CAATNews



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CAATNEWS

Editor Melanie Jarman editor@caat.org.uk

Legal Consultant Glen Reynolds

Proofreader Rachel Vaughan

Design Richie Andrew

Contributors Kathryn Busby, Beccie D'Cunha, Ann Feltham, Nicholas Gilby, Anna Jones, Mike Lewis, Emma Mayhew, James O'Nions, Jim Jepps, Ian Prichard, Tim Street, Jo Wittams.

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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.

Campaign Against Arms Trade 11 Goodwin Street, London N4 3HQ tel: 020 7281 0297 fax: 020 7281 4369 email: enquiries@caat.org.uk web: www.caat.org.uk

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Slow dismantling of arms trade fictions

Arms trade campaigners are used to responding to sudden conflicts and crises. We sometimes forget that change can come through a gradual creep of opinion and event.

Indonesia provided the first major test of New Labour's 'ethical foreign policy'. Just a few weeks after arriving in office in 1997 it approved export licences for a raft of military equipment - from fighter jets to water cannons – despite the Indonesian army's ongoing brutalities in East Timor and Aceh. Faced with a national storm of criticism coordinated by CAAT and the Indonesian human rights campaign TAPOL, the Government defended its tattered ethical policy by pointing to the legal machinery regulating the use of exported military equipment. Ministers insisted that the Indonesian government had given 'assurances' that the weaponry was not to be used for internal repression. Even photographs of Scorpion tanks (made in Coventry) deployed on Aceh's streets in 2003 failed to puncture the Government's suspension of disbelief.

It is grimly appropriate, then, that the Tactica water cannons exported in their heady first hundred days have finally discredited this legal plank of New Labour's arms control regime. As Nicholas Gilby explains on page 10, CAAT and TAPOL have revealed photographic evidence to the Observer that Tacticas are again being used, this time in Indonesia's new human rights crisis zone, West Papua, directly contradicting a ministerial statement issued only the previous week. This elicited a remarkable parliamentary admission: that CAAT has been right about enduse assurances for years. The Government has stopped seeking such assurances, because they are "not enforceable".

This seems like bad news. And it indicates how far human rights have slipped down the Government's agenda since 1997, when Foreign



Indonesian police WATCHPAPUA

Secretary Robin Cook insisted that "we [make] a very clear distinction between legitimate defence exports...which could not be used for internal repression, and equipment...like the water cannons, which can be". Eight years on, his successor has casually argued that water cannons in West Papua cannot be regarded as instruments of internal repression at all.

But CAAT and TAPOL's persistent campaigning has dismantled the fiction of 'assurances' central to the Government's defence of its appalling arms export record. Campaigners have also begun to undermine arms companies' reliance upon these flimsy governmental frameworks to avoid their own responsibility. In December, East Timor's Reconciliation Commission made a groundbreaking demand that reparations should be paid not only by the governments that armed Indonesia's brutal occupying forces, but by the Western companies that sold the arms. Weapons salesmen have long hidden behind the argument that their trade is legally licenced: governments' responsibility, not theirs. Bit by bit, this legal fiction too is being worn away. MIKE LEWIS

DSEi campaign: update on local developments

The struggle to stop the DSEi arms fair continues. In December, a motion was put to Newham Council calling on its Mayor to chair a Citizens' Enquiry into the arms fair. The fair has taken place in the East London borough every two years since 2001. It is due to return in 2007, despite huge local opposition and in contempt of large numbers of refugees who came to Newham fleeing conflicts that the arms fair helps to fuel. An Enquiry would have brought together Newham residents and community organisations with the fair's organisers (the Ministry of Defence and Spearhead Exhibitions), as well as representatives of host site the ExCel Centre, in order to evaluate the fair's impact. However, Labour councillors, instructed by the Mayor, voted to remove the section related to the Enquiry and resolved to condemn the arms fair but not to take any specific action.

The vote ignored a 2005 Council motion, which passed unanimously and called the weapons fair "totally immoral" and demanded that it should not return to Newham in 2007. It also ignored the recommendation of the Council's own Scrutiny Commission – previously set up to scrutinise the fair's negative local impact – which called on the Mayor to "ensure that effective mechanisms are put in place to ensure that local residents' interests are placed at the centre of future planning" over the arms fair.

East London Against the Arms Fair (ELAAF) will continue to protest outside the ExCel Centre, calling on other ExCel users to voice their opposition. Plans are underway for another lcoal demonstration to show that bringing the fair back in 2007 would be unjustifiable. In addition, CAAT's campaign to encourage Reed Elsevier to give up organising arms fairs continues to gain momentum – with your help we can stop DSEi from returning.

For more info see www.armsfairs.com. ANNA JONES

Iraq mercenary "trophy videos"

Alleged "trophy videos" showing private security contractors shooting Iraqi civilians have been posted on the internet, sparking concern that these companies may be responsible for killing innocent Iraqis.

The Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats have called for an inquiry into the rules of engagement covering private security firms in Iraq. Foreign Secretary Jack Straw has ruled this out, saying that the videos are a matter for the Iraqi government.

The video material appeared on a site unofficially linked to UK company Aegis Defence Services. Aegis has been criticised by the US government for failing to ensure that its employees are properly trained to use guns, while Aegis employees claim to be subject to a smear campaign.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH, 4/12/05; OBSERVER, 11/12/05

Russia sales to Iran

The US has raised concerns over Russia's agreement to sell missiles and patrol boats to Iran and to upgrade the country's MiG and Sukhoi fighter jets. The \$1bn deal is the largest Iran-Russia deal of the decade. Iran says the deal is for strictly defensive systems but the US is not convinced. With Russian arms sales for 2005 expected to have declined for the first time in eight years, Russia is looking to expand its customers beyond China and India. DEFENSE NEWS, 12/12/05

MiG deal for Algeria and India

RSK MiG has invited Algeria and India to exchange their fleets of MiG-25s for new MiG-31 interceptors in buy-back deals that would support RSK MiG's bid to extend MiG-25 operations for Libya and Syria. Should Algeria and India accept the deal, their MiG-25s will be disassembled and used as spare parts for Libyan and Syrian aircraft. FLIGHT INTERNATIONAL, 13-19 DECEMBER 05

EU arms to China despite embargo

Despite the existence of an arms embargo, EU countries exported more than 340m euro of military equipment to China in 2004. Eight of the EU's 25 member states were involved in deals, with France accounting for the largest share followed by the UK and the Czech Republic. The embargo only applies to weapons systems in their entirety, so has been circumvented by the sale of components for arms or dual-use goods. ECONOMIST, DECEMBER 2005

UK threatens Joint Strike Fighter withdrawal

In December the UK threatened to pull out of the Joint Strike Fighter project with the US. The threat came after rows over the Pentagon's reluctance to agree to transfer of technology and because of likely increases in the cost of each plane. Any withdrawal would have serious repercussions for the UK's two main contributors to the project, BAE Systems and Rolls-Royce. SUNDAY TIMES, 4/12/05

Bribery

BAE arrest

A senior executive at BAE Systems has been arrested by detectives investigating claims over a BAE "slush fund" for arms contracts with Saudi Arabia.

Peter Wilson, former head of the Al-Yamamah deal with Saudi Arabia, was arrested "on suspicion of corruption" and released without charge after being interviewed.

Former BAE Chair Sir Richard Evans was also interviewed over the same matter by the Serious Fraud Office. Evans is the most senior BAE executive to have been questioned so far.

GUARDIAN, 24/11/05 DAILY TELEGRAPH, 23/12/05

Israeli CEO investigated

Moshe Keret, Chief Executive Officer of Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI), is subject to a warrant that stops him from entering the company's premises. The warrant comes as Keret faces allegations over bribery linked to IAI contracts. JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY, 23/11/05

Compass suspended

Compass Group's military supplies division has been suspended as a service provider to the UN after allegations of corruption over a £35m deal to supply food and water to UN peacekeepers in Liberia. TIMES, 22/10/05

US congressman admits to it

US congressman Randy 'Duke' Cunningham has admitted to taking \$2.4m in bribes over military contracts. The Republican congressman was known for his interest in military issues and is a former member of the House Appropriations sub-committee, which controls military spending. INDEPENDENT, 29/11/05

BAE welcomes release of MoD's long-term strategy

The Ministry of Defence pleased BAE Systems last December when it unveiled long-term plans for military procurement and heralded a restructuring of the military industry. The plans included a major push towards unstaffed aerial vehicle technologies and a warning that the industry needed to address overcapacity. BAE welcomed the longterm strategy but one rival company described it as a return to a more nationalist procurement policy.

The release of the strategy came a day after BAE Systems was given most of the work on a £3.6bn programme to build two aircraft carriers for the Royal Navy. TIMES, 16/12/05; JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY, 21/12/05; GUARDIAN 15/12/05

UK protects arms trafficker

The UK has bowed to US pressure to keep the name of a notorious arms trafficker off a list of those subject to planned UN sanctions. The trafficker is alleged to be supplying coalition forces in Iraq. The UK had initially supported moves to freeze the assets of the trafficker, Victor Bout, who was described in 2000 by Peter Hain MP as a "chief sanctions-buster" and "merchant of death".

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, NOVEMBER 05

Torch protest

Night exercises in preparation for deployment to Iraq by the Army's £40m Apache helicopters were grounded after a protest by disgruntled farmers. The farmers shone torches at the helicopters from Middle Wallop base in Hampshire after growing tired of low-flying night exercises that scared their livestock. TIMES, 18/11/05

US sanctions against China

The Chinese government has demanded that the US lift sanctions it imposed on six Chinese state-run companies after charges of illicit sales to Iran. Beijing says that the action is unjustified and not beneficial to US-China co-operation in curbing the spread of weapons. WASHINGTON TIMES, 29/12/05

Spain goes ahead with Venezuela deal

Spain has signed a deal to provide patrol ships, maritime surveillance and transport aircraft to Venezuela. The deal was initially put on hold due to US opposition (see CAATnews 193). The US still threatens to obstruct the deal by refusing to grant re-transfer rights on US parts and technology included in the equipment. Up to half of the aircraft's components are made in the US or under licence from US companies. JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY, 7/12/05

Bumper year for Israeli arms sales

Israel expected to exceed its goal for military exports in 2005, with predictions that contracts up to \$3bn may have been signed by the year's end. Israel was one of the world's top five arms-exporting nations in 2004. Since 1996, Israel has alternated between fourth and sixth place in worldwide arms sales with the exception of a year of record sales in 2002, when it was third among arms exporters.

Meanwhile, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry revealed in an October Parliamentary Question that 72 companies in the UK hold licences for the export of arms to Israel.'

HANSARD, 24/10/05; DEFENSE NEWS, 21/11/05

Indonesia

US lifts Indonesia embargo

The US has ended a six-year arms embargo on Indonesia, arguing that it is no longer in Washington's strategic interest to isolate the country. The decision drew criticism from groups concerned about human rights abuses in Indonesia and East Timor.

With the end of the embargo Jakarta has indicated that it wants to reactivate grounded Lockheed Martin C-130 transports and F-16A/B fighter planes. ASSOCIATED PRESS, 22/11/05; FLIGHT INTERNATIONAL, 6-12 DECEMBER 05

Indonesia military admits corporate "support"

The Indonesia military has admitted that for decades a US gold-mining conglomerate has been providing direct support to army units in West Papua accused of human rights abuses.

A spokesperson for the Indonesian military said that the company Freeport-McMoRan "provides support such as vehicles, fuel and meals directly to the units in the field". The spokesperson was responding to a New York Times article that detailed company payments of \$20 million to military commanders in exchange for protection of facilities. ASSOCIATED PRESS, 29/12/05

Colombia buys Super Tucanos

The Colombian government has signed a \$235m contract for 25 Brazilian Embraer EMB-314 Super Tucano light attack aircraft following negotiations that had been delayed by the US State Department. The Colombian Air Force had intended to use US-provided Plan Colombia funds for the deal but after resistance from the US State Department decided to proceed with national funds. JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY, 21/12/05

OTHER ACTIONS

BAE Systems AGM 2006

BAE Systems is the UK's largest arms exporter. It proudly fulfils its vision of "innovating for a safer world" by producing ever more sophisticated air, sea and land systems designed to kill. Satisfied customers have included debt-stricken Tanzania, conflict-ridden Indonesia (see page 10) and the autocratic Saudi regime, one of the most extreme abusers of human rights in the world (see page 13).

2005 looks to have been another lucrative year for BAE Systems, with orders and sales for the first six months both up on the previous year. This is good news for BAE Systems but bad news for the UK: the company benefits from a significant proportion of the estimated £888 million worth of subsidies that the UK taxpayer forks out every year to help with private arms companies' exports.

This help may have left BAE with some spare cash: in 2005 the Serious Fraud Office continued its



investigation into "suspected false accounting" following the Guardian allegation that BAE Systems had been running a £60 million "slush fund" to secure Saudi arms contracts. 2005 also saw fresh allegations from the Guardian that BAE had been making payments to offshore companies between 1997 and 2004 linked to General Pinochet, the former Chilean dictator under whose brutal regime 3,000 people disappeared or were executed and more than 27,000 were arrested and tortured. Blair and BAE Systems: not such a fine romance RICHIE ANDREW

The annual BAE AGM is a rare chance to watch directors shift uncomfortably as they are forced to justify to the general public what they are doing in the name of profit. The meeting will be held in London on Thursday 4th May. We will be writing to token shareholders shortly to let you know about our plans. If you are not a token shareholder but would like to attend the AGM along with other CAAT supporters, please get in touch so that we can arrange your share. Contact action@caat.org.uk EMMA MAYHEW, QPSW WORKER

The Universities Network

Following the enthusiastic response to the Universities Clean Investment Campaign (CIC) we are in the process of establishing a CAAT Universities Network, comprising students, academics and support staff. Activists are campaigning on CAAT's CIC in 23 universities. This work ranges from individuals writing letters to groups organising campaigns for ethical investment. The new Universities Network will ensure that the momentum of these campaigns is built on through each university year. It will also respond to changing events in higher education and individual institutions; allow campaigning on different issues; and raise awareness on campus of the arms trade.

As well as the Clean Investment Campaign, the Universities Network will be investigating arms companies and the funding of university research. Other priorities include raising awareness amongst academics of Reed Elsevier's involvement in the DSEi arms fair and, with the greater input of university staff, we hope to increase transparency regarding the investments of university pension funds. With the help of those working in higher education, we believe we can kick the arms companies out of education!

The Universities Network will be informal, with individuals or groups acting as the central contact for their university or college – this will enable new campaigners to become involved more easily, and help us to effectively distribute information on new campaigns. To support activists, we will create a Universities Campaign Guide, containing information on all the university campaigns, suggested actions, case studies and draft motions for Student Unions to adopt ethical investment. We will also launch a new online resource to publicise the Network and the campaigns, with plenty of scope for contributions from Universities Network activists.

If you are a student, academic or employee in a university and would like to get involved – we look forward to hearing from you! Please contact Jo and Tim at universities@caat.org.uk JO WITTAMS AND TIM STREET

EDO campaign update

In December, three protesters convicted of Aggravated Trespass after an occupation of a factory rooftop at Brighton arms dealer EDO MBM won an important victory, with Hove Crown Court acquitting them of all charges.

This result damaged the crumbling case for an injunction against named protesters, as EDO's legal team was relying on the convictions as evidence of harassment of factory employees. The hearing also gave the protesters' defence team a chance to raise serious questions about the lawfulness of EDO MBM's work in supplying an illegal war in Iraq and an illegal occupation of Palestine. Managing Director David Jones has made interesting revelations during cross-examination about his company's supply of the Zero Retention Force Arming Unit (ZR FAU), which is an essential part of the VER-2, the main bomb rack for Israeli F16s. Jones admitted that EDO (UK) owns 100 per cent shares in EDO Artisan, which advertises that it makes the part for the Israeli Air Force. Despite this link, and the fact he is a director of EDO (UK), Jones asserted that he had no control over the company or who it sold equipment to.

EDO's own barrister in the dock?

Injunction proceedings against anti-EDO campaigners have now been adjourned until Febuary 13th. In a bizarre twist, EDO's lawyer, Timothy Lawson-Cruttenden, has been ordered to employ a barrister to defend him against charges of professional negligence after accusations that he deliberately attempted to delay high court injunction proceedings. Such stringing out of proceedings means that draconian conditions can be imposed against 'injunctees' without an injunction necessarily ever reaching a full trial.

Lawson-Cruttenden has also been charged with unlawfully obtaining material on peace campaigners from the police. Lawson-Cruttenden denies the charges. The judge was so concerned that he made a court order preventing EDO from making any further investigations except those directly related to the case.

The Israel link

EDO MBM has denied under oath that it sells equipment to Israel. Yet

Cambridge CAAT campaign launch

On December 13th last year Cambridge arms campaigners launched a campaign against Cambridgeshire County Council's arms investments.

We lobbied outside the Shire Hall and then used the official question time to put the case direct to county councillors, giving them the opportunity to explain their case for investing in the arms trade.

Good contacts made

Through this combination of protest and official communications we managed to make good contacts inside and outside of the council chambers. These contacts include Unison, friendly councillors, the Green Party and the local World Development Movement group, all of which should be invaluable in the months ahead.

Of course the Tory-run county council was not particularly



Cambridge arms campaigners visit their Council CAMBRIDGE CAAT

receptive, being led by an exbomber pilot, but as the start of a campaign we could not have asked for more, with extensive radio, television and newspaper coverage. JIM JEPPS

New CAAT website pages

Two sections of the CAAT website have had a recent re-vamp.

The local campaigning pages became a mini-website with the latest news from local groups, guides to effective local campaigning and contact details of existing CAAT groups. If we've missed your group off this list, or if you have a story to add to the news section, contact beccie@caat.org.uk

The local campaigning section can be found at http://www.caat.org.uk/getinvolve d/local

The Christian Network page also became a whole section where you can download the latest newsletter, and read about the Network's activities.

You can find this at http://www.caat.org.uk/ getinvolved/christian

Shut DESO: Time's up for the government's gunrunners

The Defence Export Services Organisation is the arms industry's very own taxpayer-funded marketing unit. It employs nearly 500 civil servants to sell arms for companies and to lobby within government for arms exports. DESO sells arms without regard for conflict, human rights or development: its sole concern is arms company sales and profits. By its very existence and position at the heart of the Ministry of Defence, DESO gives arms companies unique influence over government policies, not least because it is headed by a seconded arms industry boss. It has no place within a democratic government concerned with international peace and security.

2006 marks DESO's 40th anniversary. DESO was set up to promote arms exports at a time when the UK arms industry was primarily owned by the Government, was focused on providing equipment for the UK armed forces, and when most of the deals involved selling on ex-army/Royal Navy/RAF equipment. Each of these situations has changed radically. As a result DESO cannot be said to serve any public or national interest today; the profits from its arms deals flow straight into the pockets of arms companies and their international shareholders. The UK should have no role in providing corporate hand-outs for an internationalised and deadly trade.

Call on the Treasury to end the subsidy

Private arms companies enjoy a unique public subsidy – estimated at around £890m annually. A government arms sales unit, devoted to the business of these private companies, is a key part of this subsidy. Relative to its share of total UK exports DESO receives thirteen times the budget of the government organisation that promotes all civil exports, UK Trade and Investment.

The Labour government has been oddly reticient to end the arms trade's continued subsidies, while reducing state welfare for other industries. Backed by supporters' postcards and letters, CAAT will be trying to persuade the 'prudent' Treasury that DESO is a waste of money:

- it represents a grossly disproportionate subsidy for the arms industry
- it makes the Ministry of Defence less efficient in fulfilling a key task established for the Ministry in its 2000 Public Service Agreement: "Improved effectiveness of the UK contribution to conflict prevention and management"!

2006–7 presents a key opportunity for persuasion: this year sees the first 'Comprehensive Spending Review' since 2000, during which the Treasury will be asking tough questions about the expenditure of all the departments of government. This collective round of belt-tightening should include ditching DESO. Weds 22 March - CAAT launches the campaign at DESO's annual symposium in London. More details at www.calltheshots.org

Shut DESO campaign

launch

Don't forget to order your new Shut DESO campaign resources

Check out www.calltheshots.org for regular campaign news and events

Influence Parliament

However unregulated its activities seem, DESO has to answer to Government, and to Parliament. This makes Members of Parliament key change-makers in bringing DESO's closure closer to reality. Through our mass postcard campaign, CAAT supporters can ask their own MPs to lobby Downing Street and the Treasury, challenging them about the political influence and state welfare that DESO provides for arms companies.

Some MPs also put government figures with influence or interest in DESO's activities on the spot. Members of the Defence Committee, the Foreign Affairs Committee, the International Development Committee and the Trade and Industry Committee all question ministers directly – and all their ministries are concerned with the security, international stability and economic development damaged by the arms exports that DESO promotes.

Persuade Tony Blair to shut DESO

Ultimately it is No.10 that has the power to shut DESO. Much of the Government's enthusiasm for arms companies comes straight from Tony Blair himself. We need to combat his enthusiasm by changing the climate of acceptance around DESO – mobilising criticism of DESO from the public, media and parliamentarians. Through our mass postcard campaign as well as a series of high-profile actions throughout the year, we'll be calling on MPs and the Treasury to put pressure on Blair. Start by sending a postcard and then order more for your friends!

> DESO at Farnborough arms fair: 17th-23rd July - watch this space for more on CAAT's protest plans.

Mobilise public opinion

In a year when the UK government is calling for an international treaty to limit the global spread of arms, the existence of a government department devoted to proliferating weapons around the world is shocking – but largely unknown to the public. The first step to shutting DESO must therefore be simply to raise awareness of its existence. To create a public groundswell of opposition to DESO, we need to get DESO into the local and national media, onto the agendas of other organisations and into the general public's awareness. You can help us to do this in your area through organising public meetings, stalls, actions, media stunts, or just by telling those around you about the campaign. It's time to lift DESO from the obscurity of the Ministry of Defence's corridors, and into the public gaze.

> BAE Systems AGM: 4th May - CAAT will be protesting inside and outside the AGM of the UK's largest weapons contractor, and arguably one that profits most from DESO's work.

Order your free DESO campaign pack

New resources are now available to order for the second part of the Call the Shots campaign. Contact the CAAT office for an 8-page briefing on DESO, a campaign action guide, leaflets, and action postcards to send to your MP and the Treasury. These resources are part of the wider Call the Shots campaign, so order a free Call the Shots campaign pack too if you do not already have one. Contact Patrick (patrick@caat.org.uk).

www.calltheshots.org

FEATURE

Arming Suharto: a postscript

In March 1995 Michael Heseltine, when announcing the export of Alvis armoured vehicles to Indonesia, told Parliament that he had made "a thorough assessment of the likelihood of these vehicles being used for internal repression in Indonesia or East Timor. This assessment has concluded that it is not likely that these vehicles would be so used. The Indonesian Government have given assurances that the vehicles will not be deployed in East Timor or used in any form of repression of civilians anywhere in Indonesia". CAATnews readers will recall that such "assurances" were one of the main justifications for arming Indonesia over many years.

This assessment of course turned out to be completely wrong. UKmade Stormer and Scorpion vehicles were used in the war in Aceh in 2003 and 2004. And, as the Observer reported on 27 November 2005, UK-supplied Tactica water cannon are being used in West Papua against protesters.

Empty promises

On 22 November last year the Government told Parliament that "we no longer seek guarantees or assurances" over and above the Consolidated National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, because "assurances are not enforceable". In other words, for at least the last ten years, the Government has been offering Parliament empty promises about Indonesian conduct, and knew it was doing so despite giving Parliament the opposite impression. After sustained pressure from CAAT, TAPOL (the Indonesia Human Rights Campaign) and Parliament, and now that Indonesia is no longer a major customer for UK arms plc, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) has come clean about its long-standing attitude of utter cynicism to its public utterances.

Cynicism still reigns supreme on the FCO's Indonesia desk. Its cavalier attitude towards end-use monitoring has once again found underresourced campaigners knowing more about the deployment of UKmade equipment in conflict zones than the Government. The Government told Parliament on 22 November that it was "not aware of any UK-supplied equipment currently deployed in Papua", despite TAPOL, CAAT and the Free West Papua campaign having information contradicting this.

UK weapons deployment

The Government has so far refused to complain to the Indonesians about the deployment of UK weapons in West Papua, where human rights abuses committed with impunity by the Indonesian Army and Police are still common. Under Indonesian law it is illegal to peacefully advocate selfdetermination for West Papua: it is against these protesters that the Tactica vehicles are used. The FCO has told Parliament that this is "a more appropriate response to public disorder than some of the methods employed by the police in the past". The officials at the FCO who, on one hand enjoy a right to free expression of their political views that Papuans are denied, on the other hand suggest that Papuans should count themselves lucky not to be shot for demanding the same right for themselves! Thirty-eight MPs have

signed Early Day Motion 1131 protesting against the use of Tactica in West Papua.

Heseltine's assessment proved to be far too optimistic. And no wonder. As the FCO told Parliament on 17 November last year: "it would be extremely difficult and resourceintensive to attempt an assessment of the origin of arms and other equipment used in the commission of human rights abuses" and unsurprisingly no assessment has been undertaken by the Government. This shows how much the Government really cares about what is done with exported UK arms and makes you wonder how risk assessments in export licensing are actually carried out.

Learning lessons

Consider some examples where, against FCO expectations, arms exports have been used in an unintended way: Saracens exported in 1959 were used in Aceh in 2003; Hawker Hunters exported in the late 1960s were used to depose Allende in Chile: arms sold to the Shah of Iran in the 1970s were later used in the Iran/Iraq war. No risk assessment can seriously predict how weapons will be used over the course of their lifetime; if you don't want weapons to be used don't sell them. This is a lesson from which those arranging the Al-Yamamah 3 deal might benefit. NICHOLAS GILBY

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Tactica water

cannon watchpapua



FEB/MARCH 2006 CAATNEWS

Steering Committee

In 1974 a Steering Committee of people from organisations such as the Quakers, CND, Pax Christi and the United Nations Association established the Campaign Against Arms Trade. Today more of Steering Committee's members are elected by supporters than are appointed by organisations, but it remains CAAT's ultimate decision-making body.

The Steering Committee agrees campaigning priorities, as well as CAAT's reaction to proposals emanating from elsewhere. It also looks after funds, deciding, for example, which posts can be filled. As the employer of CAAT's staff, the Committee makes sure staffing procedures are in place.

Recently, it has been difficult to find people willing to stand for election to Steering Committee – is this because supporters know little of its vital and interesting work? In 2006, CAATnews will include more reports and information on Steering Committee. Hopefully, this will persuade more supporters to think about standing for election to the Committee in the autumn. ANN FELTHAM

Three current members have their say:

(1) Dorothy Forbes, Supporter Representative:

Why did you join?

DF: Because I was asked to! And I thought it would give me some say in the steering of CAAT.

What have you most enjoyed about being on Steering Committee?

DF: Getting to know the CAAT staff better and meeting the other people.

What would you say to anyone interested in standing for election?

DF: We need you. Especially if you live at a distance from London and can bring views from other parts of the country. (2) Sam Perlo-Freeman, Supporter Representative:

Why did you join? SP-F: I felt that I knew CAAT fairly well and felt that being part of Steering Committee is a way to

contribute towards the organisation. What have you most enjoyed

about being on Steering Committee? SP-F: The most interesting aspect has been planning campaigns – throwing around ideas about what we should be concentrating on next.

What would you say to anyone interested in standing for election?

SP-F: Don't suppose that this is a committee of 'experts' – many CAAT supporters have a lot to offer from general life experience and, in standing for Steering Committee, would make a valuable contribution.

(3) Janet Williamson, Supporter Representative:

Why did you join?

JW: I am very committed to CAAT's aims and felt it would be a good way of making a contribution. What have you most enjoyed

about being on Steering Committee?

JW: I have enjoyed the discussions on policy issues and campaigning and it has been a pleasure to work with the other Steering Committee members. I also like the consensus decision-making process the Steering Committee uses, and think this makes for better quality discussions and decisions.

What would you say to anyone interested in standing for election?

JW: Do it! There are no particular qualifications required – commitment to CAAT and being prepared to offer your views and ideas are the main ones. Be aware that as well as policy and campaign discussions, members are responsible for other tasks such as recruitment, staff reviews and so on – all Committee members should share in these tasks as far as possible.

Book review

'Warfare or Welfare? Disarmament for Development in the 21st Century', International Peace Bureau, December 2005

In 2004 the so-called 'war on terror' pushed global military spending per annum past the \$1trillion mark for the first time since the Cold War. In this context the International Peace Bureau is re-igniting a debate about spending priorities and the multitude of ways in which militarism impacts negatively on sustainable development. Yet 'Warfare or Welfare?' is not really a policy paper so much as a sourcebook aimed squarely at campaigners in both the peace and development fields.

The book includes a consideration of the concept of 'human security'; the impact of weaponry; the costs of military spending; and a look at military bases (most of which are US bases). These are followed by references for further reading and weblinks. There are also summaries of the work of organisations relevant to the topic being discussed, which are useful even if they are often just copied from the organisations' websites. Overall, this is a mine of valuable information that can either be read as a single sustained argument, or dipped into as a reference work.

'Warfare or Welfare?' is available from the Movement for the Abolition of War, 11 Venetia Road, London N4 1EJ. It costs £5+£1p&p

- cheques should be made payable to IPB.



Stop the Saudi deal

Alongside the United States, Saudi Arabia is the UK government's top priority market for arms sales – see the page opposite for more on this.

The latest "Understanding Document", signed on 23rd December 2005, is confidential but it is likely to be months, if not years, before the detailed contracts are finalised. This gives us time to campaign against, and hopefully stop, the deal.

Please write to your MP, House of Commons, Westminster, London SW1A 0AA or via email at http://www.parliament.uk/directories/ hciolists/alms.cfm asking him or her to convey to the Prime Minister your opposition to the deal. You could make the following points: a) It is appalling that the UK government is supporting the barbaric and undemocratic Saudi regime rather than strongly criticising its human rights record.

b) This record makes the Saudi regime less than secure, and the "Understanding" is likely to anger its opponents and further alienate them from the 'west'. It is not inconceivable that equipment supplied might end up in the hands of al-Qaeda.

c) Whilst BAE Systems' shareholders will benefit from the deal, it is unlikely that the UK as a whole will. Most studies on the economic impact of arms exports show that they are subsidised by the taxpayer. ANN FELTHAM

More relentless revolving...

Since we last provided an update, the revolving door has continued turning.

November 2005 saw Aegis Defence Services – the mercenary company with large contracts in Iraq – appoint a number of new board members. These included:

- former Chief of Defence Staff Lord Inge as non-executive Chairman. Lord Inge served on the Butler Committee and is also an advisor to BAE Systems;
- former Tory Armed Forces minister Nicholas Soames MP as a non-executive director;
- former Chief of the General Staff, General Sir Roger Wheeler, as non-executive director. Sir Roger is also a member of Thales UK's advisory board;
- Brigadier James Ellery as an executive director. The Brigadier is currently on secondment from Aegis to the UN as the Administrator for Southern Sudan.

In October it was reported that Lord Charles Powell, a BAE Systems consultant, had been appointed as Tony Blair's special envoy to Brunei (see CAATnews 193). Despite Brunei being in dispute with BAE Systems over three warships it ordered from the company, Lord Powell denied there was any conflict of interest.

Sir Roger Bone took over as the UK president of Boeing in September. Sir Roger was UK ambassador to Sweden and then Brazil. He replaced another retired diplomat, Sir Michael Jenkins.

It was revealed in August that Julian Scopes, BAE Systems' most senior political lobbyist and a former Ministry of Defence civil servant, had retained his all-area access pass to the MoD. Other government officials were reported as saying that once they had left Whitehall, or transferred departments, their passes were immediately rescinded.

A referenced list is kept updated at www.caat.org.uk/campaigns/ calltheshots. IAN PRICHARD

Business Appointments report

As part of the Call the Shots campaign, CAAT has highlighted the movement of ministers and civil servants from the Ministry of Defence to the arms companies. A report by Sir Patrick Brown, whom the Prime Minister had asked to look into the Business Appointment Rules, was published on 20th December. It found that the current Rules did not recognise the new reality where jobs are not for life and career changes are expected. Secondments to and from the civil service are common, but currently unregulated.

Sir Patrick recommended that the current system (which consists of the Business Appointments Panel for senior mandarins and internal departmental procedures for more junior staff) be replaced by a panel drawn from the Civil Service Commission. The panel would have support staff to help investigate cases before it. The report did not cover ministerial movements.

Other points in the report included that:

- those leaving the civil service should produce a list of those matters which might be of value to a new employer and also sign to say that they will not disclose confidential information with a penalty of legal action;
- a prospective employer will sign to say that they will not seek to acquire confidential information;
- approaches made by a prospective employer to a civil servant, and the converse, should be reported;
- lobbying by former civil servants should be permitted so long as it is reported openly within the relevant department and is subject to audit;
- the armed forces should be brought into the system.

The Prime Minister has now asked the Commons' Public Administration Select Committee to comment. ANN FELTHAM

'The customer is always right'

Mike Lewis begins a regular series looking at the reality of DESO's 'priority markets'

Ian Pearson keeps odd company. As the minister responsible for human rights, Pearson regularly champions activists against state oppression, like Aung San Suu Kyi, the imprisoned Burmese politician whose criticism of the regime's appalling human rights record he recently described as an inspiration. "Promoting human rights", he has said, is "integral to the Government's wider foreign policy", including combating the "abhorrent and illegal" practice of torture.

Next week, wearing his other hat as Minister for Trade, Pearson will share a podium in Manchester with Prince Mohammed Ibn Nawaf, the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the UK. Both men are speaking at a major conference promoting "Trade and Investment Opportunities for UK Businesses in Saudi Arabia".

UK businessman tortured

The experiences of one British businessman will undoubtedly cause the minister some discomfort. In December 2000, marketing consultant William Sampson was abducted by police in Riyadh. For 25 days he was kept shackled, deprived of sleep, and hung upside-down from an iron bar while two interrogators beat him across his feet and groin, finally inducing a heart attack. Sampson was imprisoned for over 900 days, and forced to confess on state TV to having plotted a bombing, later attributed to homegrown terrorists.

The extraordinarily brutal torture of a white Western businessman opened a rare window into the routine experience of many Saudi Arabian citizens. Dozens of the regime's critics have been detained incommunicado and without trial. Beneath a trickle of municipal-level



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reforms, the government (and its massive oil revenues) remain entirely controlled by a single family.

Ethical tensions

In contrast to its trenchant criticism of human rights abusers offering less appealing commercial opportunities, the Government remains only weakly critical of Saudi Arabia. Its Human Rights Report last year glibly welcomed "small but significant improvement", and praised dialogue on womens' rights. Amnesty International, meanwhile, quietly reported that torture and extrajudicial killings by Saudi security forces are "escalating" under the cloak of the 'war on terror'.

Pearson's own dual role personifies the ethical tension at the heart of UK foreign policy. Human rights, and even international stability, routinely play second fiddle to commercial interests. The Middle East's most repressive regime escapes serious censure for fear of offending a key UK business partner. It is perhaps unsurprising that when William Sampson brought a personal prosecution against his Saudi torturers in the UK courts last year, British government lawyers intervened to defend the Saudi policemen's state immunity.

Arms deals

Central to this commercial relationship lies a continuous stream of arms since the 1960s. In late December 2005, the UK government announced another multi-billion pound deal to 'modernise' the Saudi armed forces with a fleet of BAE System's Typhoon fighter jets. The net economic benefits of the previous Al Yamamah deals - hemmed by barter, export credits and sweeteners like agreements to manufacture components in Saudi Arabia itself remain uncertain. Indeed, the Government recently admitted that it has never formally assessed them. Allegations of corruption also continue to dog these previous deals, including an ongoing investigation by the Serious Fraud Office which last month saw the temporary arrest of a former BAE Systems Chairman.

More certain is the political support reaped by the Princes of the House of Saud from these deals. Government ministers, including Tony Blair, have personally lobbied Saudi princes for new contracts on behalf of BAE Systems. And despite formal UK support for the Middle East Arms Control Initiative, 40% of the Government's arms sales unit, DESO, work exclusively on proliferating arms to a country at the heart of this unstable region.

When Ian Pearson meets Ambassador Nawaf next week, it is hard to know if fighter jets or prison beatings will be uppermost in his mind. After thirty years in which Saudi Arabia has been DESO's best customer, we shouldn't hold our breath.

REFERENCES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST.

Fundraising

By Kathryn Busby

2006 will be another busy year for CAAT and as ever it is going to be a challenge to raise the money needed to support all of our work.

Two ways to help

Here are two very different ways in which you can get involved in fundraising; please do help if you can!

Firstly, it's time once again to call for Workers Beer Company volunteers. If you would like to attend a summer music festival and raise money for CAAT by serving drinks in the Workers Beer Company tents, then please let me know.

Secondly, on 1st October a CAAT team of sponsored runners will take part in the Great North Run. There are already three supporters keen to run this Half-Marathon and if you would like to join them, please get in touch as soon as possible.

Inspiration

To provide inspiration for running, here's what Steve Downey, who ran the Chicago Marathon for CAAT last year, had to say about his experience:

"At the start of October, I travelled to Chicago to join 34,000 other people in running the Marathon. I have supported CAAT's work for many years and it was a privilege to run my first international marathon for such an important cause.

In general, my training schedule went according to plan until I sustained a muscular strain in my right leg two months before the race. This set-back forced me to take the rest that I needed and I was relieved to resume training at my prior level



of fitness and eventually to increase weekend runs to 20 miles.

Having trained independently, it was incredible to be amongst the masses of people on the day of the Marathon. The cheering crowds encouraged runners to keep going and I was fortunate to run consistent 10-12 minute miles for the entire race. I was also relieved not to have suffered any injuries or to have been in any pain after the event!

People have a variety of motives for maintaining commitment to their training schedules, but having the support of the staff and members of CAAT was a significant factor in keeping me going on those early mornings and late evening runs. I'm now looking to the next opportunity to run for CAAT, and offer my sincere thanks to everyone who helped with fundraising."





Campaign Against Arms Trade thrives on your participation

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

Dorothy Poyner

Dorothy Poyner, who died on 1st November, helped in the CAAT office every week for many years during the 1990s. A committed Quaker, Dorothy was one of the kindest of people and gave her friendship and support to the CAAT staff and other volunteers. It was sad when declining physical and mental health, at a comparatively young age, meant Dorothy could no longer volunteer.

Our thoughts are with Dorothy's daughters, Claire and Felicity, and granddaughter Jessica.

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Subscription is voluntary, but we need your support. We suggest £26 waged, £14 low income and £35 for groups. Please give more if you are able, or less if not.

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Campaigns diary

11 February

Our Responsibility for War and Peace. Day conference organised by Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility. Resource Centre, 365 Holloway Road, London N7. See www.pcsr.org.uk

27 February

Towards the peaceful use of resources in the 21st century. Meeting organised by the Arms Reduction Coalition. 6pm–8pm, Room 4, House of Lords, London SW1. See www.arcuk.org

22 April

No arms fair in 2007. 2pm–4.30pm; Musical Protest outside the ExCel Centre in East London to call for cancellation of DSEi in 2007. Assemble Custom House.

4 May

BAE Systems AGM. See page 6

17-23 July

Farnborough International. Farnborough is an aerospace trade event with a big military component, making it a significant arms fair. CAAT will be organising actions – more details nearer the time.

Weekly

Picket of Spearhead, organisers of the DSEi arms fair. Contact picket@dsei.org

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

11 Goodwin Street, London N4 3HQ Tel: 020 7281 0297 Fax: 020 7281 4369 Email: enquiries@caat.org.uk Website: www.caat.org.uk

