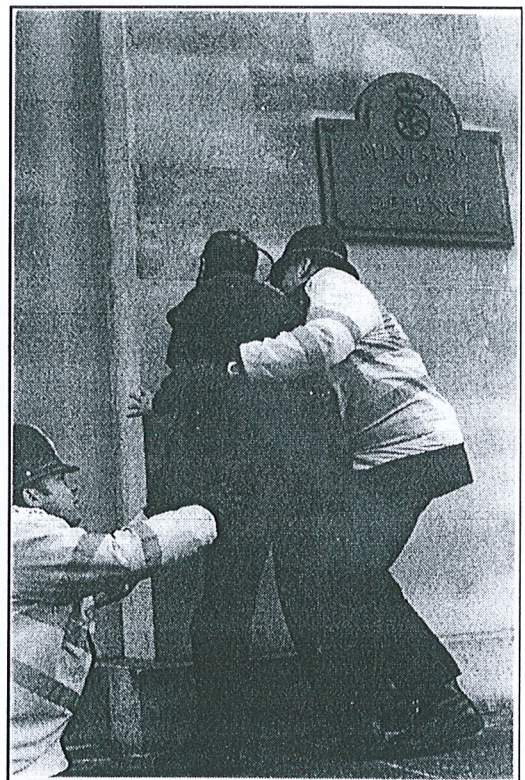
When Dan asked me if I wanted to mark the MoD Building on Ash Wednesday I was really honored. But the more I reflected on my beliefs and read about the history of this event, the more I questioned my motives for participating.

Were my motives as biblically based as I felt being a part of this group they should be; what areas of my life needing reviewing and 'redoing'; was I really prepared to spend time in jail; and could I speak well enough in court to make my point so that maybe one person would change their views about nuclear weapons and violence?

As I continued to read, reflect and question myself, I came to understand that Peace doesn't come from stillness or inactivity, and that we must challenge the use of nuclear weapons. I have a moral and faith-based obligation to try and prevent mass destruction and to help others become aware of their participation in increasing the probability of this destruction.

My strength in court and time in jail will come from my faith in God and belief in that what I am doing is right...and it is the least I can do for now.

*The author, 51, is currently looking for a community from which to continue her work for justice and peace.*



Dan Martin is prevented from completing the word 'Repent'.



# Symbolic Witness

By Roger Morbey

Imagine that you inherited a handgun. What would you do? Get rid of it, lock it away?

Or imagine you belong to a rich city church. A church with a burglar alarm, barbed wire and armed guards. Would you question your church priorities? Do you worry that a trespasser may be shot?

Or would you buy a newer, better gun and keep it by the door with the safety catch off? Would you tell other poorer churches not to waste their money on guards while keeping yours?

The British taxpayer is spending a fortune upgrading our Trident nuclear weapon system. Despite no obvious enemy the missiles are on constant alert and the UK has not ruled out the possibility of first-use. While our Aid budget remains low, and education and health services rely on charity, military spending continues unchecked.

On Ash Wednesday, Patricia King, Sister Mary Lampard, Dan Martin, Father Martin Newell and myself were arrested outside the MOD offices in Whitehall. We were challenging the UK government's policy on nuclear weapons with a call to repentance.

During a service, we symbolically marked the building with blessed ash. We were arrested and taken away to Charing Cross police station. After being held for eight hours we were released and charged with criminal damage.

People who care for me have said, with a sigh, 'Can't you stick to legal protests?' Although we can and will argue that we are upholding international law, as Christians we acknowledge a higher law. This is not arrogance but recognition that legal does not equal moral. Many Christians seem to treat human law as an idol, confusing being righteous with being law-abiding. While many government policies are criticized as unchristian, the law, which protects them, is seen as sacrosanct.

The willingness to be arrested is a symbolic witness to passion and belief. It does not harm others and when accompanied by preparation, prayer and calmness, protesters can not be dismissed as 'nutters'.

The Methodist Recorder asked if this wasn't rather Eighties, meaning: 'What have you achieved?' The arrests are a witness to all who are present, and all who hear. Believers in peace discover they are not alone. MOD staff are reminded that not everyone relies on the military for their security. Symbolic witness predates the 80s (see the Old Testament prophets).

To some our actions will seem futile. Many believe change is only possible through gaining power either by elections or violence (and so try neither.)

Fortunately Christians know another way, that lived by Jesus. Change is achieved, not by force or threats of force, but by example and personal conversions of hearts and minds.

*The author, 29, attends the Methodist Mission in Derby.*



'The willingness to be arrested is a symbolic witness to passion and belief.'  
Roger Morbey



## The Legal Process At Its Worst (Almost)

By Dan Martin

Between Cruise missiles, bad solicitors, and a vengeful State, Sarah Hipperson may lose her home.

The Bye-laws at Greenham Common were declared illegal in July 1990; they were declared to have always been illegal and, therefore, arrests and imprisonment of hundreds of women under them amounted to wrongful arrest. Sarah, long-time resident of Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp and member of Catholic Peace Action, was arrested and imprisoned under these Bye-laws nine times.

Under advice from solicitors she initiated a claim for compensation in 1992. But because of the negligence of her solicitors the case did not come to court until 1995 when it was discovered that six of the nine claims were statute barred, having exceeded the six-year limitation period. Sarah proceeded with the other three claims, again on advice from solicitors. The case came to court the following year when it was discovered the defendants, i.e. The Chief Constable of the Ministry of Defence could not be held, at law, responsible.

These cases resulted in a costs being awarded against Sarah for £6,669.65.

Not being inclined to pay, nor having a large pool of surplus cash at her disposal, Sarah pursued a claim for compensation against her negligent solicitors. The good news is that Sarah won her claim. The bad news is that Judge Brian Smedley, in a vindictive mood, awarded Sarah only £50 from each of her two solicitors.

The Chief Constable of the MoD pursued his claim for compensation. In December 1998 Sarah told Bow County court that she had an income of £70.45 per week. Not to let such trivial details get in the way of justice the Court awarded the Treasury solicitors, who were acting on behalf of the Chief Constable, the right to seize Sarah's home. Further court appearance in order to work out the details has brought closer this possibility. Her final (?) day in court is 21 May.

To date her negligent solicitors nor their firms have offered to pay Sarah's debts. Judge Smedley's catch-22 judgement -- Sarah won the case but is still to be punished -- reveals the extent the courts are (at times) simply the servants of the State. This was not a surprise to Sarah.

Sarah writes:

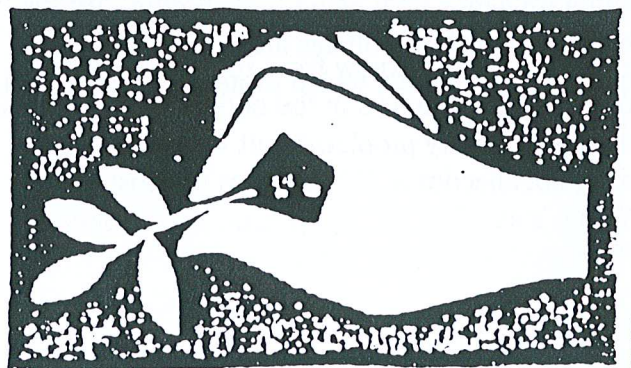
'At the start of the hearing, Judge Smedley announced that he had acted as a court martial judge in Cyprus; in other words he had a military connection. I could have objected, but I didn't. I expected him to exercise his 'craft' impartially. However, it became evident from his remarks during the hearing, his less than civil attitude to me while I was giving evidence, and his comments about me in his written judgement, that my expectations of him had been misplaced. He ignored the negligence of my solicitors and instead concentrated on my actions in obstructing the nuclear missile convoys designed for and crucial to the policy of Mutually Assured Destruction that left Greenham Common between 1984 and 1990. He stated, "She was deliberately provoking a situation where arrest was likely." The Judge acted as if I was being tried again.'

Sarah was advised not to appeal Judge Smedley's decision because the sum of £6,669.95 was 'too small' to receive legal aid.

Ironically, the solicitors and their firms who ill-advised Sarah received thousands of pounds of legal aid funds. Counsel on behalf of these negligent solicitors claimed in court that Sarah's claims 'against the original defendants were valueless. They were bound to fail.'

The Treasury pays for Trident, pays for Legal Aid, pays for the Courts, pays the Chief Constable but wants Sarah to pay twice for her work against Trident; once through her imprisonment (and she has been imprisoned many times for her nonviolent resistance to nuclear war preparations) and secondly for being on the receiving end of negligent legal advice and vindictive courts.

(The above is a summary of a very complicated, detailed, case. For the full story contact Yellow Gate, Greenham Common, Berkshire, RG14 6HN; 01635-269109; [www.web13.co.uk/greenham/](http://www.web13.co.uk/greenham/))





## Ash Wednesday 1999

### Sr. Mary Lampard

Another Ash Wednesday come and gone - another demonstration before the Ministry of Defence five more people arrested and charged with criminal damage. Why go on and on? Are we getting anywhere?

Year by year we confess we are part of a structurally violent society. Year by year we ask pardon of God and of those our weapons oppress and destroy. Year by year God's mercy is readier to blot out our offences than the police are to wash away our slogans.

All this is not for nothing. It is all part of moving towards a just and peaceful world which one day will be caught up into the Kingdom of our Father, a Kingdom of peace, love and unity.

The police have always been correct, courteous, even friendly and caring towards me. This time, however, there was one who mocked, not only me but also the Church itself, saying that "they" (the police?) should write slogans on churches, which have been responsible for far more deaths than the MOD has. When he repeated this a second time I replied: "But we've moved on from there; you haven't." I meant, of course that such things as the Inquisition are past and gone but the nuclear evil is still here.

Another surprise we all had was that the police took not only our fingerprints but even our DNA. But I have been assured that this is not for "criminals only", but that employees are also being required to give their DNA, in a nationwide project to get the population's particulars.

The three hours or so alone in a cell were like being in a hermitage with God. A kind jailer gave me a cup of cold water. May he not be without his reward! I prayed for my hostile policeman, May he get himself sorted out! I prayed for peace-lovers and peace-activists and what a joy it was, on being let out, to see Pat Gaffney and other faithful friends waiting for me. They gave me orange juice and tea; which I drank like a parched gazelle.

It was a pity that we could not write more than a few letters, not words even, on the walls and pillars of the MOD. Perhaps another time we should wait until the police have gone and hope our words will be a little more lasting.

*The author, is 83, and a Catholic, Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Africa. She worked as a Missionary sister in Africa (Uganda and Kenya) for 25 years. Previous to this Ash Wednesday She has marked the MoD 4 times.*

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## Safe Anaesthesia in Africa?

### Ray Towey and Ernestina Kimaro

It is difficult carrying out a research project in sub-Saharan Africa if you are local doctors. The clinical workload is heavy and there are few trained staff, and because of the lack of supporting infrastructure every task requires more energy than you anticipate. We tried to answer one question: "What are the obstacles to safe anaesthesia in the rural districts of our catchment area?"

We are based in an urban centre on the southern shores of Lake Victorian Tanzania, East Africa, in the tertiary referral hospital for a population of eight million. We knew from informal feedback from the anaesthetists in the outlying districts that there were many problems, but we wanted hard data, not anecdotes. Where were the obstacles? Was it lack of drugs, equipment, or personnel? With the help of funds from the Irish Government aid agency, HEDCO, we did a survey of an area of

67 500 square kilometres with a population of four million.

This survey was no easy task. It meant that one of us (EK) had to visit the 27 hospitals in the region, some in very remote rural areas. It took four months of legwork, sometimes sleeping in bus stations, taking lifts from passing lorries, sometimes trekking on foot, often travelling in broken down and overcrowded buses, buying petrol for hospital cars to get lifts, and sleeping in the hospital ward when no other accommodation was available. At each hospital EK interviewed the surgeons, anaesthetists, and administrators and inspected the theatre. Now we have more than anecdotes; we have a computer database with reliable data. Three quarters of the hospitals have no oxygen or equipment to give safe paediatric anaesthesia. The remaining quarter has no equipment for anaesthesia even for adults. Almost



all hospitals have a well trained anaesthetist and the lack of drugs was rarely a permanent problem. The major obstacle was lack of funds to buy vaporisers and oxygen concentrators. The logistics of transporting oxygen cylinders on roads washed away by the latest rains is almost impossible. It is often said about aid to the developing world that if you give a person a fish you feed her for a day. If you teach her to fish she can feed herself for a lifetime. But only if she has a fishing rod!

So how do these hospitals which lack vital equipment manage? They give bolus doses of parenteral ketamine and the surgeon does his best without muscle relaxation and the patients' lungs are not protected by a cuffed endotracheal tube. Safe ventilation of the lungs is impossible and there is no oxygen. Imagine a patient with a bleeding ectopic pregnancy in hypovolaemic shock, managed only with ketamine, with no facility for endotracheal intubation, and no oxygen. It is a nightmare for both surgeon and anaesthetist. As we approach the 21st century, surely our patients deserve better?

In 1880 William Macewen first described endotracheal anaesthesia in the BMJ, yet large populations of sub-Saharan Africa still remain without this basic foundation of modern anaesthesia. This is an appalling and unacceptable position.

The cost of upgrading the majority of the hospitals to a safe level was estimated to be \$50, 000, the approximate cost of one anaesthetic machine in Western Europe. This is a small sum for the developed world but a large sum for a country that is heavily burdened by debt repayments and where life expectancy is 52 years. Twenty six of the world's poorest 30 nations are in Africa and our data may be the tip of the iceberg. In many of these countries the sums of money leaving the poor countries in debt repayment to Western banks is more than the combined budget for education and health.

We marvel at how the International Monetary Fund can pledge \$23bn to help Russia and \$100bn for Asia, but the \$8bn owed by Tanzania cannot be cancelled. We can only conclude that elimination of poverty of the poorest is not on the agenda. Our donors also need to see this data. It may surprise them.

There are a few dedicated teachers from the developed world who are willing to visit us and give short courses to improve our professional knowledge. We also get donations of books. We are grateful for all these contributions, which boost the morale of our professional groups. But until we can address the issue of inadequate equipment the rural areas will be blocked from any progress for decades to come.

(Raymond Towey, consultant anaesthetist, and Ernestina Kimaro, assistant medical officer anaesthetist, Mwanza,

Tanzania; email: emach@AfricaOnline.co.ke Ray was a active member of Catholic Peace Action when he was living here in England; and has been arrested many times with CPA at the MoD.)

Letter to the Universe, 26 July 1998

# Protestor was not 'daubing'

**R**EGARDING your report (5 July) of the prison sentence given to Pat Gaffney, General Secretary of Pax Christi, I wonder why you do not respect the words used by her to describe her action?

You report that she 'daubed' the Ministry of Defence building in Whitehall with blessed ash.

I have been a co-conspirator with Pat since the first Ash Wednesday peace witness in 1984. Every year since then we have never 'daubed' that building in which nuclear war preparations are made. We mark that building in the same way that we and your readers mark our/their foreheads on Ash Wednesday.

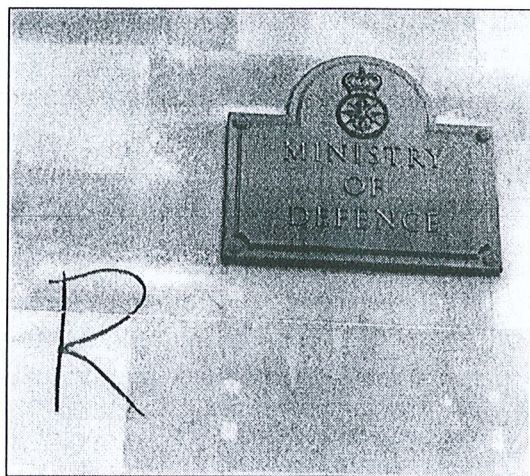
For us the reasoning is the same. By marking the

MoD with the same blessed charcoal that we use on our foreheads (blessed quite often by a Roman Catholic Priest) we are calling on the Government and community to turn away from the sin of nuclear weapons and to work for peace by peaceful means.

We do not daub our foreheads; we do not daub the MoD. To use the word 'daub' trivialises non-violent peacemakers and implies support for their prosecution and imprisonment.

Christian peace workers who accept the disruption of their lives and the suffering which resistance and imprisonment involves deserve their words to be reported accurately.

Dan Martin, London



Some of the 'damage'--the beginning of the word 'Repent'--maybe the beginning of repentance.