



Justice & Peace

News from the National Justice & Peace Network

Spring 2004

National Justice & Peace Network (NJPN)

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The National Justice & Peace Network coordinates and encourages work for justice and peace within the Catholic Dioceses of England and Wales.

This newsletter is produced three times a year by the Network. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the National Justice and Peace Network.

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Maureen Matthews
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THE FUTURE FOR NJPN

The National Justice & Peace Network starts 2004 about to be reborn as a company limited by guarantee, free to envision its own future and keen to seek your views in our planning.

The Network aims to promote and encourage the work of Justice and Peace throughout the Church and beyond. Support is given to Diocesan J&P Commissions and groups and other bodies that share their concern to bring the good news of Christ's love and peace to people who are poor, oppressed or excluded and to work to publicise and relieve their circumstances. Thus we advance the practice of the Church's social teaching.

The Network and its associates build networks and collaborate in matters of action, resources, methods and practices that promote appropriate prayer, study, celebration and spirituality by raising awareness through provision of training, workshops, conferences and publications to

- ◆ Inspire solidarity with those in need
- ◆ Raise awareness about social justice, non violence, ecological and human rights issues as central to the life of the Church and beneficial to the well-being of the community
- ◆ Encourage work, action and campaigning for social change on issues of justice and peace.

Current concerns include broadening and increasing the membership; producing joint releases and other publications with partner agencies; assisting with training events run by partners; further developing our engagement with the media and consider funding the continuation and extension of this work.

Changes

Much effort has been devoted to establishing new governing documents to gain the legal status needed as an ethical and assured employer from the start of 2004. The Memorandum and Articles of Association have been worded to provide scope for some possible changes in the network as it develops to address the challenges of the modern world.

Members

For the time being, the historical class of full membership will be retained for representatives of the dioceses of England and Wales. There is already scope to give some measure of better recognition to the 'observer' members of the Network—representatives of agencies, NGO's and religious orders—a minority of whom may now be eligible for election to the Executive Committee as full voting members. Such recognition is overdue and many would like to see it be greater still.

Planning

The NJPN Executive are now working to establish a long term development strategy and plan. These, in turn, may help us to attract funds from a wider circle of donors than has previously been possible, perhaps by gaining charitable status.



Diocesan delegates vote for NJPN's new status

Your help

Plans must not be developed in isolation. The Network seeks your

help in understanding what services it might seek to provide and the cost and time implications of sustaining them. We are not talking about abandoning our traditional work of being a forum in which diocesan representatives can keep aware of issues, but there are other functions that could well be of value. These need to become better defined and prioritised—and we need to be sure that we have not missed anything of importance.

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PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES IN ASYLUM PROCEDURES

Towards the end of 2003, there was a brief opportunity for people to comment on the latest round of proposals for modifying the way that asylum applications are handled. Among others, statement from Bishop Pat O'Donoghue was severely critical of much that was proposed.

On 17 December, the Department for Constitutional Affairs issued a report that commented upon the issues raised. There had been a number of criticisms about the timing, speed and scope of the consultation process and the report stresses that the government is still open to receiving further suggestions and comments. The Report often states that the proposed changes (now contained in the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc.) Bill are not intended to have adverse impact upon various categories of people. However, it does not explain how these intentions will be assured by regulation or how the practical effects of changes will be monitored and reported to confirm the lack of adverse impact. (And this at around the time when the time limit for "immediate" application for asylum has been extended to three days due to the fact that adverse effects are being recorded.)

Our main areas of concern over the proposals are:

- The quality and consistency of initial decisions, where past promises of staff training and resourcing have yet to show great effect
- Changes to the appeals procedure, probably entirely removing a right of eventual appeal to an independent judiciary, outside the Immigration and Nationality Department of the Home Office
- The apparent general use of a list of "Safe Third Countries", without regard to individual circumstances
- The intention to apply adverse credibility where individuals have no travel documents and are deemed to

have destroyed them

- The proposal to withdraw all support to family units of failed asylum seekers leading to the likelihood of children being taken into care
- Likely over-burdening of transport operators with unsuitable tasks

These concerns are heightened by a previous decision to limit the amount of legal support provided to asylum seekers, without reference to the complexity of individual circumstances. There is also harm to domestic race relations by the repeated failure of such documents to mention the benefits brought to the UK by immigrants and the value of developing a positive immigration policy. A further relevant matter is the seeming lack of "joined up thinking" in a world where a root cause of migration comes from so many areas of conflict and misrule – not to mention control of the arms trade and unsustainable debts. Why do we not hear more about application of diplomatic efforts and foreign aid to work upon the problems near their sources?

Several Church organisations sponsored a "Day of Solidarity with Refugees" held in London in November. One recommendation from this was that church people need to write to MPs highlighting concerns over the new proposals and copy their letters and any replies to their bishops and other possible influential parties. What is needed are simple expressions of Christian concern about matters that affect the dignity of individuals, matters that fail to sustain families and matters that prevent justice from being available to all. Ask your MP to forward your letter to the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and to the Home Secretary asking what regulations they will put into place to uphold and monitor the assurances given in the Report of 17 December and to let you know their replies. Ask the MP to bear your concerns in mind in Parliamentary debates and votes.

The future for NJPN

(continued from page 1)

Consultation

In coming months we will be consulting in various ways with Church groups to find out their opinions and requirements, but finding out the needs of you, our readers, is less easy! Do you want to see us create a new 'mass movement' sort of organisation as well as or instead of our work with Church organisations? What sort of membership fee and communication channels would be suitable and who else would provide support?

Do you believe that J&P needs:

- more training events and resources for action and spirituality?
- more about social justice in the media - Church and secular?
- a national "figurehead" for J&P?
- better liaison with ecumenical work (and secular work) at grassroots level?
- resources to brief activists on issues of current and/or fundamental concern?
- ways to assess and communicate Christian opinions to our bishops and/or politicians?

None of the above come out of the air and the Network needs to know which directions may be fruitful and appreciated before it commits itself to a new look and steps out into the unknown. It needs to know, also, just how strong a grip it needs to keep on its past and the ethos that it has valued and nurtured over several decades.

Phil Kerton

NCRF

The National Catholic Refugee Forum has recently appointed a new part-time

National Coordinator. She is **Mary Horbury**, with a record of active support of volunteer refugee support groups at Campsfield, London and Wrexham, and looks forward to developing the work of the Forum and getting to know those who support it. She can be contacted by e-mail as Mary.Horbury@refugee-form.org.uk. (More information about the Forum via the Website: www.refugee-form.org.uk.)

NJPN

Please get in touch and let us know what YOU think. Let us know what you see as our strengths and weaknesses and where our opportunities and threats may lie - and remember us in your prayers in 2004!



Send your ideas and comments to Maureen Matthews, our part-time NJPN Administrator, at 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX

CIIR

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NEWS

This is the fifth report from an agency whose work we promote and support.

With just 35 employees in its London head-office, the Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR) packs a heavier punch than its weight might suggest.

As an international development agency working in 18 countries around the world, CIIR's work is best summed up by the phrase: *changing minds - changing lives.*

Many people in the UK know of CIIR through its policy work. But CIIR's unique combination of policy advocacy and skill-share ensures that its reach extends far and wide, touching poor and marginalised people around the world – from farmers in southern Africa to women in East Timor.

CIIR works by placing skilled development workers with overseas partners – local non-governmental organisations and community groups. We *share skills* by recruiting development workers to undertake specific tasks. We have 84 development workers with partners in 11 countries, all of whom provide an additional resource to organisations. By working closely with partners for usually two years, development workers help increase the skills and capacity of an organisation in a lasting way.

In some countries overseas CIIR operates under the name International Cooperation for Development (ICD). But our vision and values remain the same: a just world where people can exert control over their lives and live life in all its fullness, where human rights are respected and all have their basic needs met.

Leading this drive is executive director Christine Allen. She says: "We come from the Catholic tradition, inspired by gospel values of justice, integrity and a concern for the powerless and marginalised. 'However, we look out to the world, not just the church. We work with, and are staffed by, people of all faiths and none. We work

with tolerance and respect for local cultures and religions and are committed to building effective partnerships. After all, respect for human dignity and justice is a hallmark of Catholic social teaching.'

So, where do we work?

CIIR's biggest programme is in Latin America. We work in Peru and Ecuador and in Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador in Central America. In the Caribbean we work in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. A major focus of this region's work is to strengthen and support women's organisations and indigenous groups to help secure greater rights and an end to poverty.

Throughout the year we run events and publish a quarterly magazine called *Interact*, a bi-weekly electronic newsletter and various books, briefings and comment papers.

In Africa and the Middle East we work in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Somaliland, (the north-west territory of Somalia) and Yemen. One focus of this region is to support local organisations working on HIV.

In south east Asia, our partner SEACA undertakes advocacy training in eight countries. After many years of international advocacy work in East Timor, we recently set up a new programme in Timor.

Deidre Nagle is a development worker in Dili. She said: "Our work is diverse but our aim is a common one: to help empower the disenfranchised. Wherever there is injustice you will find people with the determination to overcome it."

CIIR is a membership organisation dependent on the generosity of its supporters. To learn more, visit our website at www.ciir.org or call us on 020 7354 0883. You can also write to us at Unit 3, Canonbury Yard, 190a New North Road, London N1 7BJ



Christine Allen—CIIR Director

Congratulations

Congratulations to Julian Filochowski, the former Director of CAFOD who was awarded a CMG—Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George, in the Queen's 2004 New Year's Honours list.

Welcome

Welcome to Paula Scola who takes up his new post as Nottingham J&P Fieldworker on 1 March.

In Solidarity

Felix Djossou, one of the asylum seekers who attended our annual conference last year, was detained by immigration officers just before Christmas. He was at the airport waiting to be removed from the UK, when thankfully his solicitors managed to get an injunction to stop his removal. He is now held in detention. Write to him at :

Felix Djossou, c/o Jesuit Refugee Service, 112 Thornbury Road, Osterley, Middx. TW7 4NN

DIARY

Prayer

Information

Reflection

Action

2004

(Please check all details with organisers before using this information)

- Feb 22 **Unemployment Sunday** "Poor yet making many rich" CAP 0161 236 9231
- Feb 24 **Peace & Disarmament meeting**, Birmingham. Contact Pax Christi, CAAT, FoR, Quakers
- Feb 27 **CAFOD Lent Fast Day** CAFOD 020 7733 7900
- Feb 28 **War on Want AGM** 10 - 5pm 020 7620 1111 or www.waronwant.org/agm
- Feb 29-5 **Methodist Week of Prayer for Refugees** www.methodist.org.uk/prayer.htm
- Mar 1-14 **Fairtrade Fortnight**
Mark the 10th! And Choose a Taste for Life Fairtrade Foundation 020 7405 5942
- Mar 5 **Women's World Day of Prayer**
In Faith - Women Shape the Future! prepared by the women of Panama 01892541411
- Mar 6 **Holi** Hindu Festival of Colours
Lent Ecumenical Lent Course CTBI 0207 523 2153
- Mar 16 **UN Lobby of Parliament** United Nations Association-UK 020 7930 2931 www.una-uk.org
- Mar 22 **World Day for Water**
- Mar 25 Ash Wednesday **Day for Repentance Event at Ministry of Defence.** Pax Christi 0208 203 4884
- Mar 8 **International Women's Day** www.unmeditation.org/
- Mar 21 **Naw-Ruz** Baha'i New Year
- Apr 6-14 **Pesach** Jewish Passover
- Apr 7 **World Health Day** (UN) www.unmeditation.org/
- Apr 14 **Baisakhi** Sikh New Year Festival
- Apr 11 **Easter Sunday**
- May 1 **St Joseph the Worker. International Workers' Day** Just Share Events
- May 8 **World Fair Trade Day** Fairtrade Foundation 020 7405 5942
- May 9 **Europe Day** Bishops' Conference 020 7901 4865
- May 9-15 **Christian Aid Week** 020 7620 4444
- May 26-27 **Shavuot** - Jewish Festival
- May 30 **Pentecost**
- June 5 **World Environment Day** (UN) www.unmeditation.org/
- June 5-12 **Stop the Arms Trade Week** . Day of prayer on 6 June. CAAT 0171 281 0297
- June 12 **Pax Christi AGM**, London 0208 203 4884
- June 14-20 **Refugee Week** Refugee Council. Refugee Week Information Line 020 7820 3055.
- June 20 **World Refugee Day** (UN) www.unmeditation.org/
- July 11 **World Population Day** (UN) www.unmeditation.org/
- July 16-18 **National Justice & Peace Conference**
Bringing Forth the Kingdom: Love and Justice in a Broken World 020 7901 4864.
- Aug 6 & 9 **Anniversaries of first use of atomic weapons at Hiroshima & Nagasaki.**
Pax Christi 020 8203 4884 & CND 020 7700 2393.
- Sept 12 **Racial Justice Sunday** CARJ 020 8802 8080 CCRJ 020 7620 4444
- Sept 21 **International Day of Peace** (UN) www.unmeditation.org/

BURMA UPDATE

STOP LAUDA AIR FLIGHTS TO BURMA

Lauda Air is a subsidiary of Austrian Airlines. In November 2002 Lauda Air began direct flights to Burma. Lauda Air is the only European airline offering direct flights to Burma. The flights are aimed at tourists and business people.

Help us get Lauda Air out of Burma. Please send a campaign email to Cornelia Sebic, Manager of International Relations at Austrian Airlines/Lauda Air.

13 Burma campaign groups from across Europe have joined forces to demand Austrian Airlines ends Lauda's flights to Burma. Add your voice. Help us get Lauda Air out of Burma. Please send a campaign email to Cornelia Sebic, Manager of International Relations at Austrian Airlines/Lauda Air.

Send to: cornelia.sebic@aua.com

The Austrian government owns almost 40 percent of Austrian Airlines so please copy your email to the Austrian Embassy in the UK: embassy@austria.org.uk

Dear Cornelia Sebic

I was shocked to learn that Lauda Air is offering direct flights to Burma. Burma is ruled by a regime that uses rape, torture and murder to oppress its own people. Forced labour has been used to develop many tourist facilities. By promoting tourism to Burma you are helping to fund the dictatorship. I urge you to respect the wishes of Aung San Suu Kyi and the Burmese democracy movement and stop flights to Burma immediately.

Yours sincerely