

Our vision is to end torture and complicity in torture, upholding our testimony to peace and equality and working towards healing through reconciliation.

Chas Raws

Chas died in December and we include people's appreciations of him and his work in this issue. He was a leading light in Q-CAT from its outset and dedicated to the abolition of torture; a man much loved who will be much missed.

In the News

UK Intelligence and security committee report on CIA report

(further to Q-CAT Briefing No 44 Jan 2015)

The ISC has carried out a follow up investigation on December's report into the CIA role in torture, in which ISC staff visited UK and US intelligence agencies, to inspect relevant files and interview their heads, specifically on whether UK authorities had tried to influence findings on the involvement of the UK in torture by asking for 'redactions' of material.

The ISC concluded:

- redactions to documents in the report were all made on the grounds of national security, and not to avoid embarrassment to UK authorities
- the CIA itself proposed redactions relating to UK intelligence material
- allegations that UK intelligence agencies asked for redactions in order to cover up their role in the mistreatment of detainees were unfounded.

However critics have called for a full judge-led review rather than closed discussions between officials, and publication of the full 6,700 page report with appropriate redactions for national security.

As reported in the Guardian:

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/feb/11/uk-cia-torture-report-redactions-national-security-mps-rule>

Doctors Against Torture Conference (26th January 2015)

Following the revelations of medical complicity in CIA torture, a conference has focused on the vital role of doctors working in immigration detention centres (IRCs) in identifying human rights abuses and enabling rehabilitation, as they may be the first UK doctors to see detainees, and highlighted the pressures they may face.

Although doctors' duties to patients are clearly set out in international obligations, and BMA requires doctors to refuse to comply with any procedures that may harm patients or leave them physically or psychologically vulnerable to harm, IRC doctors may have to comply with employers' restrictive consultation targets. They may also be unable to provide the necessary healthcare where providers are incentivised to provide just enough health care at the lowest possible cost (despite immigration detainees having the same rights to health care as NHS patients).

Doctors in IRCs often work in professional isolation and are at risk of burnout. The conference explored ways to support doctors and where "dual loyalties" (to the patient and employers) can conflict. The conference was sponsored by BMA, Freedom from Torture and Amnesty International.

This report is based on a speech by Juliet Cohen (Freedom from

Torture)<http://www.freedomfromtorture.org/news-blogs/8242>

Q-CAT Trustees

Juliet Morton, Convenor
and Treasurer

43 Embankment Rd, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 1LA

juliet@mortonpq.plus.com

Jane Laxton, Newsletter Ed.

79 Wellington Road, New Brighton, Wirral CH45 2NE

janelaxton@hotmail.co.uk

John Cockcroft

Barbara Forbes

David Mellor

Website www.q-cat.org.uk

Rosalind Mitchell, Website manager

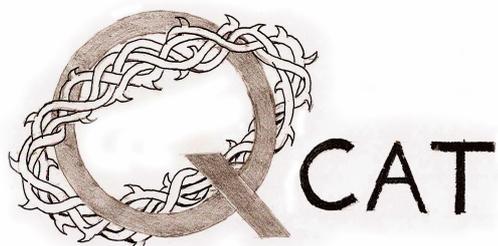
Q-CAT at Meeting for Sufferings*

Two of Q-CAT Trustees will be at Meeting for Sufferings on March 28th to introduce a pre-circulated paper about Q-CAT's activities and plans, to answer questions and to ask for continuing support and commitment. Do make your interest known to your representative before they attend this meeting.

*note for non-Quakers: this is a regular meeting of representatives from each Area Meeting of Quakers, to discern the way forward on matters of concern.

Q-CAT at Yearly Meeting in May

Q-CAT has asked for a Special Interest group lunchtime session to run the "Quakers and Torture: 10 questions to get us thinking" workshop. If you haven't been to one of these do come if you can. Participants will be asked to consider 10 questions placed round the room, about torture, UK complicity, and Quaker and their own responses. This will lead to discussion facilitated by a Q-CAT Trustee. We hope those there will also help to discern how this workshop could best be developed as a tool for Local and Area Meetings to use. One or two Trustees will also be "at large" during the Groups Fair. Do introduce yourself if you see us.



Quakers against Torture

Q-CAT in "General Election 2015 A Guide for Quakers"

This has been sent to all Local Meetings giving an overview of some of the key issues for Quakers in Britain and suggesting questions Quakers may wish to ask their parliamentary candidates. Did you see the page on Human Rights and Torture?

Guantánamo Diary, by Mohamedou Ould Slahi

The Guardian has obtained and published a manuscript diary written by a Guantanamo detainee, Mohamedou Ould Slahi, who has been detained at Guantanamo Bay since 2001, but hand wrote his 466 page manuscript in his cell nearly a decade ago, after months of physical, psychological and sexual abuse. It took years for his lawyers to obtain the declassified diary, but it has now been published as Guantanamo Diary, after 2,500 'redactions' by US censors. A federal judge ordered his release in 2010, but the US government appealed; four years on, there are no signs they plan to let him go.

Slahi writes in English, his fourth language – much of it picked up from Guantánamo guards. He is a gifted writer, exuding warmth and a sardonic sense of humour, even as he recounts his darkest moments. The descriptions of torture are harrowing. Slahi is subjected to a Donald Rumsfeld-approved "special interrogation plan". He lives in abject horror, suffering sleep deprivation, sexual assaults, beatings and threats against his mother's life and his own. He is blindfolded and taken on a three-hour boat ride as part of a mock kidnapping, forced to drink salt water. In the end, he resorts to false confessions in a desperate bid to end the torment.

Slahi's reason, resilience and grace stand out in the face of unimaginable violence and injustice. Fear and frustration permeate the diary, but not despair, or desire for retribution. "I started to ask myself questions I was having about the humane emotions I was having towards my enemies. How could you cry for somebody who caused you so much pain and destroyed your life?"

The book ends with a recent message from its writer: "That he holds no grudge against any of the people mentioned in this book, that he appeals to them to read it and correct it if they think it contains any errors, and that he dreams to one day sit with all of them around a cup of tea, after having learned so much from one another."

To read the Guardian review by Pankaj Mishra (14th February 2015)

<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/feb/13/guantanamo-diary-mohamedou-ould-slahi-review-global-war-terror-witness>

To read the original manuscript published by the Guardian:

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2015/jan/20/sp-read-mohamedou-ould-slahis-original-handwritten-manuscript>

To buy the book (£15)

<http://bookshop.theguardian.com/guantanamo-diary.html> or ring 0330 333 6846

TRIBUTES TO CHAS RAWES

compiled by David Mellor

Chas Rawes died on 30th December 2014, his health having been failing for some time. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him. A commemoration meeting was held in Heswall on 20th January 2015, attended by around 300 people. Our tributes are based on the many comments delivered there and correspondence received, covering his extraordinary, rich and busy life as a Quaker, in the Wirral, the North West and nationally, in his community and with his family and friends.

Chas was dedicated to the Q-CAT cause and indeed was involved and interested until shortly before his death. He was very knowledgeable and had many contacts from his wide-ranging work over the years, for which he was much respected in his quiet ability to bring people together and get things done. He had a flexible approach and took a long term view over changing public opinion about torture. As convenor of Q-CAT Trustees he was always someone we turned to for advice. We shall miss his friendship and leadership.

Our greatest tribute will be to continue and expand the work he considered so very important.

Chas was instrumental in setting up the Q-CAT garden at RHS Tatton Show in 2012, which he saw as a way of raising awareness of torture among a much wider audience, and it was awarded a Gold Medal. He was supportive and positive in the months of planning, design and building of the project and much involved in raising funds. He was constantly 'on duty' during Show Week, for visitors to speak to, and he arranged for part of the garden to be relocated to Woodbrooke, for the Q-CAT concern to remain in the public eye.

His influence extended widely in Quaker and human rights issues. He was a founder of Asylum Link in Liverpool which has helped thousands of asylum seekers. He 'led in a quiet but forceful way' and it is commented that 'his smile could give hope to anyone' and 'Chas left a very big legacy... he was a wonderful man ...he gave, gave, and gave....'

Formerly he was regional officer for the UN Association, in which he supported the contribution of young people and convened a 'Model UN Assembly' in Liverpool. He was deeply involved in interfaith work locally and nationally, and a wide range of human rights and peace campaigning particularly for disarmament. At ceremonies to remember the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, he read poems, sometimes his own, and shared in the casting of white flowers into the River Dee.

His family writes: 'He cared deeply about his fellow man (and woman!) and worked tirelessly behind the scenes for many causes, sharing his skills, knowledge and understanding, and supporting others. He was committed to building bridges and to advocating for some of the most disadvantaged in our society and in other countries, particularly those who suffer unjustly because of their beliefs or their status'.

Two tributes from people outside Quakers show the deep impression he made:

'Chas was a really wonderful man who reached out across denominations and communities, always seeking ways to create alliances to promote co-existence, mutual respect, and justice. Standing in the great spiritual tradition of George Fox and the Quakers, through his witness and work Chas made sense of the inequalities and injustices faced by so many. His memory will be held in great respect'.

'He was a wonderful and generous person, humble and helpful. His commitment to the Friends, especially in out working with Q-CAT, was vast'.

Others write or speak about Chas's life:

'He was a deeply committed Quaker, deeply spiritual, practical, outworking'

'He always maintained a calm and gentle profile'

'He was a man who truly put his faith into practice'

'He was a 'Quaker Minister' 'the best of the best.... he was 'wise, good and a credit to God'

'I always think of him as the ideal Quaker'

'He did great work through Q-CAT'

'Some people were influenced simply by him being therea real feeling of warmth'

'He was the epitome of godliness and calmness, the rock that you could always rely on'.

'I am deeply thankful for the chance to get to know and love this great man'

'He enabled diversity and opened up new areas ... his ideas of diversity went as deep as his capacity for love'

'He was gentle, kind and witty'

'He had a dry and quiet sense of humour'

Chas had many interests and enthusiasms. He ran a family business in Liverpool (G Rawes and Son) which dealt in bikes and accessories. His son Philip said he was 'not a conventional person... 3 R's plus a Bentley! He had a passion for vintage cars, books and antique bikes... and for teddy bears which were his constant

companions'. He had an appreciation of great literature and an extensive library with a large and varied collection of books, especially on theology.

He was a talented poet, he painted, and loved music, particularly opera. One friend said: 'there was always music, an area of calm in a very turbulent world'. He met his wife Mary whilst they were students at University College London. She had nicknamed him 'Chas' when he played the Rev. Dr. Chasuble in Oscar Wilde's 'The Importance of Being Earnest'.

So we have had to say goodbye to a good friend, a good Quaker and a good man. May his example live on in us.

In the News (cont. from page 1)

Home Secretary announces independent review of welfare in detention

Home Secretary Teresa May has announced an independent review of policies and procedures affecting the welfare of those held in immigration removal centres, including torture survivors, to be led by Stephen Shaw CBE, former Prisons and Probation Ombudsman. He will consult with stakeholders including current and past detainees, and will report in about 6 months. This follows challenges on government policies regarding immigration detention centers, particularly about the growing number of self-harm, suicide and sexual abuse cases in facilities.

Teresa May press release (9th February 2015):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-announces-independent-review-of-welfare-in-detention>

DONATION TO Q-CAT (Charity No. 1093757)

To the Treasurer: Juliet Morton,
43 Embankment Road, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 1LA

Please accept the enclosed cheque/CAF voucher for
£.....payable to Q-CAT.

Name.....

Address.....

Postcode.....

If you are a taxpayer you can increase the value of
your donation to Q-CAT by 25% at no cost to you.
Please complete the Gift Aid Declaration (not
applicable to CAF vouchers).
I would like my donation to be treated as Gift Aid. I
confirm that I am a UK taxpayer, resident in the UK for
tax purposes, and that I am paying an amount of
income/capital gains tax at least equal to the tax the
charity claims on my donation in the relevant tax year.

Signed.....

Dated.....

To receive newsletters by email contact
Jane Laxton from.qcat@hotmail.com
and include your Local and Area Quaker
Meetings if appropriate.

To receive newsletters by post please fill
this in and send it to Jane Laxton, 79
Wellington Rd., New Brighton, Wirral
CH45 2NE

Name

Address.....

.....
Local and Area Quaker Meetings (if
appropriate).....
.....