

CAAT*n*ews

**75% OF
ARMS DEALS
WOULD NOT
HAVE HAPPENED
WITHOUT OUR
HELP**



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CAAT was set up in 1974 and is a broad coalition of groups and individuals working for the reduction and ultimate abolition of the international arms trade, together with progressive demilitarisation within arms-producing countries.

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COVER: RICHIE ANDREW

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Close DESO – campaign countdown



CAAT protesting outside the BAE Systems AGM in May PATRICK DELANEY

23 January 2006 will see the launch of phase 2 of CAAT's Call the Shots campaign, which calls for DESO, the Government's arms sales unit, to be shut down.

DESO – the Defence Export Services Organisation – lies at the heart of government-arms industry collusion. For four decades DESO has been a central component of the extraordinary economic resources and political support provided by the Government for the arms trade. It is the arms companies' very own Ministry of Defence department, within which government and industry have worked hand-in-hand to broker arms sales to areas of conflict, repressive regimes and impoverished regions of the world. DESO itself claims that 75 per cent of the UK's arms sales would not have taken place without its work. Close DESO, and we hit a major part of the UK's weapons trade. Pages 8 and 9 reveal the reality of DESO's work in more detail.

2006 marks DESO's 40th anniversary, and CAAT and other organisations will be pressing the Government and the public to realise that DESO's time is up. The taxpayers' subsidy that DESO represents for the arms industry alone is reason to close it. And dedicating political resources to

exporting weapons to the war zones and oppressors that are central to DESO's 'target markets' is scandalous.

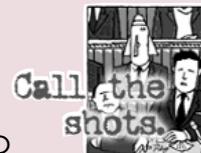
The campaign to close DESO is also a fitting continuation of our campaign to lock the revolving door. Heads of DESO are themselves 'revolvers', seconded from arms companies straight into the heart of government, often with their civil servants' salaries topped up directly by the arms industry. Through such special relationships, arms companies not only enjoy unique government support, but have sought to influence government policy, and even its foreign relations.

Despite its centrality to some of the worst abuses of the UK arms trade, DESO has maintained a remarkably low public profile. Many people have never even heard of it. In 2006 we hope to change this, and we need your help! CAAT's opinion poll last December found that 50.8 per cent of those surveyed oppose the use of DESO's 600 civil servants to promote arms exports, while only 15.8 per cent said they support this. We believe that if we can tell more people about DESO, they will want to see it closed.

Our next step will be to create a groundswell of support for closing DESO. As part of this we have begun

Key diary dates in 2006

We'll be announcing events around the Close DESO campaign throughout the year. Some upcoming key dates are below. Details on these will be available nearer the time.



23 January

Close DESO campaign launch – if you're in London, come and help launch the campaign on the national stage.

March

DESO's annual conference

4 May – BAE Systems AGM

Free campaign resources, including a briefing, action guide and campaign postcards, will be available to order from January. Please contact Patrick in the office (patrick@caat.org.uk).

asking other organisations to sign a statement calling for DESO's closure, to be published as the campaign is launched in January. We need you and other local campaigners to ask potentially sympathetic groups in your area to sign up. We also aim to gain wide media coverage of the campaign, both nationally and locally.

Finally, we will be applying pressure directly on Tony Blair. Part of this will be a postcard campaign targeting both the Prime Minister himself – who alone has the power to close DESO – and the Treasury, which forks out millions of pounds every year to fund DESO.

BECCIE D'CUNHA

Revolving door

UK envoy to Brunei is on BAE Systems' payroll

Charles Powell, who is on the payroll of BAE Systems, has been appointed as the Prime Minister's special envoy to Brunei. The appointment comes despite the fact that Powell's industry paymaster is currently in dispute with Brunei over the purchase of three warships (see *CAATnews* 190). The sultan of Brunei ordered three ships but is now refusing to make the final payments to BAE Systems and refusing to take delivery of the ships. The UK taxpayer may have to pay more than £20m for any outstanding default on the deal. Powell denied a conflict of interest and said he had already been acting in the role for three to four years.

GUARDIAN, 8/10/05

Former Permanent Secretary at Cabinet Office to advise SBAC

After retiring from the civil service in April this year, Sir David Omand is to take up a two-year post as strategy advisor to SBAC, the trade association representing suppliers to civil and military aerospace markets.

Omand is a former Permanent Secretary at the Cabinet Office. He also spent seven years on the UK's Joint Intelligence Committee.

SBAC, 26/9/05

Saudis deny reports of Typhoon talks

While Saudi defence officials have admitted holding talks with several companies over the purchase of a new fighter plane, they have denied press reports that the Saudi government has been secretly negotiating with the UK to buy the Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft.

DEFENSE NEWS, 10/10/05

Pakistan deal postponed after quake

Pakistan has put off buying a fleet of F-16 fighter planes from the US in order to prioritise emergency aid for earthquake survivors. The announcement came after the country's leader General Pervez Musharraf was criticised for refusing to cut military spending in the wake of the disaster.

The deal, which Washington had originally blocked in the 1990s in protest at Pakistan's nuclear plans, was given the go-ahead in March (see *CAATnews* 190). GUARDIAN, 5/11/05

India suspends Denel deals

India has cancelled a rifle deal with South Africa's Denel Land Systems and suspended other Denel deals after the arms company was placed under investigation for unfair commercial practices in securing the rifle contract.

Denel officials claim not to have transgressed any laws, nor to have breached provisions of its contract. In private, Denel officials claim that the company has become a victim of political manoeuvring after India's 2004 elections.

JANES DEFENCE WEEKLY, 12/10/05

Swan Hunter investigation?

The National Audit Office may launch an investigation into the cost of a contract to build two naval ships at the Swan Hunter shipyard on Tyneside. The shipyard is close to the constituency of the Prime Minister and some senior Labour politicians. Questions have been raised over the costs, which are double the original estimate. Concern focuses on £87m that was paid to the shipyard last year by the Ministry of Defence. Defence industry sources described the payment as "a bung disguised as a contract for extra work".

DAILY TELEGRAPH, 7/11/05; EXPRESS ON SUNDAY, 16/10/05

Spanish planes to Venezuela put on hold by US

A deal by Spanish aircraft-maker EADS CASA to sell ten transport planes to Venezuela has been put on hold while the US State Department scrutinises the company's applications for export licences. The planes contain US-manufactured parts sold to EADS CASA on the basis that they may not be sold to foreign companies and countries unless the US State Department grants approval.

The hold-up comes amidst increasing tension between Venezuela and the US, with Venezuela using its oil wealth to challenge the US doctrine of neo-liberalism. Venezuela's President Chavez has also threatened to give F-16 aircraft bought from the US to Cuba or China, saying that the US has failed to fulfil its maintenance commitments. Concerned over upsetting relations with Washington, Israel has already frozen its contract to upgrade the F-16s.

DEFENSE NEWS, 29/10/05; DAILY TELEGRAPH, 3/11/05

Explosives manufacturing shifts overseas

BAE Systems' decision to close manufacturing facilities in Bridgwater and Chorley means that explosives needed for bullets, shells and missiles used by the UK's armed forces will no longer be made in the UK. Manufacturing of the unique charges used in the UK's nuclear missiles will also shift overseas.

An article in the *Telegraph* speculated that the explosives may now be made in France, implying that UK forces may not be able to operate without French government approval. The union Prospect, which has many members working in the threatened plants, warned that the UK would be left "dangerously dependent on foreign suppliers".

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH, 6/11/05

National Gathering

CAAT's 2005 National Gathering was an inspiring day of lively and constructive discussion and debate. People came from far and wide to take part in our annual conference, which kicked off with a session outlining the next stage of our Call the Shots campaign. This will focus on shutting the Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO – see pages 3, 8 and 9). Then came a variety of workshops – from sessions on CAAT's Clean Investment and Arms Fairs campaigns; discussions about the future of arms controls and alternatives to war; as well as practical sessions on local campaigning and media skills.

The final plenary looked ahead to possible issues of the future and we began the process of shaping CAAT's campaign plan for 2007–2009. Lots of ideas for future work were discussed, including mercenaries, the transatlantic relationship, finding solutions to armed conflict and the increasing power of Europe. As well as bringing together a wonderful mix of people – from life-long peace campaigners to many people new to arms trade issues – the day helped to put the spotlight on CAAT and our work, and provided a chance to review our campaigning and our approach to many difficult questions. Thanks to all who took part. ANNA JONES

Steering Committee vacancy

There were three nominations for the four places for Supporter representatives on CAAT Steering Committee – Gillean Patterson, Sam Perlo-Freeman and Anna Stavrianakis.

They will serve during 2006 and 2007 joining Richie Andrew, Richard Bass, Dorothy Forbes and Nicholas Gilby for whom 2006 will be their second year.

Play a more active role

The shortage of nominations means there is still a place for another Supporter representative. If you are a supporter and interested in playing a more active role within CAAT then we would love to hear from you.

Please contact Ann at the CAAT office on 020 7281 0297 or ann@caat.org.uk for more details. The closing date for nominations is 15th December.

The CAAT office will be closed from 1pm on Tuesday 20th December until 10am on Wednesday 4th January. We wish you all the best for the festive season and for 2006.

Freedom to protest campaign

CAAT joined a wide variety of groups – including Gate Gourmet strikers, animal rights protestors, environmental and community activists – at the first 'Freedom to Protest' conference in October. The day provided a much-needed forum to share experiences and promote coordination at a time when our legitimate activities against oppression are increasingly threatened by repressive laws and more extensive police powers.

Blair may have suffered his first defeat by a majority supposedly concerned about civil liberties, yet many of our rights have already been sold down the river. Often disguised in legislation appearing to address major fears about terrorism and violent crime, severe restrictions have already been imposed on the



space in which protest and dissent can legally take place. The wave of new laws not only affects those who are openly criticising power: anti-terror laws already subject ethnic communities to the heavier hand of the state. Meanwhile, the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act, which criminalises unauthorized

protests around Parliament, means that from January 1st every offence becomes arrestable. This criminalises the public and creates an entirely different relationship between the state and citizens.

Discussions at the conference were lively and constructive. The day generated increased communication between groups, which will hopefully enable us to challenge future attacks on our rights. What is clear is that the struggle for basic rights and freedoms is not just one for 'activists' – a collective movement needs to be encouraged and we must all keep our eye on the spectre of the police state.

For more information see www.freedomtoprotest.org.uk

ANNA JONES

Bristol careers fair die-in

Students from Bristol University and the University of West England linked with People & Planet, Amnesty International and Bristol Campaign Against Arms Trade to stage a die-in in October outside the Science, Engineering and IT Careers Fair at Bristol University's Wills Memorial Building.

The die-in was held to protest at the presence of arms companies and the increasing militarisation of science. Carrying banners proclaiming 'Hands up against the arms trade', and asking visitors to the fair 'What do you want to be remembered for?', the students 'died' bloody and painful deaths to symbolise the death and destruction wrought by the arms trade.

Meanwhile, inside the fair itself a number of activists distributed an alternative guide to some of the companies that were present. The leafleters engaged in dialogue with students and pointed out some of the more uncomfortable facts about the companies they were potentially going to be working for. The guide



The die-in at the Bristol University careers fair BRISTOL CAAT

includes details on which Bristol University departments are engaged in research with, or for, the Ministry of Defence and/or the arms industry. Activists distributed over 500 guides and had some very interesting discussions with students attending the fair.

There was no hassle, although activists were asked to leave the hall on the grounds of 'health and safety reasons' once they were discovered.

By this logic, a few protestors are more of a health hazard than the companies that make weapons that kill!

The action was successful all in all, with a mix of dialogue and confrontation that hopefully will get people thinking.

People can get a copy of the alternative guide from the Bristol CAAT website at www.bristolcaat.org.uk. BRISTOL CAAT

Local campaigns news & views

South Essex CAAT group

South Essex CAAT has just been re-launched with two main focuses.

The first is a BAE Systems avionics centre in Basildon. South Essex CAAT wants to alert local people to the presence of the centre, so will be leafleting and planning demonstrations in the area.

The second focus for the group is CAAT's Clean Investment campaign, which will involve lobbying Essex County Council (ECC). The ECC Pension Fund has substantial investments in arms companies, including over a million shares in BAE Systems. South Essex CAAT has written to all CAAT supporters in

Essex to tell them about the existence of the new CAAT group and to ask them to send a letter to the Financial Strategy Investment Manager at ECC.

If you would like to get involved in South Essex CAAT, please contact Irene Willis on 01268 682820. For more information on the group's campaign for clean investment, please contact David Rice on 01376 321036.

Calling all CAAT groups...

We will soon have a page on the CAAT website (www.caat.org.uk) for local CAAT groups. So please do get in touch if your group has a

website that we can link to, or if you would be happy for your contact details to be on the site.

If you would like advice on setting up a website for your CAAT group, please contact James in the office (james@caat.org.uk).

This is your space

Please do keep sending in news of what you are doing locally or ideas you have for local campaigning. It is a great way to flag up any events that you are planning and to share ideas with other local campaigners on what works and what doesn't. Send your news and views to beccie@caat.org.uk

ARMS TRADERS IN THE HEART OF GOVERNMENT

James O’Nions explains why DESO should be shut down

It was with no apparent irony that Defence Secretary Denis Healy told Parliament in January 1966 “While the Government attach[es] the highest importance to making progress in the field of arms control and disarmament, we must also take what practical steps we can to ensure that this country does not fail to secure its rightful share of this valuable commercial market.” The comment was part of a speech in which Healy accepted in full the findings of the Stokes report, whose recommendations centred on the establishment of a “small but very high-powered central arms sales organisation”. This was also the beginning of a process that saw such an organisation established inside the Ministry of Defence.

Arms sales unit

Based on similar developments in the US under Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, the unit’s aim was to provide sales support to UK arms companies, many of which were publicly owned at the time, to enable them to sell their products more effectively in the global market. The chairman of a military electronics firm, Racal, was seconded to head up the Defence Sales Organisation, as the unit became known, starting an unbroken tradition of arms company executives occupying the post. In 1985 the DSO became the ‘Defence Export Services Organisation’ (DESO) but in all other respects remained the same. Today’s Head of Defence Export Services is Alan Garwood, previously Chief Operating Officer at missile manufacturer MBDA.

The arms industry considers DESO important enough to club together to supplement Garwood’s senior civil servant wage with an undisclosed amount to bring him up to the earnings of an industry executive. Yet despite the complete privatisation of the arms industry since DESO was set up, Garwood’s supplement is all that the arms industry pays towards what is essentially their very own taxpayer-funded marketing department. What’s more, no other industry is subsidised to such an extent. Relative to its share of total UK exports (which is less than 2 per cent), DESO receives thirteen times the budget of the government organisation which promotes civil exports, UK Trade and Investment.

Government connections

It isn’t simply the fact that 500 civil servants work to promote their arms exports that makes DESO so valuable to the industry. In theory, an arms industry trade association like the Defence Manufacturers Association could raise and spend DESO’s annual budget of £16 million on marketing itself. What they wouldn’t get is the unique, and uniquely undemocratic, access to the heart of government that DESO provides.

Because DESO is a government body, its resources are not limited to the offices that it maintains in 18 countries worldwide. It is able to draw on the support of the military attachés that are located in around 82 UK embassies. By some estimates, military attachés and their support staff spend an average of a third of their time on arms sales, using diplomatic contacts which otherwise would not be

available. In addition, DESO's London staff and its head have direct access not just to Defence Ministers but according to former Head of Defence Export Services Charles Masefield, directly to the Prime Minister.

Recent events have highlighted just what benefits arms companies garner from these links. In October this year, the *Guardian* reported that Tony Blair had visited DESO 'priority market' Saudi Arabia to push £40bn worth of Eurofighter Typhoons on behalf of BAE Systems. With senior ministers helping DESO in their mission, it is little wonder that the organisation can boast on its website that "successive Customer Satisfaction Surveys of the UK defence industry revealed that over 75 per cent of ...[arms exports] would not have been achieved without the assistance of DESO".

Key markets

DESO's strategic marketing plans also assist the arms companies. Whilst the UK remains prepared to sell arms to just about anyone, DESO does identify priority markets each year where it thinks the best opportunities for UK arms sales lie. The most recent available Strategic Market Analysis is for 2004 and lists 28 countries as key markets, ranging from rich countries such as Japan and Italy, to poorer ones such as Kazakhstan and India. DESO's overseas offices are opened and closed periodically as the emphasis shifts from one market to another. The organisation also attends strategically important international arms fairs. It spent £1m on its presence at 13 of these arms fairs in 2004 (see www.armsfairs.com for more information).

Two of the key markets, though, stand out from the rest, making up a 'premier league'. Even before the possible Eurofighter deal came onto the horizon, repressive absolutist monarchy Saudi Arabia received so much of DESO's attention that the work of up to 200 of DESO's staff focuses on this country alone. The importance of Saudi Arabia dates back to the 1986 Al Yamamah deal, which was negotiated personally by Margaret Thatcher, and was followed in 1988 by an even bigger deal that established an arms-supplying relationship with Saudi Arabia for the foreseeable future. It was, and remains, a de facto message of approval to a regime that Amnesty International says has a "dire human rights situation".

The other country in DESO's premier league is the world's foremost imperialist power, the USA. With its global military 'commitments', the US represents the biggest arms market in the world, a market into which DESO is clearly keen to get UK companies. BAE Systems, which now has several

US subsidiaries, is in a good position to supply the Pentagon from inside US territory, but others export from the UK. In fact, in 2004, the US represented the biggest export market for UK-manufactured arms, with licences issued for goods on the military list worth £340 million, plus open (unvalued) licences constituting much more.

Corporate welfare

In the forty years since Healy established the DSO, both the UK and the arms trade have changed a lot. In the '60s and '70s, the DSO operated in a sector that was largely owned by the state and geared towards producing equipment for the UK armed forces. It sold second-hand military equipment that was no longer needed by the UK, and surplus production from equipment manufactured primarily for the UK. Whilst Stokes was keen to see the industry plan ahead to make its products more attractive to these secondary customers, this was still a far cry from the privately-owned, internationalised arms industry of today.

In line with these changes, DESO now seems to support the sale of equipment with only the most tenuous links to the UK, such as Swedish Gripen fighters with UK-made components. Furthermore, in April 2005 the Disposal Sales Agency, which sells the second-hand equipment, was moved out of DESO, leaving the organisation even more squarely focused on what its mission has evolved to be: the most barefaced form of corporate welfare.

Of course, there was no more ethical justification for running a government department with the sole aim of global arms proliferation in the 1960s than there is today. In four decades, DESO has helped facilitate sales of weapons that were used by human-rights abusing states from General Pinochet's Chile to Suharto's Indonesia. It has also presided over arms sales to both sides of a conflict, such as during the Iran-Iraq war of 1980-88.

Yet as developments in the arms industry have made the justifications for DESO's continued existence increasingly redundant, the influence of arms companies over government policy ensures that the organisation itself continues to occupy a prestigious place in the Ministry of Defence. That influence is maintained by a revolving door between government and industry, through the multiple advisory bodies that arms executives sit on, by corporate lobbying, and crucially through the existence of DESO itself. The Defence Export Services Organisation stands at the centre of a pernicious nexus of corporate influence on government, for which we have to pay. Any strategy for ending the misery caused by UK arms exports must include closing it down.

Heads of DESO in the last 20 years

Colin Chandler 1985-89

Seconded from British Aerospace; went back to Siemens Plessey, the TI Group, Racal, Vickers.

Alan Thomas 1989-94

Seconded from Raytheon.

Charles Masefield 1994-1998

Seconded from Avro and Airbus (part-owned by BAE Systems); went back to GEC and BAE Systems.

Tony Edwards 1998-2002

Seconded from TI Group

Alan Garwood 2002-present

Seconded from MBDA (part-owned by BAE Systems).

A hollow gesture?

Nicholas Gilby assesses the Government's support for an Arms Trade Treaty

The Control Arms campaign for an Arms Trade Treaty was launched in October 2003 by Amnesty International, Oxfam and the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), which includes CAAT. It calls for an international treaty to make states "exercise the highest degree of responsibility in international arms transfers".

The campaign uses a set of 'Global Principles for Arms Transfers' in its advocacy activities (www.iansa.org/control_arms/documents/att-bms-en.pdf).

What is an Arms Trade Treaty?

An Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) would be a legally binding treaty that would prevent transfers which:

- breach international law (e.g. UN embargoes)
- lead to serious violations of human rights, international humanitarian law and crimes against humanity
- are likely to adversely affect regional stability and sustainable development

Additionally the treaty would force states to provide annual reports on their arms exports and submit to common standards of export control.

On the agenda

Control Arms has had much success this year. At the UN Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms in July, 13 countries agreed to support the introduction of an ATT, and in October in Luxembourg the 25 EU countries did as well. Currently 42 countries are backing an ATT.

The UK backs it too – Jack Straw announced his support at 2004's Labour Party Conference, and spoke at greater length at a Saferworld lecture in March 2005. Labour and the Liberal Democrats both included support for an ATT in their election

manifestoes. The campaign has pushed arms control up the international agenda for the foreseeable future.

CAAT's position

CAAT formally supports an ATT. An international instrument that genuinely stopped arms exports to human rights abusers, regions of tension and warmongers the world over would be a great step forward. To be effective, though, such a treaty must not only prevent the circulation of Kalashnikov rifles amongst African conflict zones by shady arms brokers. It must also address state involvement in the arms trade: the fundamental engine of both the 'legal' and the 'illegal' trade (indeed, an estimated 90 per cent of 'illegal' arms transfers begin in 'legal' sales).

The key question for us is 'how would an ATT change UK arms exports?' Jack Straw's speech in March was hazy on the treaty's desired outcome. He did gesture at the central aspects of the arms trade that underpin CAAT's advocacy, stating that the "tanks of repressive regimes account for an enormous amount of avoidable human misery across the world"; noting that in the Congo "six years of conflict have caused millions of deaths"; and arguing that "developing countries who spend already over-stretched budgets on armaments for which they have no clear need are bound to have too little left for health, education and vital infrastructure."

Changes

What kind of changes in the UK arms trade, then, are needed to satisfy Straw's criteria?

- To stop the "tanks of repressive regimes" Labour would have prevented Britain's export of Scorpion tanks and Saracen Armoured Personnel Carriers, used in Jakarta in 1998 during the last days of the Suharto dictatorship, when hundreds were

killed. They were used by the Indonesian Army in Aceh in 2002 and 2003, when they committed massive violations of international humanitarian law.

- Labour would have stopped the sale of spares for Hawk jets for Zimbabwe, used in the Congo war which caused "millions of deaths".
- Labour would stop promoting sales to Pakistan, desperately impoverished in parts, yet committing a quarter of government spending to arms.

Government response

Yet the responses of UK Government departments to the ATT tell a different story. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has made it clear that, since the UK's existing regulations were the standard to which an ATT would bring other countries, they did not envisage an ATT altering the pattern of UK arms exports at all. Tellingly, when this summer CAAT met with Alan Garwood, the head of the MOD's Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO), Garwood professed not to have even heard of the ATT. And harmonising arms trade regulations in this way would in any case suit the domestic arms industry, forever complaining about not competing on a "level playing field". This perhaps explains why the Defence Manufacturer's Association is amongst the ATT's official supporters.

For the ATT to have a positive impact on the role of the UK and other arms trade giants proliferating arms across the globe, the gap between Straw's rhetoric and its political reality needs drastic change.

NICHOLAS GILBY IS A MEMBER OF CAAT'S STEERING COMMITTEE

Reed campaign update

Calling teachers, lawyers, academics, doctors...

In September the *Lancet*, arguably the world's most prestigious medical journal, published a letter organised by CAAT and signed by public healthcare professionals from five continents. The letter highlighted the surprising involvement of the *Lancet's* publisher, publishing giant Reed Elsevier, in the global arms trade. Reed Elsevier provides vital information services to a raft of

landmines clandestinely offered for sale in 1999. This September, just five days after Reed's company secretary wrote in the *Lancet* that "compliance checks take place before and throughout the exhibition", and that "should any exhibitor be found to be displaying or promoting prohibited items during DSEi, its stand would immediately be closed", one journalist found an exhibitor openly (and illegally) promoting torture equipment.

makes it impossible to police this distinction. Inside DSEi's exhibition hall this year, land rovers – highlighted as life-saving humanitarian vehicles by DSEi's spokesperson – were mounted with machine guns. Military humanitarianism provides moral whitewash for the warships, unmanned fighting vehicles and weapons demonstrations that, in fact, headline DSEi's publicity material.

"It will be incomprehensible to the *Lancet's* readers that our owners are engaged in a business that so clearly undermines not only principles of public-health practice, but also the policies of intergovernmental agencies."
The Lancet, 10 September 2005

major professions: not just healthcare professionals but teachers, lawyers, librarians, academics and social workers, whose work is in the public interest and underpinned by principles of democracy, equality and human rights. Yet through its subsidiaries, Reed Exhibitions and Spearhead Exhibitions, the company also organises a series of arms fairs around the world – most recently DSEi 2005 in London's Docklands. These 'defence exhibitions' are a centrepiece of the deadly business of the international arms trade.

Illegal exhibits at arms fairs

Highlighting the incompatibility of these twin business spheres, the letter prompted the *Lancet's* editorial board itself to issue a scathing condemnation of its own publisher in the same issue, calling upon Reed Elsevier "to divest itself of all business interests that threaten human, and especially civilian, health and well-being". Under fire from its own flagship publication, Reed Elsevier responded by insisting that its activities are entirely legal. The company neglected to mention a string of legal breaches by exhibitor companies at DSEi, including

According to the exhibitor itself, "we had received permission from the organizers who approved all of our brochures". So much for "tight regulation" and "compliance checks".

In any case, as the *Lancet* pointed out, just because certain weapons sales are legal doesn't mean that they are right. Reed itself recognises this principle through its subscription to the UN Global Compact – a set of standards which require companies "to be fully aware of potential human rights issues both upstream and downstream" of their business. This undertaking is at odds with inviting repressive regimes, from Indonesia to Saudi Arabia, to shop for instruments of oppression and conflict.

Dual-use equipment

Reed Elsevier has also resorted to arguing that much equipment displayed at DSEi, "such as air ambulances or equipment for fire control and fire-fighting...are vital elements for life-saving activities". Such equipment can of course save lives. But even humanitarian equipment is often dual-use – and thus covered by arms control laws when sold to military customers like those at DSEi. Selling it at arms fairs

Stop DSEi 2007

Arms fairs like DSEi are not promoting peace or saving lives. They help maximise the profits of arms companies at the expense of human life. Following DSEi 2005's disastrous publicity, we are now at an exciting and critical time in which stopping DSEi 2007 is a very real possibility. But to make this happen, we need more of Reed Elsevier's consumers to follow the *Lancet's* lead and call on the company to disengage itself from the arms trade. Teachers who use Harcourt resources can highlight the arms trade's effect on children across the world. Lawyers and researchers who use LexisNexis information systems can question Reed Elsevier's disregard for human rights. Academics and professionals using Reed Elsevier's numerous journals and magazines, from *New Scientist* to *Community Care*, can challenge the company on the ethics of promoting weapons to developing countries. Union motions, public letters and articles in Reed's publications themselves, perhaps even boycotts of the company's products – all can make it clear that Reed Elsevier is risking its reputation and integrity by playing a role in death and destruction around the world.

Please get in touch if you can help the campaign to stop Reed Elsevier organising arms fairs. For more info: <http://www.caat.org.uk/armsfairs/reed.shtml>. ANNA JONES AND MIKE LEWIS

Stop the Saudi arms deal

Nothing better illustrates CAAT's current Call the Shots campaign on the corporate influence over Government than the news that Prime Minister Tony Blair dropped in on Saudi Arabia on 2nd July to show his support for a £40bn deal to sell Eurofighter Typhoon fighter planes made by BAE Systems. The *Guardian* reported that the deal is opposed by the Foreign Office, as well as by the Serious Fraud Office (SFO), which is currently investigating bribes allegedly paid by BAE Systems to members of the Saudi Royal Family. In addition, it appears that King Abdullah has already approved a £2.8bn deal for BAE Systems to upgrade 96 Tornado fighters.

Tony Blair is playing a central role in brokering an arms deal involving one of the world's most repressive and politically unstable regimes. The Saudis are also said to be dictating UK policy by making the deal contingent on the UK government



Tony Blair and Prince Abdullah at Riyadh Air Base in July 2005

ZAINAL ABD HALIM/REUTERS

granting three political favours, including the deportation of dissident Saudi refugees in the UK, and the dropping of the SFO investigation. Additionally, the Saudi government wants British Airways to re-open its route to Riyadh.

The Foreign Office is said to be wary about the deal because it would involve the presence of thousands of

UK technicians in Saudi Arabia in addition to those currently there and servicing the Tornado planes. These foreign nationals can be terrorist targets.

- If you have not already done so, please contact your MP immediately – either by email which can be found via <http://www.locata.co.uk/commons> or at the House of Commons, Westminster, London SW1A 0AA. Ask him or her to convey your concern about the proposed deals to the Prime Minister: say that you think it is wrong that the Government should put BAE Systems' interests before those of regional security, the human rights of the Saudi people (especially women), the movement to end corruption, and UK taxpayers, who could stand to pick up the bill if the Saudi government is overthrown.

ANN FELTHAM

Business Appointments rules review

David Blunkett's injudicious failure to consult the Business Appointments Committee when taking up a lucrative directorship has generated a storm of criticism from critics of Labour 'sleaze'. Distracted by Blunkett's downfall, the media and the Opposition have entirely ignored a far greater challenge to the accountability of public servants' relationship with the private sector: Labour's ongoing efforts to widen the revolving door between government and industry, by hamstringing the Business Appointment rules themselves.

In July 2004, Number 10 appointed Sir Patrick Brown to undertake a review of the Business Appointment rules explicitly intended, as Blair himself explained, "to make it easier for civil servants to move into the private sector and

back again". With public attention focussed on ministers' business interests, CAAT fears that the review will quietly remove existing weak restrictions on the much larger movement of senior civil servants between Whitehall departments and related industries. The review's head is himself no stranger to this lucrative revolving door, having spearheaded bus and rail privatisation as Permanent Secretary at the Department of Transport, before becoming chairman of the new Go Ahead bus and rail company.

At stake is not simply the probity of a single minister, but the political influence wielded by entire business sectors – led by the arms trade. According to the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments, executives of Britain's

arms companies participate in "a traffic between the [Ministry of Defence] and the contractors which supply it". Little wonder that they have been able to rely upon personal lobbying from Blair and his defence ministers to pursue recent arms deals with India and Saudi Arabia, to the detriment of human rights, conflict resolution and poverty reduction.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the new scrutiny of the Government's relationship with big business, as *CAATnews* goes to press, the report has yet to appear despite its publication being already overdue. CAAT is calling for the report to be published immediately, and its findings subjected to full debate.

MIKE LEWIS

The arms trade on campus

With the revelation that nearly half of the UK's universities invest in the arms trade, CAAT successfully re-launched its university Clean Investment campaign in October. We were alarmed to find such massive financial links between a trade fuelling conflict and poverty, and institutions committed to internationalism and progress. Our research made regional and national news, with the *Times Higher Educational Supplement* breaking the story on the day of the launch, picked up by the *Times*, *Guardian Education*, and several local papers. University newspapers – including York, Oxford, Cambridge, Swansea and Manchester – have also featured prominent pieces on major university arms trade investments.

Success at SOAS

The campaign has already met with success. Just seven days after CAAT's findings appeared on the front page of Europe's largest student newspaper, the *London Student* (which prompted pressure from members of the Association of University Teachers), the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) announced that it would sell all its arms company shares, and consider an ethical investment policy. SOAS cited CAAT's disclosures and subsequent media attention as their motivation. The decision presents a clear challenge to other educational arms trade investors. It proves, once again, that divestment is legally possible, and that the views of staff and students on ethical issues are becoming harder to ignore.

Tackling the 'Ivy League'

And after just a few weeks, the campaign is taking off at many universities. CAAT volunteers Jo Wittams and Tim Street have been speaking at events in Oxford, Cambridge and London at universities that are members of the university arms investor 'Ivy League',



Campaigning for clean investment

holding over 3.5 million shares between them. These events have mobilised interest in arms trade investments amongst groups concerned with issues from general ethical investment to the privatisation of the education system. Local anti-arms trade campaigns have since been established, and innovative ideas for university campaigns developed.

Freedom of Information

This year the university campaign has been significantly strengthened by the Freedom of Information Act, enabling access to much more information than ever before. From having obtained information on 63 universities, colleges and pension funds in previous years, we now have details on 183 institutions. Students and staff at almost every university across the country can find information regarding their institution on the new website (<http://www.caat.org.uk/campaigns/clean-investment/universities/>). The site includes investment details, email

addresses for financial decision-makers, and outlines of sample letters to adapt and send.

Tip of the iceberg?

There remain, however, significant gaps in our knowledge. The growing popularity of managed funds has meant that although some universities have sent lists of the managed funds in which they invest, we have been unable to obtain details of the company shares held in these funds - including confirmation of arms trade shares. This is an area where staff and students can make an impact and reveal more university arms trade investments. One student contacted a fund management company for details and received a full list of companies in the fund – an indication that this information is more likely to be available to those who have a link to an institution, and an assumed interest in the performance of the funds. We welcome any further information in this area.

Nor is investing in arms companies the only way in which university wealth supports the arms industry. Under government-sponsored schemes like the 'Towers of Excellence', universities increasingly collaborate with arms companies such as BAE Systems and Rolls Royce on programmes that develop military technology. Research and Development money awarded to universities directly benefits military corporations.

But with the growing awareness and support of students and staff, universities will have to take notice. Educational institutions taking responsibility for their actions, and divesting from arms exporting companies, will send a powerful message about the legitimacy of the arms trade.

For more information on the Clean Investment campaign see www.caat.org.uk or contact the CAAT office.

Fundraising

By Kathryn Busby

I am delighted to report that Steven Downey successfully ran the Chicago Marathon on Sunday 9th October, finishing in an impressive 4 hours, 22 minutes and 6 seconds. Congratulations Steve! So far we have received sponsorship donations of nearly £1,000 from CAATnews readers and through Steve's online fundraising page but we would love to push that total even higher. If you haven't yet had a chance to sponsor Steve, there is still time to send in your donation. Please make cheques payable to CAAT and mark the back 'Chicago Marathon'.

This December will see the latest in an impressive list of club nights that have taken place in recent years to raise money for CAAT. Organisers Nizim have been holding events in aid of various causes since 2003, and on Saturday 3rd December CAAT will be their beneficiary for the



Steven Downey

first time. Nizim Presentz Emancipate promises to be a thrilling mixture of live jazz, funk, hip hop, electro, breaks and breakcore; so if you fancy a night of live music, DJs and dancing, come down to the Brixton Telegraph, Brixton Hill, London SW2 and join us. Entry is £5 before 11pm, £8 after and you can see the full line-up on www.caat.org.uk

This year, we have been lucky enough to receive a number of

donations given in honour of CAAT supporters celebrating birthdays and anniversaries. A few months ago, one couple raised £240 by asking their friends and family to make donations to CAAT instead of buying them gifts for their Golden Wedding Anniversary. This is a wonderful way of helping CAAT, so if you have a birthday, anniversary or other celebration coming up, but would like your friends to give you something a bit different this year, then why not use the occasion to support our campaign?

Finally, I'd like to give a quick mention to Robin Yu, who has accepted the CAAT Skydiving Challenge and will be leaping from 3,000 feet to raise money for CAAT in 2006. Watch this space to find out when he will be doing his jump and how you can support him.

See you in the New Year.



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For more information on all of these contact the CAAT office on 020 7281 0297 or if you have any enquiries not covered below contact enquiries@caat.org.uk

Subscribe to a CAAT email list

Sign up to receive the monthly CAAT bulletin with the latest news and events; to receive press releases; to join the list for the CAAT Action Network and find out about nonviolent direct action to stop the arms trade; or to find out when the latest CAATnews is on the website.

Contact enquiries@caat.org.uk or visit www.caat.org.uk/lists

Make a donation

The donations of our supporters enable CAAT to struggle for a world without arms trading; without your help there would be no campaign. Support CAAT by sending us a cheque, setting up a regular standing order donation, or by taking part in a fundraising event.

Contact Kathryn at kathryn@caat.org.uk

Contact your MP

It is estimated that every letter written to a politician represents about 80 people who care but haven't got around to writing. If you would like to visit or write to your MP, contact the CAAT office to find out if your MP has shown an interest in arms trade issues.

On some issues it is also worth contacting your MEP. If you live in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales, you can also raise issues that have an impact on employment or the economy with your national representatives.

Contact Ann at ann@caat.org.uk

Campaign locally

CAAT has a network of local contacts and groups around the UK who take responsibility for promoting anti-arms trade activity and the work of CAAT in their area. Get in contact if you would like to know what is happening in your area or if you are interested in becoming a local contact or setting up a group. All that's needed is a willingness to raise awareness of arms trade issues in any way that you feel is appropriate.

Contact Beccie at beccie@caat.org.uk for info, including the Local Campaigns Pack.

Raise awareness

Organising a public meeting, using the local media and running a street stall have proved effective ways for CAAT groups to raise awareness of arms trade issues. CAAT can provide speakers for public meetings, materials for stalls and can also help with publicity.

Contact Anna at action@caat.org.uk or Beccie beccie@caat.org.uk

For media info contact Mike at press@caat.org.uk

Research the arms companies

CAAT has produced a range of research on the UK's main arms companies. However, staff at the CAAT office are not able to track all arms company developments and would appreciate receiving any information you find. This can include anything from watching out for information in your local press, to undertaking basic research in your local library, to approaching a company directly for information.

Contact Ian at ian@caat.org.uk

Protest against the arms trade

A protest can confront the arms trade and illustrate that many people do not think that the arms trade is an ordinary, acceptable business. In addition, a protest can generate a lot of publicity, which will raise awareness about the company and the arms trade in general. CAAT is a non-violent organisation and any protest organised under the name of CAAT needs to be non-violent (contact the office for the CAAT guidelines).

Contact Anna at action@caat.org.uk

Join the CAAT Christian Network

The Network raises arms trade issues within national church structures and local churches.

Contact Beccie at beccie@caat.org.uk

Order a CAAT publication

CAAT produces briefings, reports and leaflets on a range of issues.

Contact Patrick at patrick@caat.org.uk

Cartoon from the archives



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Campaigns diary

3 December

Nizim Presentz Emancipate. Club night in aid of CAAT – live jazz, funk, hip hop, electro, breaks, breakcore. At the Brixton Telegraph, Brixton Hill, London SW2. £5 before 11pm, £8 after.

10 December

Stop the Arms Trade – Defend the Right to Protest. Mass demo in Brighton called by local anti-arms trade campaigners and supported by CAAT. Meet Churchill Square in Brighton at 12 noon. See www.smashedo.org.uk

10 December

International Peace Conference. Organised by Stop the War, 10am–8pm, Royal Horticultural Hall, 80 Vincent Square, London SW1P 2PE. With speakers from Iraq, the US and UK. See www.stopwar.org.uk

23 January 2006

Close DESO campaign launch. See page 3 and pages 8–9

4 May 2006

BAE Systems AGM. CAAT will be protesting at the Annual General Meeting of the UK's largest arms company. More details nearer the time.

17–23 July 2006

Farnborough International arms fair. More details nearer the time.

Weekly

Picket of Spearhead. Contact picket@dsei.org for details.

Monthly

Second Monday of each month until the cancellation of all future ExCel Arms Fairs. 7.30pm – East London Against the Arms Fair meeting at the Garden Cafe, 7 Cundy Road, London E16. Contact East London Against the Arms Trade, c/o CIU, Durning Hall, Earlham Grove, London E7.

See www.caat.org.uk for more information on arms trade events

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Email: enquiries@caat.org.uk

Website: www.caat.org.uk

