

British Pugwash Group

Annual Report of the Executive Committee for the Year 2004/5

This has been a busy year, with a variety of activities, to which many of our members have contributed. Particular highlights are the following:

- UK Government is facing the decision whether or not to replace its existing armoury of “Trident” submarine-launched nuclear weapons. British Pugwash has argued strongly, in two major published reports, that these weapons are now worse than useless. We are now leading a consortium of like-minded organisations in a **Nuclear Weapons Awareness Project**, aimed at raising the current, rather apathetic, public interest in the issue.
- For the launch of this project we arranged a public meeting and press conference in London, addressed by **President Michael Gorbachev**. Subsequently we were pleased to hear that, in his keynote address to a gathering of Nobel Peace laureates, in Rome, the President made very positive references to our project. The Programme now has a website up and running: www.comeclean.org.uk; it is piloting a series of lessons as part of the citizenship curriculum; and it organizes a series of high-profile events to educate and keep the nuclear security issue in the mind of the public.
- Also in support of this issue, we have commissioned a substantial **review article** which we are trying to place in the national press.
- Following our annual business meeting, in May, Dr Scilla Ellworthy spoke to members and the public on the work of **The Oxford Research Group** (of which she had recently relinquished the Directorship), particularly in liaising with governments on security issues.
- More broadly, **Eliminating Weapons of Mass Destruction** is, of course, a central Pugwash concern, and this was the topic of a three-speaker Pugwash session at a recent “*British Association Festival of Science*”, held in Exeter and well attended, by a predominantly young audience.
- Then, in October, we arranged a public meeting at which Sir Brian Heap spoke on **NATO’s Science for Peace Programme: the Ambassadors’ Missed Opportunity**, expressing concern that NATO’s science budget is being diverted into anti-terrorist security projects.
- We were fortunate, in February, to be able to host a talk by the eminent Canadian Pugwashite, Senator Douglas Roche, who addressed a public meeting on ***The Future of the NPT, in the context of the 2005 Review Conference***.
- Also addressing a major topical concern was this year’s December meeting, on **Weaponisation of Space: What are the Issues?** The speakers here were Prof Jassani (KCL), Dan Plesch (Birkbeck), Joeliën Pretorius (Cambridge) and Dr Groves (Centre for Security Studies, Hull)

We were all immensely saddened to hear of the death, on October 17th, of Dr Bas Pease. Bas was Chairman of the Group from 1990 to 2002 and, for much of that time, a member of Pugwash Council.

