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SUPPORTERS' NEWSLETTER 1

Dear friends,

This is the first of what we intend to be a regular series of newsletters to supporters of CAAT. After the next one, they should be produced at about 6-weekly intervals, to fit in with the timetable of Campaign Council meetings, and with the work of other committees.

During the past week, the Campaign has started to make itself felt in the outside world. A press release was widely distributed at the beginning of last week, and as a result a few presspeople turned up at a press conference on Thursday 14th, in I don's Fleet Street. Speaking at the conference was Frank Allaun MP, and several people from the Campaign. Another press statement was issued after the conference, and the final result was quite a large piece on the back page of the Guardian, and another sympathetic piece in the Morning Star. If in fact you've found any other coverage, or come across anything of interest in any publication, please send them in to the Campaign as an attempt is being made to build up as much background material as possible.

Some points from the press statements before and after the press conference:

"This Campaign is a project set up and sponsored by 8 peace movement organisations, and has several initial aims -

- A comprehensive educational and informational campaign on the subject, introducing and questioning the arms trade amongst the general public.
- The raising of the arms trade in the "political arena", and its implications.
- In order to start with an achievable objective, the concentration on exports from Britain, and more specifically on arms sales by one particular corporation.... "

"... At today's inaugural press conference, this corporation was named as EMI. The amount of armaments-related work done by EMI is substantial, and yet is only a minority of the work done by the Company. This therefore means that their changing over from production for war to production for peace would be relatively easy compared to many companies; and they thus will provide a useful example to others when they do in fact stop. Also, their interests in so many everyday products gives scope for a wide range of action by supporters of this Campaign in case discussion alone does not change their policy. ... "

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Other items of news relevant to the launching of the Campaign will be apparent from the top of this page. We now have an office and phone number! The office is a room in the Peace News/Housmans Bookshop building. After quite some work on clearing out the historic debris of previous peace movement occupants, the room now has CAAT-type posters up and is sparsely furnished. What is much needed now is for someone to drop in with a typewriter that they don't need; and also someone with a filing cabinet... For the time being, storage space is cramped, and typewriters have to be borrowed from fellow inhabitants of the building, when they're available.

Sponsors: Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Friends Peace and International Relations Committee, Greenpeace, London School of Nonviolence, Pax Christi, Peace Pledge Union, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

At the Campaign's Steering Committee meeting last week, Albert Beale, a member of two of the sponsoring organisations and ex-co-editor of Peace News, was appointed as part-time co-ordinator of CAAT. Money has been made available through the Friends Peace and International Relations Committee for a salary. Of the half week that the co-ordinator works for CAAT, he will generally be available in the office for people to phone or call in on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. CAAT work outside the office will be kept to other times whenever possible. The phone is shared with another organisation in the building which also uses its office part time.

Now that the Campaign is properly under way, the next thing is what all the individuals, groups and organisations we're in touch with can do. Firstly, we now have ready or almost ready various tools that you can use:

- * Free introductory leaflet about the Campaign (sample enclosed), though if you want large quantities, please send something to cover the cost.
- * Fact-sheet about British arms sales, first of a series. Again, small quantities for reference free, but a donation would be helpful for large quantities.
- * Poster, "CAMPAIGN AGAINST ARMS TRADE", 15p.
- * Poster, "ARMS SALES - POINT OF DELIVERY", 15p.
- * Poster, "Exports Up! G.B. DEATH SALESMEN", 15p.
- * Suggested book list on the arms trade, free.
- * Badge, 10p.
- * CAAT Information kit; collection of booklets, pamphlets, newspaper reprints, sample leaflet, booklist, questions for MPs, poster. All in a folder, 50p.

Please also send stamps or cash for postage for whatever you order.

What to do with all this... Raise the issue of the arms trade wherever you can. With the information to back you up, try to get your union, church, college, or other group to consider the issues and to take a stand on them. Write to the press, especially the local press about it. Find out if armaments work is being done in your area. If so, start making a fuss about it, and let us know of anything you find out. We want to compile as complete a set of information about it as possible, and the government and the companies involved aren't very helpful. Write to your MP. Organise a meeting on the topic - write to the Campaign's office and ask for a speaker. Get together with members of the various sponsoring organisations in your area - and anyone else interested - and form a local group whose priority is this Campaign. We can let you know of other supporters in your area. Send us cuttings from papers or magazines that might be of interest - if you can, send us relevant books so that we can build up a library on the subject. And of course we need money. Office rent, printing, duplicating, postage, and many other expenses are such that the Campaign only has enough money guaranteed for the coming months; but this Campaign needs more than a few months to succeed, and it needs to grow a great deal. Do you own any shares in EMI? Since we've decided to concentrate on them, one of the first jobs is to ask pertinent questions at their AGM next week. If by any chance you are going (and at least two Campaign supporters already are), then ask them - for example - to give a more detailed breakdown of the figures in their Report. The category which includes "defence" electronics sales amounts to 28% of their total sales (over £100 million), and we'd like to know just how much of it is armaments, and how much of what exactly is sold overseas, and to whom. Meanwhile, if there are any EMI factories in your area, or any bingo halls or record shops owned by EMI, start talking to the people who work there about some of the less public and less pleasant sides of the Corporation. EMI are involved in many different fields, and one of the next factsheets the Campaign will produce will be one listing EMI's involvements in more detail, so that all our supporters know what to look for.

Hopefully this should give everybody plenty to do for now! The co-ordinator, the Campaign's office facilities, and those of the various supporting organisations are meant to be used. So please keep in touch. The Campaign's Council - with people from all the supporting organisations - meets every 6 weeks, and the steering committee every fortnight, to discuss plans for the Campaign, so send in any ideas you have. Also, the various Campaign Working Groups are meeting regularly - on Research, Parliamentary work, EMI, Publicity, and they would all welcome feedback and ideas. They can all be reached via the Campaign's address. We hope to be hearing from you.