

CATHOLIC WORKER



Save Dale Farm

By Zelda Jeffers

Dale Farm in Essex is the UK's largest Travellers community, consisting of nearly a hundred plots and over a thousand residents. It is owned by the Travellers. Across the UK many sites have been closed and others evicted and travellers forcibly moved on. This is only part of the marginalisation and prejudice Travellers face. This is not just about homes but also the criminalisation of a community and a way of life. Is our fear of Travellers so great that we're willing to pay massive sums of taxpayers' money just to bulldoze their homes? Apparently so. Dale Farm has been under constant threat of eviction for more than 10 years causing chronic stress to those living there. If (cont p2)



Above: The Cleansing of the Temple

Free Burma! Free Kyaw!

By Kyaw Min

I live in Dorothy Day House (DDH) of the London Catholic Worker since July last year, and my name is Kyaw Min from Burma (In 1991, the Government changed the name to MYANMAR).

I arrived to UK September 4, 2010. The government of Burma found out about my political movement in Burma after I arrived in the (cont p8)

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Untangling the Strands of 'Violence' and Legality

by Soo Tian Lee

*A Student's Viewpoint from within
the Anti-Austerity Movement*

On Thursday, 11 November 2010, I purchased my first-ever copy of the Daily Mail. In fact, I purchased copies of no less than six different newspapers that day, all which carried the same cover photo, but accompanied by amazingly divergent headlines. The event being reported was the student protests in London the day before, which culminated with the occupation of Millbank Tower, site of the headquarters of the Conservative Party. The famous photo (*see p3*) showed a protester putting his foot through the glass 'shop' front of the building. The Independent headline announced the arrival of 'The New Politics'. On the other end of the spectrum was the Times, the headline screaming that the student protesters were 'Thuggish and Disgraceful'. The Daily Mail, of course, had to report that there had been a 'Hijacking of' (cont p3)

Ash Wednesday Witness

By Ciaran O'Reilly

Ash Wednesday in the Catholic Calendar marks the beginning of the season of Lent in preparation for Holy Week, the Passion and Easter's triumph of life over death.

At noon on Wednesday March 9th., Catholic Workers attended mass at Westminster Cathedral, where foreheads were traditionally marked with ash while words were uttered that remind one of one's own mortality "Remember you are dust and unto dust you shall return!"

Following mass, we chatted with some "Women for Ordination" folks from Warrington vigilling in protest outside the Mass and made our way past institutions that have no sense of humility, their subversion by the prince of darkness or their mortality. We passed McDonalds, Royal Bank of Scotland, New Scotland Yard, the QE2 Conference Centre, British Parliament before arriving at Downing St. to support a small "Campaign Against the Arms Trade" (CAAT) delegation delivering a petition to British Prime Minister Cameron regarding British arms exports to (cont p6)

London Catholic Worker:

We are: Angela Broome, Simon Watson, Henrietta Cullinan, Chris Goodchild, Scott and Maria Albrecht, Zelda Jeffers, Martin Newell, Papa Mao Fall Ndiaye, Soo Tian Lee, Sean O'Malley, Ciaron O'Reilly, Mirjam Johansson

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Both Dorothy Day House and our new Mattison Road House offer hospitality to destitute refugees, mainly men. We run Peter's Community Café and the Urban Table Soup Kitchen. We organise regular non-violent resistance, and produce this newsletter.

We are: Martin Newell, Sean O'Malley, Ciaron O'Reilly, Soo Tian Lee

Catholic Worker Farmhouse:

Lynsters Farm, Old Uxbridge Road,
West Hyde, Herts, WD3 9XJ
Tel: 01923 777 201 Email:
thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk

We are: Scott & Maria Albrecht and family, Mirjam and Herman

The Farmhouse offers hospitality to destitute women and children. We vigil regularly at the nearby Northwood Joint Forces Military HQ. We also grow organic vegetables and have a poustinia.

Peter's Community Café:

Open Mon-Weds 12noon-5.30pm
The Crypt, St Peter's Church,
Northchurch Terrace, De Beauvoir
Town, N1 5AT Tel: 020 7249 0041

Urban Table Soup Kitchen:

Open Sun. 2.30pm-4.30pm
The Old School Rooms, The Round
Chapel, Powerscroft Road, Hackney,
London E5 0PU

Peter's Cafe and the Urban Table are both attempts to imitate Jesus' practice of sharing his table with all comers. At the Café in particular we also hope to offer a space to build bridges between the disparate groups and individuals in our local community, as well as welcoming activists.

Anti-©opywrite For Action

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SAVE DALE FARM

(from p1) Basildon Borough Council gets its way they will demolish half of it at an estimated cost of £18 million, much of it for policing. On March 10th the council voted £8 million (one third of it's budget) to carry out the eviction of 150 families from 52 plots of land at Dale Farm which will make hundreds of people including children the old and infirm homeless.

At the same time Basildon Council are axing local services and jobs

They're even selling off playing fields to developers to raise money. Yes, I'm not making this up - they're actually destroying much used and loved green areas in Basildon Town to supposedly protect the green belt although Dale Farm nominally in the green belt used to be a scrap yard unlovely and unloved.

We've paid for the financial crisis caused by the banks, and now we're being asked to pay in order to deliberately make people homeless, denying health services to the sick, and an education to children. And pay dearly - 100 Basildon Council jobs are likely to be axed to help the local authority cope with budget cuts which will leave it £2.3 million short. Firing 100 people, to make 50 families homeless. They are also cutting £505,000 to disabled services. The Council wants vulnerable people in the settled community to suffer in order to make Travelling people suffer. There is a part of the Dale Farm site



Above: Richard Sheridan, from the National Gypsy Council, in front of diggers destroying a travellers plot

where families have permission to stay. All the pitches are owned by the travellers. They have created places to live at no cost to the public, as they were told to do by a previous Conservative Government. Relatives live near one another offering support and care when it's needed, people know and look out for each other making it a safe place for the children, elderly and vulnerable.

Living on the roadside is no longer an option, travellers evicted from nearby Hovefields were immediately moved on by the police, night after night until they were out of Essex.

When we can find £ millions to evict families from land they own but can't find the funds to keep nurseries, libraries and youth centres open - something has gone terribly wrong. If you would like to help put this right see <http://dalefarm.wordpress.com/> Dale Farm Solidarity on Facebook or contact Grattan Puxon dale.farm@btinternet.net 01206 523528

SPECIAL OFFER:

- end of print run -

"Dorothy Day - Selected Writings"

available from London CW

for £5 + £2.50 p&p.

normal price £14.95 - 370 pages

"There is no better introduction to Dorothy Day"

-Jim Forest

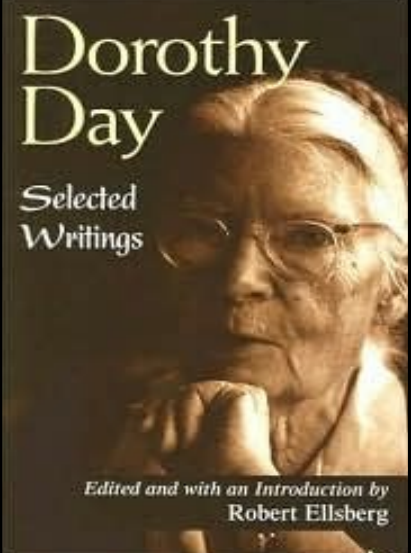
"Reads like a sustained prayer -
for peace, for love, for humility,
and most of all, for activism."

-Christian Century

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VIOLENCE AND LEGALITY

(From p1) a Very Middle Class Protest'

All of us know that news articles on the same subject often differ significantly according to the slant of writers and editors. However, I believe that in the case of the Millbank occupation, as well as subsequent coverage on the student and general anti-cuts movements, there are more complicated issues involved. These are the issues of violence and legality, as well as how both of these elements relate to protest.

Many people believe that once a protest 'turns violent' and/or when it results in any breach of the law, it automatically becomes morally illegitimate and should be condemned. Let's deal with the question of violence first. As a pacifist, I believe in practising non-violence in all areas of life. However, what I think is a lot less clear is what exactly constitutes 'violence'. It is clear from the reports appearing in the papers the next day that the damage to property caused by the protesters was deemed 'violence'. Shockingly, however, press reports about the case of Alfie Meadows, the Middlesex University student who was hit on the head with a police truncheon and had to undergo emergency brain surgery were repeatedly qualified with words such as 'alleged', as if to assuage the public that really, the noble enforcers of the law could not have been so 'thuggish' as to club a student on the noggin.

Perhaps in this case the words of Emmeline Pankhurst may shed some light on the situation we're in at present. She said: "There is something that Governments care for far more than *human life*, and that is *the security of property*, and so it is through property that we shall strike the enemy." The suffragettes recognised that within the hegemonic system we have been living in for the last two centuries, property is treated as having a higher value than human life. Jeremiah 22:17b accuses us when it says to us: "You kill innocent people and violently oppress your people". And this is due to, as the first part of the verse says, our focus on financial gain, which is premised to our obsession with private property: "[Y]our eyes and your heart are fixed only on profit for yourself."

Almost everyone who is familiar with the work of the Catholic Worker would know about ploughshares actions, which is a form of spiritual witness practised to oppose war and militarism and involves the decommissioning of weapons of war in order to follow the Biblical idea of turning "swords into ploughshares" (Micah 4:3). Turning to the issue of legality, we know that this practice makes some Christians feel queasy, because to them the idea of property damage is antithetical to Biblical injunctions to obey the laws of the land one is living in (Roman 13:1-7). The idea that a Christian is meant to be the embodiment of the perfect citizen, however, is clearly annulled by looking back into the annals of history. Jesus himself was repeatedly deemed a troublemaker by those who opposed his radical witness, and notably –

in an example of direct action that is recorded in all four Gospels – made a whip of cords and drove the money-changers and other businesspeople out of the temple. Paul, in the same letter to the Romans which is commonly cited as a warning against civil disobedience, expressed his desire to visit the believers in Rome. However, when he finally reached the capital of the Empire, he arrived as a prisoner in chains. Numerous other followed in the last two millennia, from 16th century Anabaptists who refused to serve in armies to Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King.

"Fine," one might say. "So civil disobedience is not against the Christian faith. But what about the issue of violence? Should not actions like smashing windows and, even worse, throwing fire extinguishers off the roof of buildings be unequivocally condemned?" Dealing quickly with the second case mentioned first, much has been said in the media about the student who lobbed a fire extinguisher off the top of Millbank Tower which could have killed a police officer on the ground. What few people realise, however, is that the crowd of thousands of students in the courtyard and in the area around the building immediately condemned



Above: a student outside the Conservative Party HQ. Note all the cameras in the background.

the mindless action by chanting together, "Stop throwing s**t!" Videos of this can be found on YouTube and disprove the notion that the student protesters were murderous rioters. We knew how to tell the difference between breaking a window (which can feel no pain), and striking a human being.

Slavoj Žižek, a contemporary Slovenian philosopher, distinguishes in his book *Violence* between what he calls 'subjective' and 'systemic' violence. The former, he says, can be easily linked to particular persons, that is to say, 'subjects'. For example, when a Libyan protester is shot by a soldier, such an action can be easily condemned. Systemic violence, on the other hand, cannot be easily linked to particular human actors, and are what Žižek explains as "the often catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of our economic and political systems." In other words, these are instances of violence that are so much a part of the system that we do not see them as [cont p7]

SPEAKING PERSONALLY

This article is based on an interview with Martin Newell of Giuseppe Conlon CW House, by Ann Kelly of the National Justice and Peace Network, originally printed in the 'Justice and Peace' newsletter.

Anne: *Where do you think your commitment to justice and peace comes from?*

Martin: Definitely from my faith. I had a kind of conversion experience when I was a student. I grew up a Catholic in a comfortable background but had never heard of putting faith into practice in terms of rich and poor and social justice. Then I read *Rich Christians in a World of Hunger* by Ronald Sider. It said basically, in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, we - Western Christians - are the Rich Man - and what were we going to do about?

I went on a visit to the Birmingham Ashram Community and Jim Wallis was speaking in Birmingham; he had what he called the 'Poverty Bible', where he had cut out all the references to poverty and justice to show all the holes that were left. The people at Ashram were living the kind of faith that the books were talking about, living and working in the inner city among immigrant communities, running all kinds of projects like a city farm.

Soon after, I went to Taizé where I had a very intense religious experience that a commitment to the poor and political action, to live simply, was a central part of being a Christian, and I had to respond to that. I then had a crisis of faith - what if I'm wrong? But I was clear that if there is a Christian God, then this was part of Christianity. So the question came down to, 'is there a God?' I decided that I did believe, so wanted to start along this path. I gave lots of stuff away, got involved in more voluntary work and tried to learn more about politics.

I was puzzled, though, that all this understanding of Christianity was coming from evangelicals and didn't know if it existed in Catholicism. Then when I was back at university, one of the students was giving out Traidcraft literature with an ad from CAFOD for a book, 'Proclaiming Justice and Peace', which had the 20th century documents on Catholic Social Teaching in it. I can't say I read all the documents, but I read the summaries and realised the Catholic Church has just as much if not more radical things to say, and it's gone on from there, with inspiration from the 'Catholic Worker' newspaper and liberation theology.

Later, I spent a year in Toxteth with Jesuit Volunteer Service, where I learnt about reflecting on experience as in the Pastoral Cycle, and a year in the Simon Community which was really an experience of living in community with the poor. After that I went to seminary where I first read liberation theology. I was also inspired by Austin Smith's book 'A Passion for the Inner City', which came from the experience of life with the poor and oppressed.

In the 90's I began to realise that I had been focussing exclusively on the social justice aspect of 'justice and peace', and wanted to learn more about war and peace and what to do about it. I found Pax Christi, which had a



Above: The Rich Man ['Dives'] and Lazarus

across through my time at the Simon Community.

Anne: *What for you are the most important areas of concern today?*

Martin: For my work with the London Catholic Worker, we have just started a new house of hospitality to welcome refused Asylum Seekers; we also run a soup kitchen and community café. So I suppose the whole issue of migration is a big one for me - that we are trying to keep the poor out, protect our comfort zones. When God created the world he didn't draw lines round it. We have been going round the world taking the resources from other countries and bringing them here for a long time and so people are following the resources.

Another important one is peace work - the war in Afghanistan, the arms trade, nuclear weapons - there is the possibility in the present climate of significant downscaling of nuclear weapons so we need to press for that; I've been involved in organising blockades at Devonport as part of the Trident Ploughshares group. War and violence is what the powerful escalate to, to keep the poor and the powerless down, when propaganda and intimidation don't work. Climate change weighs heavily on my mind - I've been involved with the Heathrow Airport campaign.

I also have hopes of promoting what is called the 'consistent life ethic', a 'Seamless Garment' approach, protecting life from conception through to natural death, including the threat to life from social injustice, nuclear weapons etc. People involved in campaigning on the life issues and those working for justice and peace need to see each other as allies and support each other.

Anne: *What sustains you in your commitment?*

Martin: Faith, my prayer life, my community and friends. My order, the Passionists, have been very supportive. There also all the friends around the Catholic Worker. My family are also very caring, even though they have different points of view. At the end of the day, I suppose I have always been very stubborn about going down the line that I believe in even when it might be seen as out of line. It's very deeply personal, arising out of a deep experience of conversion and I feel it is central to my faith. I'm trying to live an active contemplative lifestyle, so prayer is central. I also get a lot of satisfaction from the love that I get back from the people I meet in the work in do, for ex-

ample in our Community Café, where things are very equal and you get to know people as friends. In any of the work that I've been involved in I've always tried to build relationships based on friendship.

Anne: *What are your hopes for a Church like ours in the 21st century?*

Martin: There are perspectives in Catholic Worker circles that I don't come across elsewhere, that I would hope to see become common place insights in our Church. A central concern is our response to Liberation Theology, which came from a Third World context and is a reflection of that. Many people have called for a British Liberation Theology. But that isn't our context. Our of First World privilege and comfort. So what we need is a theology, that comes out of a practice, of repentance and resistance: repentance from our privileges and resistance to injustice and violence. Much of which is headquartered here in the UK and London, in terms of politics, the military, corporations and financial and commodities markets.

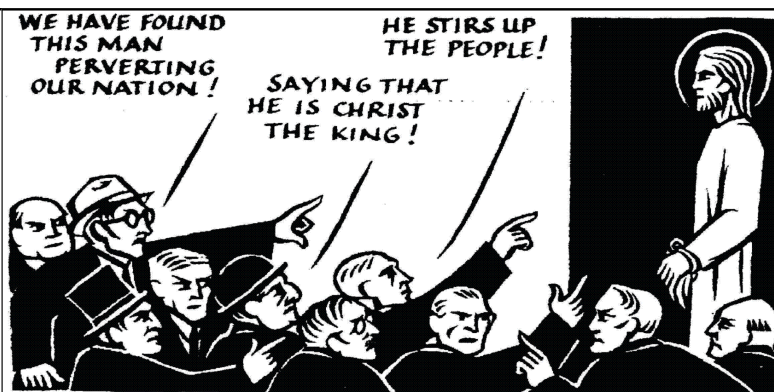
My hope is for the Church in this country to respond to that reality, and for Christians in this country to take on that responsibility. We are in a similar position to the Romans in the time of Jesus, wanting to protect our own comforts, and also like the Whites in Apartheid South Africa, in a place of privilege built on injustice and violence and a system and laws designed to keep the poor out and protect our comfort zone.

A big connection that is important for me as a Passionist is an understanding of the cross as nonviolent resistance; that a willingness to resist arrest for the sake of justice and peace, to protect life, and to go through the legal process that can ultimately in this country lead to prison, is to participate in the Passion. I would like there to be a more authentic understanding of the Passion in the real human and political context. I am interested in the ideas of René Girard on the meaning of the cross and scapegoating, it's a new line in the theology of the cross.

A MONTH AT GIUSEPPE CONLON CW HOUSE

By Eugene Rodrique

When I arrived at the LCW I was looking forward to living in a Christian household which was committed to practical help in the community. I found it straight away and worked with some great people. I began helping in the kitchen and cleaning out the rooms below the church. I helped out at the Urban table soup kitchen and Peters Cafe with serving food. The best part was living and working with the guests who were always grateful for the work we did. I gained an insight into how the underprivileged have to live, but also got to see what some of them could achieve if given a chance. I also visited the Catholic Worker Farm and found it a peaceful and friendly place contrasting with the busy London House. I enjoyed working with the other volunteers



and met more different people in one week than I would normally in a month. My month here at London Catholic Worker was a varied, challenging and rewarding experience. I hope to return soon in the future.

LEARNING THE WORKS OF MERCY

By Joseph Laundry

I first heard about the Catholic Worker after having dinner with a friend of mine back in Australia. He told me about his experience working on the Catholic Worker farms across the world. It was intriguing to hear his involvement in the mission of hospitality, resistance and charity which is needed in society today. Whist on travels from Australia of my own, I contacted the London Catholic Worker and enquired about doing some live-in volunteer work. I met up with Martin and arranged to start a few weeks later. My involvement would be to help out around the house, cooking meals, general cleanup duties and sorting out bundles of donated items. Coincidentally, another volunteer began the same day as I did.

While living with the CW, I became aware of the many problems and injustices that face society today. I saw the CW community get involved in tackling the issues of today and being a voice for those that have been marginalised. I was very impressed when an immigrant came for help and he received assistance in getting his case heard. These are the people in our society who don't have a voice and who are often seen as +a nuisance to society. I was impressed

on the calibre of the workers that lived in 'self-imposed poverty' and rely on providence to run their work in the spirit that Dorothy Day founded.

In the Gospel a few weeks ago, it contained the Final Judgement story of the Lord separating the righteous from the wicked. In the story, Christ separates the two groups based not on how much prayer time they said (although it's very important) but on the works towards fellow human beings ie feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, relieving the thirsty etc. In everyday life, it's hard to find circumstances that will allow you live up to these principles. At the café run by CW the work allowed me to experience the gift of giving to individuals without reward. When one thinks less of himself and towards others, that is love of neighbour as Christ puts it.

Through the 2 weeks that I was with the London Catholic Worker, it has broadened my perspective on the social environment we live in today and the much needed work that needs to be done to fight poverty, homelessness and injustice. I must thank the Catholic Worker for opening my eyes to the fact that being a Christian, you can't sit and watch on the fence line – you must be active and involved in the issues that affect humanity.

ASH WEDNESDAY

(FROM P1) the Libyan dictator Gadaffi. These British arms are presently being turned by Gadaffi on his own people.

After leaving the CAAT delegation we crossed Whitehall and walked to the rear of the Ministry of Defence (M.O.D.) buildings to Embankment Gardens on the Thames. By this point there were eleven Catholic Workers present with countries of origin as diverse as Australia, England, Malaysia, South Korea, Sweden, The Netherlands and the USA. Ages ranged from early 20's to mid-60's with a gender balance favouring women. We were eventually joined by over a

hundred others for a liturgy organised by Pax Christi, Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CCND) and the Catholic Worker, welcoming of participation by people of other faiths and no faith traditions, the broader range of nationalities was enhanced with a demographic favouring older folks. The Buddhist nun and monk of Nipponzon Myohoji were present reminding us of the legacy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Also present were Ploughshares activists who had disarmed nuclear weapons systems and people who had worked and lived in war zones from Africa, Palestine and East Timor, to the north of Ireland and the Philippines.

The weather held and the liturgy unfolded to address the Lenten theme of repentance in relation to the British state's nuclear warfighting preparations. This Ash Wednesday liturgy and accompanying acts of nonviolent resistance has been undertaken on an annual basis since 1982 when it was initiated by Catholic Peace Action. Arrest and imprisonment have been consequent of many previous Ash Wednesday actions at the M.O.D. over the years.

"Let your hearts be broken, not your garments torn, turn to the Lord your God again, for God is all tenderness and compassion." Joel 2:13 "Repentance means a change of mind and heart. Joel called it heart-break... The call to repentance is a call to the Nation to change political, social and economic structures which oppress and exploit the weak." Fr. Gerry Hughes S.J. The liturgy remembered the victims of war, the people of Iraq, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Congo, Israel, Palestine and indigenous peoples whose land has been stolen and exploited for uranium mining and testing of nuclear weapons. Peace prisoners were also remembered: Bradley Manning, Fr. Louis Vitalie OFM Helen Woodson, Rafl Dhafir, Michael Omondi, Nancy Smith, Chris Spicer, Frank Donnelly, Carl Steward Norman Lowry Jr and these unknown to us.

At the conclusion of the liturgy the group processed from the gardens following a cross chanting in Latin,

6 "Ubi caritas, et armour. Ubi caritas, Deus ibi



Above: Henrietta Cullinan and Martin Newell of London CW kneeling in front of the Ministry of Defence which they had just marked with blessed charcoal.

est." (Where charity and love are, God is there.) By the time we had processed up the footpath Fr. Martin Newell C.P. of Giuseppe Conlon CW House and Henrietta Cullinan of the CW Urban Table Soup Kitchen had leapt over the M.O.D. railings across the road from the main party marking the M.O.D. with ash and writing in charcoal..... "Repent", "War is Sin" , "Let Our Hearts be Broken Not Our Garments" , "No Nukes" , "No More War" , "Trident is Sin"

Police who appeared reluctant to jump the railings found their key, opened the gate and detained them. Scott Albrecht, former U.S. Air Force airman who had worked with U.S. nuclear weapons at Lakenheath USAFB in England, from the Catholic Worker Farmhouse crossed the road from the main party dropped to his knees and wrote on the M.O.D. building..... "No Trident", "God is Love" , "Repent" .

The party of over a hundred stopped on two occasions to continue the liturgy before crossing the road. Henrietta, Fr. Martin and Scott remained on their knees as the police questioned them taking details. As the main party arrived at the main entrance to the building, Sr. Susan Clarkson of St. Francis Catholic Worker House Oxford and Maria Albrecht of the Catholic Worker Farmhouse dropped to their knees and wrote on the M.O.D. building..... "Disarm Now" , "No More Ministry of Death" . The five were eventually released by the police and informed of the possibility that they maybe summoned to court at a later date.

DISARM NOW PLOUGHSHARES

On Monday March 28th. the "Disarm Plowshares" Susan Crane, Fr. Bill Bicschel, Susan Crane, Lynn Geenwald will be sentenced in the U.S. for their 2009 "All Souls Day" plowshares action on the U.S. Trident nuclear warfighting system at Naval Base Kitsap, Bangor, Washington state - the largest nuclear weapon storage area in the US. In London we will hold a solidarity vigil at the U.S. Embassy on that day of sentencing. More background and information on "Disarm Plowshares" website.

LENT IS EXPENSIVE THIS YEAR!

We at the London CW rely totally on Providence, on donations from individuals like yourself, as well as some churches.

We have no paid staff. Instead we are committed to voluntary poverty. For many reasons including our political witness, we are not a registered charity. We receive nothing from the government. Our guests are with us because they are not allowed to work or receive any benefits.

Our total costs last year for all our work in east and north London was about £35,000, of which £20,000 was rent for our small house in Dalston and our Community Café, which only covers the cost of the food we buy (books will be done as soon as possible!). We live on a shoe string.

In July, God gave us another house. This one is rent free for two years, and thank God it is big so we can host so far up to 20 guests here, refugees unwelcome and destitute in our land, despite the Biblical injunction to 'welcome the stranger'.

We also have a growing community working and witnessing to our faith in the God who comes in strange and human guises, and reminds us that we never know when we might be 'entertaining an angel' when we welcome a sister or a brother.

However, the bills are considerable and work needs to be done so we can make more use of the space we have. As I write, we are about to have hot water installed and the hot water piped to the sinks and the new showers that will be put in. Together with basic maintenance and repair to the heating, this will cost just over £10,500. And we just received a £3,000, 6 month, gas bill. So we are making a special appeal, to ask for help paying for this work of welcoming Christ in all who are poor and oppressed.

VIOLENCE AND LEGALITY

(from p3) even being exceptional, or at least not 'violent'.

What could this mean in practice? The most simple and relevant answer at this present moment is none other than the cuts to public services. When people lose their jobs or benefits and hence their means of survival, or when their children are unable to continue to attend their schools and colleges because of the removal of the Education Maintenance Allowance, a great violence is done to their lives. Such violence goes deeper than physical harm, but result in extended hardship and, in essence the systemic destruction of the present and future of countless human lives. Another instance of systemic violence, which we at the London Catholic Worker see in our daily work, is the bureaucratic system of granting asylum to numerous



Burying the Dead by Ade Bethune

people who come to the UK from all over the world seeking a safe place to live. The words of Ezekiel 22:29 seem prophetic of our present situation: "The people of the land practice extortion and commit robbery; they oppress the poor and needy and mistreat the foreigner, denying them justice."

Hence, when people tell me that student protesters have violated the law, my response is this: the law promises so much, but delivers so little. Whether we like it or not, the law in the statute books and as interpreted in the courts is the *law*, but it is certainly not always *justice*. And when I hear denunciations of 'student violence', my question is: does not the violence which flows through the system cause more damage and ruin to human dignity than ostensible 'violence' to property? Are not the decisions made by the politicians in Westminster and Whitehall more devastating than any harm caused by a foot through a window? These are questions which we must consider before we carelessly categorise one action as violent and unlawful, and the other, fair and just.

FREE BRADLEY MANNING - STOP THE WARS SUPPORT RESISTORS OF VIOLENCE & OPPRESSION

Bradley Manning is a Private (PFC) in the American Army who has been accused of leaking the 'collateral murder' video and other information to Wikileaks. He is currently being held in maximum custody in the US military base of Quantico. The conditions he is being held in are tantamount to torture.

Although the army psychiatrist has reported that he is not a suicide risk, he is being held under 'Prevention of Injury' watch conditions otherwise reserved for the suicidal. He is effectively in isolation, and has been since he was remanded in custody 8 months ago. It seems that the US government are hoping to break him so that he gives evidence incriminating Julian Assange, in return for a plea bargain. If someone encouraged him to send information to Wikileaks, that would be the criminal offence of espionage under US law. Manning is facing up to life

imprisonment if convicted of the current charges including 'assisting the enemy'.

It seems clear that one very large group of people who have been 'assisted' by the information published by Wikileaks are Arabs: it is a very significant inspiration for the uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and elsewhere in the Arab world. It seems likely the USA government does not really support these movements for greater freedom, since most of the governments being challenged are US allies. Manning and Assange are both resistors to the power and domination of the US military and Arab dictators. They seem likely, like many in the uprisings, to pay a price for this. They need our support. See ww.bradleymanning.org and ukfriendsofbradleymanning.org. They also have a facebook page.

by Martin Newell

FREE BURMA! FREE KYAW!

(FROM P1) UK and put my name on a wanted list. So, I applied for asylum in the UK but was turned down for 'leave to remain in the UK. As the Burmese police had confiscated my things and money, my family can not help me and I am not permitted to work either. So, I was in very difficult situation and felt depressed. After I contacted Martin from Catholic Worker London, I got great hope. My future is bright again and I could resubmit my fresh document to Home Office to consider my case and now I am awaiting decision. May I explain you to, so you understand clearly about me.

There was a revolution in Burma in 1988 for Democracy and to remove military junta. It was one of the events at the end of communism in eastern Europe and the country got a lady who was awarded Noble prize and more than 100 international Awards, Honors & Appointments. Aun



San Suu Kyi became a leader of pro-democracy.

I had never heard the word "Democracy" before 1988. I really didn't know what it stand for but I shouted like others in the front row of the revolution. In 1988, I was just 17, I did not really know about politics because I lived in a small village. I was awakened to know what politics and democracy are from that revolution. I started to study about democracy after the revolution and during university days I studied from discussing with friends and reading illegal books (in Burma the books about politics are illegal). In 1996 I had chance again to be involved for student revolution to against military regime. In this time the revolution did not occur widely but I was motivated to study more about politics. The government imprisoned many students. So, I decided to do my own political ways. This meant that I will do politics without against the government. I volunteered to teach the students at the place where there were not enough teachers for matriculation. Thats why I went back to my small village to do so and I spent my time more than three years by teaching. Nowadays many of my pupils became graduates and they re-

placed me. To be able to do political thing widely, I moved to the former capital Rangoon and started to do so while studying Spanish for my profession as a tourist guide.

While I was working as a Tour Guide, I had more and more chances to learn about politics and human rights from tourists. I founded my own group named Freedom Burma with my friend and tried to deliver messages to the public but this way did not help. I started blogging the political information to tell the world about the regime and to put pressure to the government. I started blogging in 2006. I celebrated a blogger seminar in June 2007 with friends, more than 500 people attended that seminar, some of my friends and me were detained after that. I was released after a short time but my friend was a long time in prison after the monks revolution in September 2007. I was detained again in 2008 after I became part of the 'Generation Wave' group who campaigned on the graffiti slogan for 'free burma' and 'free Aung San Suu Kyi'. After that, the movement of Generation Wave was more accelerated. The government was finding all the members of Generation Wave. So, most of the members fled to the Thai border. I also tried to flee abroad, I tried to register at a college in London and I got a student visa from UK embassy during 4 days.

After I got to London, one of my friend of Generation Wave was detained and he told the police there about our last movement and about my own UG group Freedom Burma. So police was searching for me, they raided my home and left a subpoena for the political movements. As my return is dangerous, I applied for asylum in UK. Both Home Office and the Immigration and Asylum Chamber assessed the information that I gave, but they refused my original application.

After refusal from administration Court, I was going to be homeless. I was depending upon NASS [National Asylum Support - Ed] support because of the Burmese government confiscated all my money. While I was waiting to access my application, I used to be involved in demonstrations for free Burma and free Aung San Suu Kyi. When I demonstrated at Manchester I met with a lady from Amnesty International. When she realized about me, she helped me to contact with the Catholic Worker. I contacted with Martin and he helped me immediately to stay in London. After I live in London, I could summit a subpoena, which I received very recently, as new documentation [as new evidence for a new asylum application—Ed]. An officer of the UN authenticated my subpoena and submitted it at the Home Office. Now I am waiting for decision again.

After I arrived to DDH July 13 2010, I got great hope. I have no worries for accommodation, I recovered from depression and I am able to participate in the movements for Free Burma, Free political prisoners and Free Aung San Suu Kyi. As I have no (Cont p11)

LCW NEWS...NEWS...NEWS

Bradley Manning, Julian Assange and all other political prisoners have been very much in our minds recently. Of course, so many of our guests have also been political prisoners, and like Bradley Manning been kept in conditions amounting to torture. Ciaron is been continuing to organise solidarity vigils and events for both. See next page for more info.

Also much in our minds have been the uprisings in the Arab world. We give thanks that those in Egypt and Tunisia have been almost completely non-violent, and they have learnt much from non-violent struggles elsewhere in the world. We have a lot to learn from them. We pray of course for peace, justice and freedom for the people of all those countries struggling to get out from under dictatorships of various shades. We have noted however that strangely, after increasing friendliness recently towards him, Gadafi has now become enemy Number One. I guess it must be because, almost alone among Arab leaders, he is anti-American.

Conor has been doing great work welcoming and organising our guests here at Giuseppe Conlon House, and helping some move on too. Ali, who was one of our very first guests at Dorothy Day House over four years ago, was given 'Leave to Remain' (full refugee status) last year, after waiting over seven years. Just today he has been offered a place of his own to live. Only a bedsit, he still has to find a way to make his way in our country, and of course still finds himself very near the bottom of the pile. Kinkella and David who also got 'leave to remain' are still waiting to get a new place to live. It takes months to get ID and benefits sorted.

Joe and Eugene were two short term volunteers here with us recently for a few weeks. We are grateful for what they gave: Joe has written of his experience on p5. As the saying goes, experience is what you learn.

We also continue to be grateful to all those who enable us to welcome the stranger, the refugee, the lonely, the homeless and those who are just poor, here at Giuseppe Conlon House, at Dorothy Day House, at our Urban Table drop-in Soup Kitchen and Peter's Community Café, too. Those who help by being on the rotas, by picking up food donations, by cooking and cleaning, and by sending and bringing all the donations we depend on, both in cash and in kind.

Our work and life here is still growing, nearly five years since we started our first house, but it is also still fragile, like so many precious things. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers.

*The bread which you do not use is the bread of the hungry;
the garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of him who is naked;
the shoes that you do not wear are the shoes of the one who is barefoot;
the money that you keep locked away is the money of the poor;
the acts of charity that you do not perform are so many injustices that you commit.*
- St Basil -

FOR SALE: CATHOLIC WORKER T - SHIRTS

The Catholic Worker Farm t-shirts:
Front "Comforting the Afflicted",
back of t-shirt "Afflicting the Comfortable".
Available in black or white; sizes s, m, l, xl.
£15 including postage.

To order e-mail
thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk.



Dates for your Diary

**Regular Vigils: Thursdays 3.30pm
at Northwood Town Centre.**

Contact CW Farmhouse House for
more details

Lent bible study: Tuesdays
6.30pm arrivals tea/coffee etc
7.00pm Bible study starts
Giuseppe Conlon CW House,
49 Mattison Road, Harringay
London N4 1BG

**April 15th–17th: Faith & Resistance
Retreat** with Frank Cordaro and Car-
men Trotta at GCH: Contact GCH for
more info.

**APRIL 17TH: FREE BRADLEY MANNING–
END THE WAR - PUBLIC MEETING**
SPEAKERS: Gareth Pierce (solicitor,
Guildford 4 etc), Frank Cordaro &
Carmen Trotta (US CWs)
Music, refreshments, BYO!
Contact GCH for more info.

Also see: bradleymanning.org

Giuseppe Conlon House: (GCH)
tel:0208 348 8212
E: londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk

Good Friday: April 22nd

Stations of the Cross
Central London – procession around
the 'geography of suffering'
**Contact Giuseppe Conlon House or CW
Farmhouse – for more details**

May 23rd / 24th

Evening of the 23rd: Celebration of
Hope, Oxford: music, speeches etc

May 24th: trial in Newbury, near
reading, of Catholic Workers on
trial for cutting a gate in the pe-
rimeter fence at Aldermaston
nuclear bomb factory

Contact GCH for more details.

September 13th–16th 2011

DSEi arms fair - one of the world's
biggest arms fairs
At the EXCeL exhibition centre,
Custom House, East London.
CAAT (Campaign Against the Arms
Trade) will be organising protests,
as will Catholic Workers.

Catholic Worker Farmhouse
tel: 01923 777 201
E: thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk

A NEW SOCIETY An Easy Essay by Peter Maurin

To be radically right
is to go to the roots
by fostering a society
based on creed,
systematic unselfishness
and gentle personalism.

To foster a society
based on creed
instead of greed,
on systematic unselfishness
instead of systematic selfishness,
on gentle personalism
instead of rugged individualism,
is to create a new society
within the shell of the old.
Modern society
is in a state of chaos.
And what is chaos
if not a lack of order?

Sociology
is not a science
it is an art,
the art of creating order
out of chaos.
All founders of orders
made it their personal
business
to try to solve the problems
of their own day.

If religious orders
made it their business
to try to solve the problems
of our own day
by creating order
out of chaos,
the Catholic Church
would be the dominant
social dynamic force
in our day and age.



FREE BURMA! FREE KYAW!

(from p8) chance to work, I have free time and I could use internet the whole day in DDH. I started blogging again and posted some articles in my blog. In October I created a facebook group named 'Freedom Burma' and I organized my old friends. We discuss about politics and share news, opinions and knowledge on the group page. More of my friends of my friends became interested in my Group and ask to join. Now there are more than 10,000 members, both from around the world and from inside Burma, in the group during four months. It increases more and more members daily too. Most of members are posting local and international news, articles, top secrets of government and the gossip of top militaries. We are leaking news daily and educating the people. Many people visit my



Above: monks and riot police in Burma during the 'saffron revolution' in 2007

group page and read the news, articles and they also comment on those. We are planning a revolution like as the middle east and the popular topic of my group is about revolution. Many people are discussing about that but for us, it's too difficult to start a revolution in Burma. The people from middle east are facing the dictators with the army in the background. In Burma we must face a military junta, military dictators. And so it's so difficult to fight them. That's why we are planning well. After the release of Aung San Suu Kyi, she also said to build up many small groups to connect as a big network. Many youths tried to build groups in various ways, for example social groups, political groups, technical groups, music groups. Our aim is that all the groups will link as a big network one day, and we will try

to improve for the social lives. If the people are educated, our environment also will be developed. So, I am writing articles about social life, politics and about Burma.

Before I stayed in Dorothy Day House, I felt so lonely and got depressed in Bolton because I have no close friend in the UK. I felt that no one help me. But after I moved to this house, everything is changed, I got confidence again, and warm friendship from the people of the Catholic Worker. I had great time and chance to use the internet 24/7. So now I can contact my family and friends. Now I am spending my time meaningfully. Even though I am in a difficult situation, now I am happy living in Dorothy Day House, my life is very safe and I spend my time helping the Catholic Worker too. Until now I believe God is with me.

STANDING ORDER MANDATE

Please fill in the form in **BLOCK LETTERS**. Filling out this form enables us to set up a monthly standing order with your bank. It can be stopped at any time by informing your bank.

I wish to pay London Catholic Worker £10 / £20 / £40 / other amount per month / other

Payments to be made monthly / other First payment to be made on: ... / ... / 11 and monthly thereafter.

Your Bank Name.....

Your Bank Address.....POST CODE.....

Your account name:.....

Your account number:..

..... Your sort code:

.....

Please pay: Triodos Bank **Credit of:**
Brunel House, London Catholic Worker
11 The Promenade Sort Code: 16 58 10
BS8 3NN A/C No: 20066996

Until further notice, the sum of the value indicated above.

SIGNED:..... **DATE:**...../...../ 11

PLEASE RETURN TO "London Catholic Worker"
at: 49 Mattison Road, London N4 1BG

YOUR NAME & ADDRESS:.....

.....

..... POSTCODE:.....

TEL:.....

CONTACT US

NOTE: Postal Address:

49 Mattison Road, London N4 1BG

Tel: 020 8348 8212

E: londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.londoncatholicworker.org

I want to receive the London CW Newsletter. [I enclose stamps/
donation / cheque payable to "London Catholic Worker"]

NAME

ADDRESS:.....

.....POST CODE:.....

Dorothy Day House & Guiseppe Conlon House, and Urban Table Needs

FOOD:

- Dry goods, rice, pasta
- Instant coffee, tea bags
- Tuna & corned beef
- Sugar & salt & pepper
- Tinned tomatoes & fruit juice
- Cheese and eggs
- Toilet paper
- Breakfast cereals

OTHER

- Handyman / woman
- Plumber, electrician
- Soap, razors, shampoo & all toiletries.
- Cleaning materials & equipment

- **MONEY!** - see p11 for standing order form.

OFFICE:

- Book keeper
- Help with producing and sending out newsletters
- Guillotine for paper & A4 laminating pockets
- Good, working, computer and laser printer

HOUSEHOLD GOODS:

- Bike locks & bike lights
- Single sheets and single duvet covers
- Paint for walls

- **New full time community members, volunteers and participants in vigils etc!**

"Prayer - without this, all the rest is useless"

CW FARMHOUSE NEEDS:

- Food, esp. juice, milk, cheese, butter, cooking oil
- Toilet paper, nappies, baby wipes
- New members & help with gardening, cleaning, cooking, DIY
- People to take part in vigils & round table discussions
- Visitors to use our poustinia (for a donation)
- **MONEY! -and of course your prayers.**

SUPPORT OUR WORK

The London CW is part of the radical, pacifist Catholic Worker movement started in 1933 in New York & inspired by the Gospel vision and practice of our founders, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. There are now over 150 CW houses and communities in the US and about 10 other countries. Check out the US-based CW website www.catholicworker.com, and come visit us!

CW houses and our finances are independent. There is no 'headquarters' or central organisation. We in London are a network, not an organisation.

To donate to Dorothy Day or Giuseppe Conlon House make a cheque to "London Catholic Worker".

To donate to the Farmhouse, make a cheque to "Catholic Worker Farmhouse".

OTHER CATHOLIC WORKERS IN THE UK: OXFORD :

St Francis CW House, 227 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4
Tel: 01865 248 288 - and see their page on our website.

None of us are paid to do this work: it is a gift of the heart. For reasons including our political witness, we are not a registered charity. We receive nothing from the government. Between us, we now have 3 houses hosting 35 destitute refugees who are not allowed to work and cannot receive any social security benefits - the most disenfranchised people in our society. We also run a community café and a drop in soup kitchen. So we continue to rely on our supporters and readers donations, to pay our rent on houses and other costs. Our voluntary poverty means that we can do all this for a total of only (!) £75,000 a year. Please make out a Standing Order and give generously to support our work with the crucified of today's world. You will have your reward. (Luke 16:39)