**Alternatives to European Union militarization?**

**Presentation by Edward Horgan, PANA international secretary to Danish Peoples Movement 26 August 2017**

The threat of nuclear war has not gone away. The Korean situation is still ongoing. Nuclear armed China and India are in dispute over border issues, and India is also in dispute with nuclear armed Pakistan over Kashmir. The US and Israel are probably the two most dangerous nuclear states in the world today. In Europe Russia is being surrounded and threatened unjustifiably by NATO but also by the European Union which is becoming increasingly militarised. Britain’s exit from the EU will strengthen French and German plans for yet another large army in Europe, this time a European Union army, because Britain has been opposed to the establishment of such an addition multi-national army in Europe. Seven countries in the Middle East so far have been devastated by conflicts, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Syria and Egypt. In my view this is not happening by accident but by design in a series of resource wars let by the USA, and actively supported by its NATO and US Middle Eastern allies. The resulting refugee crisis in seen in Europe as a European refugee crisis, but in reality it is a Middle Eastern and African refugee crisis, largely created by a coalition of the USA and its Western allies and made possible by NATO.

NATO should have been made redundant in 1990 after the collapse for the Warsaw Pact and Soviet Union, but it was kept in place in order to usurp the proper role of the United Nations, and so that NATO Forces could be used to ensure that we in the West could continue to seize and hold an undue proportion of the world’s depleting resources at the expense of the majority of the world’s population. It has become the WEST against the REST. When these problems are combined with critical global environmental problems, we are creating the conditions for a perfect storm that could destroy humanity and our whole living environment.

We are now seeing the rapid development of another large army in Europe, in addition to the NATO and the Russian military, with the establishment of a European Union army. This process will be helped by Britain’s exit from the EU, leaving the combined France and Germany as the dominant power in Europe. The plan seems to be to turn the EU without Britain into a militarised super-state, if necessary in competition with the USA. In my view this European army is being viewed and planned as an alternative to NATO rather than as an ally of NATO, to pursue the economic and national interests of Europe’s major powers, Germany and France. The smaller European states like Ireland and Denmark, will be seen as useful idiots compelled to comply with the dictates of Germany and France, and the economically challenged southern European states, including Italy and Spain will also be dominated by the powerful bilateral inner circle of Germany/France.

What are the alternatives, firstly for countries like Denmark and Ireland, also for the rest of Europe, and even more importantly, for the rest of the world, that is rapidly becoming the victim of this militarisation of Europe and the West?

Ireland is not in NATO, and is theoretically neutral, but has abandoned its neutrality by allowing over three million armed US troops to travel through Shannon airport on their way to and from the US Middle Eastern wars. Denmark is a NATO member but has opted out of European army connections. This is a bit like St Augustine, “Oh Lord make me pure, but not yet”, in the case of both Ireland and Denmark. Ireland must restore its genuine neutrality and Denmark should become neutral by opting out of NATO as well as staying out of European militarisation. The rest of Europe must also stand up to German and French domination. We must study history more carefully lest we allow the worst parts of European history to be repeated. Corsican Napoleon had a French vision of European unity that had some good points but in practice brought devastation across all of Europe and some of the Middle East and especially in Russia. German (or Austrian) Hitler has a German vision of European unity that had no good points at all, except for some Germans, and that caused enormous destruction and deaths across Europe, especially once again in Russia. Little wonder then that Russia feels threatened by NATO and EU expansion, led by Germany and supported by neo-Napoleonic France. Russia in no longer the Soviet Union, and does not seek to invade Western Europe, but it does seek to protect its own people and territory.

The European Union was or should have been a good idea as a multinational organisation of sovereign states promoting the very desirable objectives of international peace, economic development, democracy, equality, human rights and the rule of law. It should also have been an organisation promoting genuine cooperation and sustainable development with the rest of the world, but this aspect has never been genuinely developed, and the European Union has now reverted to exploitation of the majority world rather than cooperation in the wider interests of humanity. French neo-colonial exploitation in its former African colonies is the most obvious example of this.

Perhaps from selfish and self-centred perspectives this could be seen as a good idea. We the privileged people of Europe could work to maintain our levels of privilege, and to hell or to poverty with the rest of the world. This attitude was sustainable, even if morally repugnant, in the eras of slavery, and colonisation, using brute military force to extract our undue share of the world’s resources. Up to 1945, humanity did not have the capacity to destroy its living environment, and we could arguably keep on using violence to achieve our unjustified objectives. Human greed knows no boundaries. With the introduction of nuclear weapons, nuclear power, rapidly increasing world population, and rapid destruction of our living environment, humanity is on a fast track towards its own destruction and demise. The use of brute force, wars, increasing militarisation, gross breaches of the rule of law, is no longer sustainable. Two unstable leaders, Trump and Kim Jong-Un, could have lit the nuclear fuse, and could still do so, that would made Planet Earth unliveable. Over the coming months or years, German and France, the EU, or NATO, and/or the US could do likewise in a war with Russia. Of course most of the immediate damage will be in Europe, or in the Far East well away from the United States, as it is US military policy to use what is known as the tethered goat strategy by always fighting US wars in someone else’s country, and even provoking such wars. The people of Europe or the Korean Peninsula will be the equivalent of a tethered goat in a tiger hunt.

It is imperative that we find an alternative way of managing our national and international affairs than by the rule or misrule of force and violence. The rule of law is not only a way forward – it is the only sane and sustainable way forward. The rule of law, locally, nationally, internationally and globally will never be perfect and must always be in the process of amendment, improvement and updating as the needs of humanity require. After the devastation of World War 2, the United Nations Charter was supposed to be foundation stone of international law, or at least it was portrayed at such in its preamble. However, the chief founders of the UN and drafters of its Charter, the USA, USSR and UK (France and China were still occupied while the UN Charter was being drafted), decided to draft the UN Charter is such a way that its five UN Security Council permanent members would have an all-encompassing veto over the UN which placed each of these five member states above the rules of the UN Charter, and in effect above the rules of international laws. Since the end of the Cold War especially, the three NATO members who are UN Security Council permanent members have abused their UN vetoes and acted in clear breach of the UN Charter on several occasions by waging wars of aggression without UN Security Council approval. In so doing they have acted as international outlaws, and have rendered the United Nations powerless and ineffective towards the achievement of the UN’s primary objective of maintaining international peace. NATO and the US of course will claim that they have only bypassed the UN because the UN has been ineffective in maintaining international peace, and that they, NATO and the US, were therefore forced to step in to enforce international peace and wage so-called humanitarian wars. This is a lie for many reasons, including as stated above, the reality that these same countries set up the UN to fail, and that all the wars waged by them since the end of the Cold War were wars of resources and illegal regime change, and instead of protecting human rights involved multiple gross breaches of human rights and war crimes. However, the power of these states also protects their leaders from the accountability of war crimes tribunals. These issues combined with the failures of the UN mean that the whole inadequate edifice of international law must be critically examined, transformed, and improved. The biggest obstacle to this is the United Nations itself, which gives enormous and undue powers to its five permanent members, because their powers of veto also apply to any reform of the UN, and there is no likelihood that each of these five powers will agree to vote themselves out of such a powerful position, which also applies in the case of the US to additional special economic powers over the World Bank and the IMF and therefore over the global world economic system. In addition to the inadequacies of international law, there is also an urgent need for an additional system or tier of global law, and global jurisprudence, which does not exist at all except with some minor exceptions such as the inadequate war crimes process, which once again does not apply in practice to the same five UN veto powers.

Reluctantly, since the UN is being used very effectively as a blocking mechanism towards the improvement and implementation of international law, and towards the prevention of the introduction of a proper system of global jurisprudence, the UN itself may need to be abandoned or partly bypassed and a new global organisation set up to fulfil the urgent needs that the UN should have addressed. The off-repeated argument that the UN is all that we have and that the world would be in an even worse condition without the UN, is a flawed argument. The world is now in its present most dangerous and damaged condition partly because of the failures of the UN and its very flawed UN Charter. The issue of establishing a new and additional system of global jurisprudence is a vital one. The existing system of international laws exists only or primarily as a system of laws and regulations between states and reached by agreement between those states, especially the most powerful states, and often with very little input from citizens of those states, or even from majority of the world’s least powerful states.

The non-aligned movement in the 1950 did attempt to overcome some of these problems by setting up an alternative system of states that were not aligned to either of the then two superpowers, the USA and USSR. President Sukarno of Indonesia even went as far as withdrawing Indonesia from the United Nations as part of this process, and this may have been one of the reasons that the US engineered his overthrow and his replacement by the military regime of Colonel Suharto.

At European level, the majority of EU member states, at the behest of and in the interests of their citizens, must work to ensure that the EU does not succumb to the same malaise that has destroyed the United Nations, whereby a small cohort of EU states, place themselves in a position of absolute power over and above the EU at the expense of the majority of EU States, just as the five permanent members of the UN Security Council have done with the UN.

What can we, as tiny insignificant individuals, do to overcome these huge problems? Well firstly, we individuals are not as tiny and insignificant as our Governments would like us to believe. There are lots of things we individuals can and must do. Standing idly by and doing nothing hoping things will not get any worse is no longer an option. Things are getting worse progressively and daily, and will get catastrophically worse if allowed to continue. What we are doing here today meeting and discussing these issues is a start, but is not nearly enough. Passive resistance is also not enough. We need to work as individuals and network together nationally and internationally to achieve the necessary change. Because positive change needs to happen urgently and quickly, we need to be creative and take direct actions, including challenging bad laws by non-violent actions wherever necessary. Small scale and even large scale peaceful protests are no longer enough. In March 2003 millions of people marched against the Iraq war, but when the war went ahead regardless of these protests, most of these people went home, and did nothing more. This was the point when military bases should have been occupied to prevent them being used for this and other illegal wars. While such actions will be described by governments as breaking the law, in my view, such actions are necessary to uphold and enhance the rule of law, and are therefore justified actions and any such peace activists should be acquitted in any subsequent trials on the basis of justifiable reasons for their actions.

While we must avoid the temptation of exacerbating the situation by resorting to violent revolution or violent actions, we must be prepared to take all necessary non-violent actions to protect humanity from militarisation and wars of resources.

The alternative of militarization of Europe is peace and cooperation with Russia.